

the extent technically feasible and consistent with good engineering practice, be provided no less than the same quality of signal processing and carriage provided for carriage of any other type of standard television signal.

(d) Each qualified local noncommercial educational television station whose signal is carried shall be provided with bandwidth and technical capacity equivalent to that provided to commercial television broadcast stations carried.

(e) Each commercial broadcast television station carried pursuant to § 76.56 shall include in its entirety the primary video, accompanying audio, and closed captioning data contained in line 21 of the vertical blanking interval and, to the extent technically feasible, program-related material carried in the vertical blanking interval or on subcarriers. Where appropriate and feasible, operators may delete signal enhancements, such as ghost-canceling, from the broadcast signal and employ such enhancements at the system headend or headends.

(f) Each qualified local NCE television station carried pursuant to § 76.56 shall include in its entirety the primary video, accompanying audio, and closed captioning data contained in line 21 of the vertical blanking interval and, to the extent technically feasible, program-related material carried in the vertical blanking interval or on subcarriers, that may be necessary for receipt of programming by handicapped persons or for educational or language purposes.

(g) With respect to carriage of digital signals, operators are not required to carry ancillary or supplementary transmissions or non-program related video material.

(h) If a digital television broadcast signal is carried in accordance with § 76.62(b) and either (c) or (d), the carriage of that signal in additional formats does not constitute material degradation.

[58 FR 17362, Apr. 2, 1993, as amended at 59 FR 62345, Dec. 5, 1994; 66 FR 16553, Mar. 26, 2001; 73 FR 6054, Feb. 1, 2008]

#### § 76.64 Retransmission consent.

(a) No multichannel video programming distributor shall retransmit the

signal of any commercial broadcasting station without the express authority of the originating station, except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section.

(b) A commercial broadcast signal may be retransmitted without express authority of the originating station if—

(1) The distributor is a cable system and the signal is that of a commercial television station (including a low-power television station) that is being carried pursuant to the Commission's must-carry rules set forth in § 76.56;

(2) The multichannel video programming distributor obtains the signal of a superstation that is distributed by a satellite carrier and the originating station was a superstation on May 1, 1991, and the distribution is made only to areas outside the local market of the originating station; or

(3) The distributor is a satellite carrier and the signal is transmitted directly to a home satellite antenna, provided that:

(i) The broadcast station is not owned or operated by, or affiliated with, a broadcasting network and its signal was retransmitted by a satellite carrier on May 1, 1991, or

(ii) The broadcast station is owned or operated by, or affiliated with a broadcasting network, and the household receiving the signal is an unserved household. This paragraph shall terminate at midnight on December 31, 2019, provided that if Congress further extends this date, the rules remain in effect until the statutory authorization expires.

(c) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(1) A satellite carrier is an entity that uses the facilities of a satellite or satellite service licensed by the Federal Communications Commission, to establish and operate a channel of communications for point-to-multipoint distribution of television station signals, and that owns or leases a capacity or service on a satellite in order to provide such point-to-multipoint distribution, except to the extent that such entity provides such distribution pursuant to tariff under the Communications Act of 1934, other than for private home viewing;

(2) A superstation is a television broadcast station other than a network station, licensed by the Federal Communications Commission that is secondarily transmitted by a satellite carrier;

(3) An unserved household with respect to a television network is a household that

(i) Cannot receive, through the use of a conventional outdoor rooftop receiving antenna, an over-the-air signal of grade B intensity of a primary network station affiliated with that network, and

(ii) Has not, within 90 days before the date on which that household subscribes, either initially or on renewal, received secondary transmissions by a satellite carrier of a network station affiliated with that network, subscribed to a cable system that provides the signal of a primary network station affiliated with the network.

(4) A primary network station is a network station that broadcasts or rebroadcasts the basic programming service of a particular national network;

(5) The terms “network station,” and “secondary transmission” have the meanings given them in 17 U.S.C. 111(f).

(d) A multichannel video program distributor is an entity such as, but not limited to, a cable operator, a BRS/EBS provider, a direct broadcast satellite service, a television receive-only satellite program distributor, or a satellite master antenna television system operator, that makes available for purchase, by subscribers or customers, multiple channels of video programming.

(e) The retransmission consent requirements of this section are not applicable to broadcast signals received by master antenna television facilities or by direct over-the-air reception in conjunction with the provision of service by a multichannel video program distributor provided that the multichannel video program distributor makes reception of such signals available without charge and at the subscribers option and provided further that the antenna facility used for the reception of such signals is either owned by the subscriber or the building owner; or under the control and avail-

able for purchase by the subscriber or the building owner upon termination of service.

(f) Commercial television stations are required to make elections between retransmission consent and must-carry status according to the following schedule:

(1) The initial election must be made by June 17, 1993.

(2) Subsequent elections must be made at three year intervals; the second election must be made by October 1, 1996 and will take effect on January 1, 1997; the third election must be made by October 1, 1999 and will take effect on January 1, 2000, etc.

(3) Television stations that fail to make an election by the specified deadline will be deemed to have elected must carry status for the relevant three-year period.

(4) New television stations and stations that return their analog spectrum allocation and broadcast in digital only shall make their initial election any time between 60 days prior to commencing broadcast and 30 days after commencing broadcast or commencing broadcasting in digital only; such initial election shall take effect 90 days after it is made.

(5) Television broadcast stations that become eligible for must carry status with respect to a cable system or systems due to a change in the market definition may, within 30 days of the effective date of the new definition, elect must-carry status with respect to such system or systems. Such elections shall take effect 90 days after they are made.

(g) If one or more franchise areas served by a cable system overlaps with one or more franchise areas served by another cable system, television broadcast stations are required to make the same election for both cable systems.

(h)(1) On or before each must carry/retransmission consent election deadline, each television broadcast station shall place a copy of its election statement, and copies of any election change notices applying to the upcoming carriage cycle, in the station's public file if the station is required to maintain a public file.

(2) Each cable operator shall, no later than July 31, 2020, provide an up-to-

date email address for carriage election notice submissions with respect to its systems and an up-to-date phone number for carriage-related questions. Each cable operator is responsible for the continuing accuracy and completeness of the information furnished. It must respond to questions from broadcasters as soon as is reasonably possible.

(3) A station shall send a notice of its election to a cable operator only if changing its election with respect to one or more of that operator's systems. Such notice shall be sent to the email address provided by the cable system and carbon copied to *ElectionNotices@FCC.gov*. A notice must include, with respect to each station referenced in the notice, the:

- (i) Call sign;
- (ii) Community of license;
- (iii) DMA where the station is located;
- (iv) Specific change being made in election status;
- (v) Email address for carriage-related questions;
- (vi) Phone number for carriage-related questions;
- (vii) Name of the appropriate station contact person; and,
- (viii) If the station changes its election for some systems of the cable operator but not all, the specific cable systems for which a carriage election applies.

(4) Cable operators must respond via email as soon as is reasonably possible, acknowledging receipt of a television station's election notice.

(5) Low power television stations and non-commercial educational translator stations that are qualified under § 76.55 and retransmitted by a multichannel video programming distributor shall, beginning no later than July 31, 2020, respond as soon as is reasonably possible to messages or calls from multichannel video programming distributors that are received via the email address or phone number the station provides in the Commission's Licensing and Management System.

(i) Notwithstanding a television station's election of must-carry status, if a cable operator proposes to retransmit that station's signal without according the station must-carry rights (*i.e.*, pursuant to § 76.56(e)), the operator must

obtain the station's express authority prior to retransmitting its signal.

(j) Retransmission consent agreements between a broadcast station and a multichannel video programming distributor shall be in writing and shall specify the extent of the consent being granted, whether for the entire signal or any portion of the signal. This rule applies for either the analog or the digital signal of a television station.

(k) A cable system commencing new operation is required to notify all local commercial and noncommercial broadcast stations of its intent to commence service. The cable operator must send such notification, by certified mail except as provided in this paragraph (k), at least 60 days prior to commencing cable service. After July 31, 2020, the cable operator must send such notification by electronic delivery in accordance with § 76.1600. Commercial broadcast stations must notify the cable system within 30 days of the receipt of such notice of their election for either must-carry or retransmission consent with respect to such new cable system. If the commercial broadcast station elects must-carry, it must also indicate its channel position in its election statement to the cable system. Such election shall remain valid for the remainder of any three-year election interval, as established in paragraph (f)(2) of this section. Noncommercial educational broadcast stations should notify the cable operator of their request for carriage and their channel position. The new cable system must notify each station if its signal quality does not meet the standards for carriage and if any copyright liability would be incurred for the carriage of such signal. Pursuant to § 76.57(e), a commercial broadcast station which fails to respond to such a notice shall be deemed to be a must-carry station for the remainder of the current three-year election period.

(l) Exclusive retransmission consent agreements are prohibited. No television broadcast station shall make or negotiate any agreement with one multichannel video programming distributor for carriage to the exclusion of other multichannel video programming distributors.

(m) A multichannel video programming distributor providing an all-band FM radio broadcast service (a service that does not involve the individual processing of specific broadcast signals) shall obtain retransmission consents from all FM radio broadcast stations that are included on the service that have transmitters located within 92 kilometers (57 miles) of the receiving antenna for such service. Stations outside of this 92 kilometer (57 miles) radius shall be presumed not to be carried in an all-band reception mode but may affirmatively assert retransmission consent rights by providing 30 days advance notice to the distributor.

NOTE 1 TO § 76.64: Section 76.1608 provides notification requirements for a cable system that changes its technical configuration in such a way as to integrate two formerly separate cable systems.

[58 FR 17363, Apr. 2, 1993, as amended at 59 FR 62345, Dec. 5, 1994; 65 FR 15575, Mar. 23, 2000; 65 FR 53615, Sept. 5, 2000; 66 FR 16553, Mar. 26, 2001; 67 FR 17015, Apr. 9, 2002; 69 FR 72045, Dec. 10, 2004; 70 FR 40224, July 13, 2005; 74 FR 69286, Dec. 31, 2009; 80 FR 11330, Mar. 3, 2015; 83 FR 7626, Feb. 22, 2018; 84 FR 45669, Aug. 30, 2019; 85 FR 16005, Mar. 19, 2020; 85 FR 22651, Apr. 23, 2020; 85 FR 44217, July 22, 2020; 86 FR 26186, May 13, 2021]

**§ 76.65 Good faith and exclusive retransmission consent complaints.**

(a) *Duty to negotiate in good faith.* Television broadcast stations and multichannel video programming distributors shall negotiate in good faith the terms and conditions of retransmission consent agreements to fulfill the duties established by section 325(b)(3)(C) of the Act; provided, however, that it shall not be a failure to negotiate in good faith if:

(1) The television broadcast station proposes or enters into retransmission consent agreements containing different terms and conditions, including price terms, with different multichannel video programming distributors if such different terms and conditions are based on competitive marketplace considerations; or

(2) The multichannel video programming distributor enters into retransmission consent agreements containing different terms and conditions, including price terms, with different broadcast stations if such different terms

and conditions are based on competitive marketplace considerations. If a television broadcast station or multichannel video programming distributor negotiates in accordance with the rules and procedures set forth in this section, failure to reach an agreement is not an indication of a failure to negotiate in good faith.

(b) *Good faith negotiation*—(1) *Standards.* The following actions or practices violate a broadcast television station's or multichannel video programming distributor's (the "Negotiating Entity") duty to negotiate retransmission consent agreements in good faith:

(i) Refusal by a Negotiating Entity to negotiate retransmission consent;

(ii) Refusal by a Negotiating Entity to designate a representative with authority to make binding representations on retransmission consent;

(iii) Refusal by a Negotiating Entity to meet and negotiate retransmission consent at reasonable times and locations, or acting in a manner that unreasonably delays retransmission consent negotiations;

(iv) Refusal by a Negotiating Entity to put forth more than a single, unilateral proposal;

(v) Failure of a Negotiating Entity to respond to a retransmission consent proposal of the other party, including the reasons for the rejection of any such proposal;

(vi) Execution by a Negotiating Entity of an agreement with any party, a term or condition of which, requires that such Negotiating Entity not enter into a retransmission consent agreement with any other television broadcast station or multichannel video programming distributor;

(vii) Refusal by a Negotiating Entity to execute a written retransmission consent agreement that sets forth the full understanding of the television broadcast station and the multichannel video programming distributor; and

(viii) Coordination of negotiations or negotiation on a joint basis by two or more television broadcast stations in the same local market to grant retransmission consent to a multichannel video programming distributor, unless such stations are directly or indirectly under common de