



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See *MCI v. FCC*, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 27, 2012

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Janice Wise (202) 418-8165
Email: janice.wise@fcc.gov

FCC ADOPTS NEW RULES PERMITTING TV CHANNEL SHARING BY BROADCASTERS; ENACTS FIRST STEP TOWARDS FREEING UP SPECTRUM UNDER INCENTIVE AUCTION

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) today took its first step toward making a significant portion of spectrum currently used by the broadcast television service available for new uses. The Report and Order, in anticipation of a future incentive auction to address the nation’s growing demand for wireless broadband, allows multiple broadcast stations to elect to stream individual programming while sharing a single channel.

The new rules promote innovation and investment in mobile communications, and help ensure the United States keeps pace with the global wireless revolution. The rules also help preserve broadcast television as a healthy, viable medium.

Specifically, the Report and Order establishes a framework for how two or more television licensees may voluntarily share a single six MHz channel in conjunction with the auction process:

- While stations will need to retain at least one standard definition programming stream to meet the FCC’s requirement of providing an over-the-air video broadcast at no direct charge to viewers, they will have the flexibility of tailoring their channel sharing agreements to meet their individual programming and economic needs.
- Stations sharing together will employ a single channel and transmission facility but will each continue to be licensed separately, retain its original call sign, retain all the rights pertaining to an FCC license, and remain subject to all of the FCC’s rules, policies, and obligations.

The new rules apply to full power and Class A television stations, including both commercial and noncommercial educational television stations. The rules neither increase nor decrease the cable and satellite carriage rights currently afforded broadcast licensees. Nor does the Report and Order act on the proposals in the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to establish fixed and mobile allocations in the U/V bands or to improve TV service on VHF channels. The Commission will address the allocation issue in a future rulemaking, and may address the VHF issues at a later date as well.

Action by the Commission April 27, 2012 by Report and Order (FCC 12-45). Chairman Genachowski, Commissioners McDowell and Clyburn. Separate statements issued by Chairman Genachowski, Commissioners McDowell and Clyburn.

For further information, contact Shaun Maher (202-418-2324; Shaun.Maher@fcc.gov) of the Media Bureau, Video Division. Press contact: Janice Wise (202-418-8165; janice.wise@fcc.gov).

-FCC-

For news and information about the FCC, please visit: www.fcc.gov