



PUBLIC NOTICE

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FCC ANNOUNCES THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DISABILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE AND SOLICITS NOMINATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Federal Communications Commission (Commission) announces the establishment of a new federal advisory committee, the Disability Advisory Committee (DAC or Committee), which will provide advice and recommendations to the Commission on a wide array of disability matters. By this *Public Notice*, we seek nominations for membership on and a Chairperson to this Committee. The Commission intends to establish the DAC for a period of two years, with an expected starting date during the first quarter of 2015.

Nominations for membership to the DAC should be submitted to the FCC no later than January 12, 2015. Procedures for submitting nominations are set forth below.

MISSION

The DAC's mission will be to provide to the Commission advice, technical support, and recommended proposals on the full range of disability access issues within the Commission's jurisdiction. This Committee also will provide a means for stakeholders with interests in accessibility issues to exchange ideas, facilitate the participation of consumers with disabilities in proceedings before the Commission, and assist the Commission in educating the greater disability community and covered entities on disability-related matters. Issues to be considered by the Committee may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Telecommunications relay services;
- Closed captioning;
- Video description;
- Access to televised emergency information;
- Access to video programming apparatus;
- Access to telecommunications services and equipment;
- Access to advanced communications services and equipment;
- Hearing aid compatibility;
- Access to 9-1-1 emergency services;
- The National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program; and
- The impact of IP and other network transitions on people with disabilities.

The DAC will be organized under, and will operate in accordance with, the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA).¹ As authorized by FACA, the Commission plans to establish, within the DAC, subcommittees and working groups to help focus the Committee's recommendations on specific areas. At present, the Commission intends to establish subcommittees on the following issues:

- Telecommunications relay services;
- Video programming access (including closed captioning, video description, access to video programming apparatus, and access to televised emergency information);
- Access to 9-1-1 emergency services; and
- Access to communications services and equipment (advanced communications and telecommunications).

The Commission may consider establishing subcommittees or working groups on additional issues in the future.

WHO MAY APPLY FOR MEMBERSHIP

The Commission seeks applications from interested organizations, institutions, or other entities from both the public and private sectors that wish to be considered for membership on the DAC. The Commission is particularly interested in receiving nominations and expressions of interest from individuals and organizations in the following categories:

- Individuals, organizations and other entities representing people with disabilities, including people who are blind and visually impaired, people who are deaf and hard of hearing, people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, people with multiple disabilities, including those who are deaf-blind, people with speech disabilities, and people with mobility disabilities;
- Individuals, organizations and other entities with a particular interest in the accessibility needs of children and senior citizens with disabilities;
- Communication service providers, including TRS providers, wireline and wireless telecommunications providers; advanced communications service providers; telecommunications and advanced communications equipment manufacturers; video programming providers, owners, distributors and manufacturers; voice over Internet protocol and other IP-enabled service providers and manufacturers; researchers; educators; and accessible design developers and inventors;
- Federal government agencies;
- State and local government agencies; and
- Qualified representatives of other stakeholders and interested parties with relevant experience.

Selections will be made on the basis of expertise, experience, and diversity of viewpoints that are necessary to address effectively the questions before the Committee. Individuals who do not represent an organization, institution, or entity, but who possess expertise valuable to the Committee's work, are also welcome to apply. If appointed, such individuals would serve as Special Government Employees (SGEs) subject to conflict of interest rules, financial disclosure requirements, and limitations on financial holdings similar to those applicable to regular agency employees. In addition, under current White House guidance, such individuals (unlike those who are serving in a representative capacity) cannot be

¹ 5 U.S.C. App. 2.

registered federal lobbyists.

OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERS AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Members will serve at the discretion of the Chairman of the Commission. Members must be willing to commit to a two (2) year term of service from the date of establishment of the Committee and should be willing and able to attend at least three (3) one-day plenary committee meetings during each calendar year of the Committee's term. Members also will be encouraged to participate in deliberations of at least one (1) subcommittee or working group. The time commitment for participation in any subcommittee or working group may be substantial. However, subcommittee or working group meetings may be conducted informally, using suitable technology to facilitate the meetings, subject to oversight by the Designated Federal Official of the DAC.

Each meeting date and agenda topics for the plenary committee meetings will be described in a Public Notice issued and published in the Federal Register at least fifteen (15) days in advance of the meeting date. Each meeting of the full Committee will be open to the public. All meetings will be fully accessible to individuals with disabilities.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE, DEADLINE AND MEMBER APPOINTMENTS

All nominations should be received by the Commission as soon as possible, but no later than January 12, 2015.

No specific nomination form is required; however, each nomination must include the following information:

- Name, title, and organization of the nominee and a description of the organization, sector or other interest the nominee will represent;
- Nominee's mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number;
- A statement summarizing the nominee's qualifications (including relevant experience and expertise) and reasons why the nominee wishes to be appointed to the Committee, as well as how the nominee's qualifications will enable that individual to contribute to the Committee's mission. To the extent the nominee will represent a specific organization (including a governmental entity), the statement also should include a description of the organization, as well as the benefit of having the organization represented on the Committee;
- A statement confirming that the nominee, if seeking appointment for the individual's expertise and not as a representative of an organization or entity, is not a registered federal lobbyist; and
- The specific subcommittee(s), if any, on which the nominee has an interest in serving, along with the nominee's qualifications to serve on such subcommittee. If indicating more than one subcommittee, the nominee should list these in order of preference.

For applicants seeking to represent an organization or company, the applicant's nomination to the Committee must be confirmed by an authorized person (*e.g.*, organization or company official) that such organization or company wants the nominated person to represent it on the Committee. For example, this confirmation may be in the following format: "I am [insert official's name], the [insert official's title] at the [insert name of organization - *e.g.*, company, government entity, trade association, *etc.*], with responsibilities for [concise description of position]. My organization would like [insert proposed member's name], who is currently [an employee of/consultant/attorney to the company] to serve as our

representative on the Commission's Disability Advisory Committee.”

Please note this *Public Notice* is not intended to be the exclusive method by which the Commission will solicit nominations to identify qualified candidates; however, all candidates for membership on the Committee will be subject to the same evaluation criteria.

All nominations, including the requisite statements listed above, should be submitted by e-mail to DAC@fcc.gov.

ACCESSIBLE FORMATS

To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer & Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202-418-0530 (voice), 202-418-0432 (TTY).

For additional information about the Committee, please contact E. Elaine Gardner, the Designated Federal Official for the Disability Advisory Committee, at 202-418-0581, email: Elaine.Gardner@fcc.gov, or call the ASL Consumer Support Line, at 1-844-432-2275 via videophone.

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