in transmission over a line of communications; or (2) discontinue, reduce or impair service over a line of communications. Part 63 of Title 47 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) implements Section 214. Part 63 also implements provisions of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 pertaining to video which was approved under this OMB Control Number 3060–0149. In 2009, the Commission modified Part 63 to extend to providers of interconnected Voice of internet Protocol (VoIP) service the discontinuance obligations that apply to domestic non-dominant telecommunications carriers under Section 214 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended. In 2014, the Commission adopted improved administrative filing procedures for domestic transfers of control, domestic discontinuances and notices of network changes, and among other adjustments, modified Part 63 to require electronic filing for applications for authorization to discontinue, reduce, or impair service under section 214(a) of the Act.

In July 2016, the Commission concluded that applicants seeking to discontinue a legacy time division multiplexing (TDM)-based voice service as part of a transition to a new technology, whether internet Protocol (IP), wireless, or another type (technology transition discontinuance application) must demonstrate that an adequate replacement for the legacy service exists in order to be eligible for streamlined treatment and revised part 63 accordingly. The Commission concluded that an applicant for a technology transition discontinuance may demonstrate that a service is an adequate replacement for a legacy voice service by certifying or showing that one or more replacement service(s) offers all of the following: (i) Substantially similar levels of network infrastructure and service quality as the applicant service; (ii) compliance with existing federal and/or industry standards required to ensure that critical applications such as 911, network security, and applications for individuals with disabilities remain available; and (iii) interoperability and compatibility with an enumerated list of applications and functionalities determined to be key to consumers and competitors (the “adequate replacement test”). In June 2018, the Commission further modified the rules applicable to section 214(a) discontinuance applications. First, all carriers, whether dominant or non-dominant, that seek approval to grandfather data services below speeds of 25 Mbps download speed and 3 Mbps upload speed are now subject to a uniform reduced public comment period of 10 days and an automatic grant period of 25 days. Second, all carriers, whether dominant or non-dominant, seeking authorization to discontinue data services below speeds of 25 Mbps download speed and 3 Mbps upload speed that have previously been grandfathered for a period of at least 180 days are subject to a uniform reduced public comment period of 10 days and an automatic grant period of 31 days, provided they submit a statement as part of their discontinuance application that they have received Commission authority to grandfather the services at issue at least 180 days prior to the filing of the discontinuance application. This statement must reference the file number of the prior Commission authorization to grandfather the services the carrier now seeks to permanently discontinue. Third, carriers are no longer required to file an application to discontinue, reduce, or impair any service for which it has had no customers and no request for service for at least a 30-day period immediately preceding the discontinuance. Fourth, all carriers, whether dominant or non-dominant, that seek approval to discontinue legacy voice service can obtain further streamlined processing with a public comment period of 15 days and an automatic grant period of 31 days, provided (1) they offer a standalone interconnected VoIP service throughout the service area, and (2) at least one alternative stand-alone, facilities-based voice service is available from an unaffiliated provider throughout the affected service area (the “alternative options test”). Finally, all carriers, whether dominant or non-dominant, that seek approval to grandfather legacy voice service are now subject to a uniform reduced public comment period of 10 days and an automatic grant period of 25 days.

Federal Communications Commission.
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