
Annual DTV Ancillary/Supplementary Services Report Due for Commercial and Noncommercial Digital Television Stations

By Lauren Lynch Flick and Scott R. Flick

All commercial and noncommercial educational digital television broadcast station licensees and permittees must file FCC Form 317 by December 1, 2014.

The FCC requires all digital television stations, including all commercial and noncommercial educational full power television stations, digital low power television stations, digital translator television stations, and digital Class A television stations, to submit FCC Form 317 each year. The report details whether stations provided ancillary or supplemental services at any time during the twelve-month period ending on the preceding September 30. It is important to note that the FCC Form 317 must be submitted regardless of whether stations offered any such services. FCC Form 317 must be filed electronically, absent a waiver, and is due on December 1, 2014.

Ancillary or supplementary services are all services provided on the portion of a DTV station's digital spectrum that is not necessary to provide the required single free, over-the-air signal to viewers. Any video broadcast service that is provided with no direct charge to viewers is exempt. According to the FCC, examples of services that are considered ancillary or supplementary include, but are not limited to, "computer software distribution, data transmissions, teletext, interactive materials, aural messages, paging services, audio signals, subscription video, and the like."

If a DTV station provided ancillary or supplementary services during the 12-month time period ending on September 30, 2014, it must pay the FCC 5% of the gross revenues derived from the provision of those services. This payment can be forwarded to the FCC's lockbox at the U.S. Bank in St. Louis, Missouri and must be accompanied by FCC Form 159, the Remittance Advice. Alternatively, the fee can be paid electronically using a credit card on the FCC's website. The fee amount must also be submitted by the December 1, 2014 due date.

If you have any questions about the content of this alert, please contact the Pillsbury attorney with whom you regularly work, or the authors of this alert.

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