



Receiving Television Broadcast Stations From Satellite TV Companies

Most satellite subscribers can receive television broadcast channels that originate within their local area, but some channels that are broadcast in nearby markets may not be available. However, subscribers can ask their satellite TV companies if they can add these channels, which may be possible in some instances. This guide provides information that may be helpful to anyone requesting local or out-of-market channels from their service company.

What is ‘local into local’ service?

With local-into-local service, satellite TV companies retransmit signals from stations located within a particular “designated market area” to subscribers in the same DMA. The Nielsen Company assigns each county to a DMA, based primarily on its measurement of local viewing patterns. Neither the FCC nor the satellite company plays any part in determining which counties are included in particular DMAs.

Satellite service that provides local TV broadcast stations - commonly called “local-into-local” service - is available to most subscribers. For example, as of December 2015, DISH Network provides local-into-local service in all 210 television markets and DIRECTV provides such service in 198 markets. Your satellite company may charge for this service.

Accessing ‘significantly viewed’ nearby out-of-market stations

If you receive local-into-local service, your satellite TV company may also provide out-of-market broadcast stations assigned to a neighboring local TV market that have been determined by the FCC to be “significantly viewed.” These are stations viewable over-the-air by a “significant” number of households in your community.

The FCC posts a list of the stations <https://transition.fcc.gov/mb/significantviewedstations041916.pdf> eligible as significantly viewed signals and the communities in which they are significantly viewed. Your satellite carrier can tell you whether a station is on the significantly viewed list and if it intends to offer the station.

Adding stations through the FCC’s market modification process

The FCC can also add other TV stations to your local TV market through the market modification process if the station can show it provides local service to your community and your satellite TV company has the technical ability to provide the station to your community.

This process requires the station, your satellite TV company, or your county government to file a request with the FCC. Subscribers **cannot** file directly with the FCC. If you do not receive stations from your home state (“in-state” stations), ask an in-state station or your satellite TV company if this process may be used to add an in-state station to your local-into-local service.

(For more information, including the criteria that the FCC considers in evaluating a request from the station, your satellite TV company, or your county government, see the FCC’s guide <https://transition.fcc.gov/bureaus/mb/policy/STELAR-Market-Modification.pdf> concerning the STELAR [STELA Reauthorization Act of 2014] market modification process.)



Accessing out-of-market stations by ‘unserved’ subscribers

If your satellite TV company is not offering local-into-local service, or is not offering a particular network TV broadcast station as part of its local-into-local service in your market, and you cannot receive a good signal over-the-air from the local network station, you are an “unserved” subscriber. In this case, you can ask your satellite TV company if it can provide you with an out-of-market station affiliated with the same network.

Non-satellite access to broadcast TV

Subscribers also can receive free, over-the-air, local TV broadcast stations, regardless of whether or not their satellite TV company offers local-into-local service, by installing a traditional antenna for use in conjunction with their satellite service. Your ability to receive over-the-air signals, however, depends on several factors, including geographic location and antenna quality.

For more information

For more information about broadcast TV from satellite, go to <https://www.fcc.gov/media/television-broadcast-stations-satellite>. For information about other communications issues, visit the FCC’s Consumer Help Center at www.fcc.gov/consumers.

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