

Media Contact:

Janice Wise, (202) 418-8165
janice.wise@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release

**FCC EXPANDS AUDIO DESCRIPTION REQUIREMENTS TO 40
ADDITIONAL DESIGNATED MARKET AREAS**

*Expansion Will Make More Video Programming Accessible for More Consumers
who are Blind or Visually Impaired*

WASHINGTON, October 27, 2020—The Federal Communications Commission today adopted an order expanding its audio description requirements to an additional 40 designated market areas (DMAs) over the next four years. Audio description makes video programming more accessible by inserting narrated descriptions of a television program’s key visual elements during natural pauses in the program’s dialogue. The action ensures that a greater number of individuals who are blind or visually impaired can be better connected, informed, and entertained by television programming.

Pursuant to the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act of 2010 (CVAA), the Commission’s audio description rules currently require certain broadcast stations in our nation’s top 60 DMAs to provide described programming. The CVAA provides that as of October 8, 2020, the Commission may phase in audio description requirements for up to an additional 10 DMAs per year if it determines that the costs are reasonable. In today’s Order, the Commission concludes that the costs of expanding the audio description regulations to DMAs 61 through 100 are reasonable for program owners, providers, and distributors. The Order also replaces the term “video description” with “audio description” throughout the Commission’s rules, implementing a recommendation of the Commission’s Disability Advisory Committee and harmonizing the Commission’s terminology with that used by consumers and other Federal agencies.

The audio description requirements will phase in for an additional 10 DMAs each year for four years, beginning January 1, 2021 or the effective date of the order, whichever occurs later. In 2023, the Commission will determine whether to continue expanding audio description requirements to an additional 10 DMAs per year beyond the top 100 DMAs.

Action by the Commission October 27, 2020 by Report and Order (FCC 20-155). Chairman Pai, Commissioners O’Rielly, Carr, Rosenworcel, and Starks approving. Chairman Pai and Commissioner Rosenworcel issuing separate statements.

MB Docket No. 11-43

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Media Relations: (202) 418-0500 / ASL: (844) 432-2275 / Twitter: @FCC / www.fcc.gov

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).