



PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

News Media Information 202-418-0500
Internet: www.fcc.gov
TTY: 888-835-5322

DA 23-28

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**CONSUMER AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS BUREAU SEEKS COMMENT ON
SORENSEN COMMUNICATIONS, LLC'S PETITION FOR A LIMITED WAIVER OF THE
PRIVACY SCREEN RULE FOR VIDEO RELAY SERVICE**

CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51

Comments due: February 13, 2023

Reply Comments due: February 28, 2023

Pursuant to sections 1.1, 1.3, and 1.45 of the Commission's Rules (47 CFR §§ 1.1, 1.3, and 1.45), the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau (CGB or Bureau) of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC or Commission) seeks comment on a Petition for a Limited Waiver filed by Sorenson Communications, LLC (Sorenson).¹ As a provider of Video Relay Service (VRS), Sorenson requests the Commission waive its visual privacy screen rule to allow VRS providers to pilot integration of VRS with video conferencing services.² A "visual privacy screen" is defined as "a screen or any other feature that is designed to prevent one party or both parties on the video leg of a VRS call from viewing the other party during a call."³ The privacy screen rule prohibits a VRS communications assistant (CA) from enabling a visual privacy screen or similar feature during a VRS call and requires the CA to disconnect a VRS call if the caller or called party enables a privacy screen or similar feature for more than five minutes or is otherwise unresponsive or unengaged for more than five minutes.⁴ This rule was adopted to prevent fraudulent practices where VRS minutes were logged while no one was engaged in a conversation.⁵

Sorenson contends that enforcement of the privacy screen rule would hinder the participation of VRS users in video conferencing calls because the participants, including deaf participants, in such calls may turn off their video connections for reasons unrelated to inactivity.⁶ Sorenson seeks a limited waiver of the rule that would allow VRS users to use interactive video conferencing services without video being activated, for longer than five minutes.⁷ Sorenson does not seek a waiver that would allow CAs to turn off their videos or use a privacy screen.⁸

¹ Petition of Sorenson Communications, LLC for a Limited Waiver of the Privacy Screen Rule for Piloting VRS Integration with Video Conferencing Services, CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51 (filed Dec. 19, 2022) (Petition), <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/document/12190888126091/1>.

² See Petition at 1-3.

³ 47 CFR § 64.601(a)(51).

⁴ 47 CFR § 64.604(a)(6).

⁵ See *Structure and Practices of the Video Relay Service Program*, CG Docket No. 10-51, 26 FCC Rcd 5545, 5566-68, paras. 39-42 (2011).

⁶ See Petition at 3-7.

⁷ See Petition at 9.

⁸ See Petition at 7.

Filing Requirements. Interested parties may file comments on Sorenson’s Petition on or before the dates shown on the first page of this document.⁹ All comments must reference CG Docket Nos. 03-123 and 10-51. Comments may be filed using the Commission’s Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS).¹⁰

- Electronic Filers: Comments may be filed electronically using the Internet by accessing the ECFS: <https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/filings>.
- Paper Filers:
 - Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and one copy of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, filers must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number.
 - Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail. All filings must be addressed to the Commission’s Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.
 - Currently, the Commission does not accept any hand delivered or messenger delivered filings as a temporary measure taken to help protect the health and safety of individuals, and to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19. In the event that the Commission announces the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions, a filing window will be opened at the Commission’s office located at 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701.¹¹
 - Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9050 Junction Drive, Annapolis Junction, MD 20701.
 - U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail may be addressed to 45 L Street, NE, Washington, DC 20554.
 - During the time the Commission’s building is closed to the general public and until further notice, if more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of a proceeding, paper filers need not submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number; an original and one copy are sufficient.

Ex Parte Rules. The proceeding the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking initiates shall be treated as a “permit-but-disclose” proceeding in accordance with the Commission’s ex parte rules.¹² Persons making ex parte presentations must file a copy of any written presentation or a memorandum summarizing any oral presentation within two business days after the presentation (unless a different deadline applicable to the Sunshine period applies). Persons making oral ex parte presentations are reminded that memoranda summarizing the presentation must (1) list all persons attending or otherwise participating in the meeting at which the ex parte presentation was made, and (2) summarize all data presented and arguments made during the presentation. If the presentation consisted in whole or in part of the presentation of data or arguments already reflected in the presenter’s written comments, memoranda or other filings in the proceeding, the presenter may provide citations to such data or arguments in his or her prior comments,

⁹ See 47 CFR §§ 1.1, 1.3, 1.45.

¹⁰ See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, GC Docket No. 97-113, Report and Order, 13 FCC Red 11322 (1998).

¹¹ See *FCC Announces Closure of FCC Headquarters Open Window and Change in Hand-Delivery Policy*, Public Notice, 35 FCC Red 2788 (OMD 2020), <https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-closes-headquarters-open-window-and-changes-hand-delivery-policy>.

¹² 47 CFR § 1.1200 *et seq.*

memoranda, or other filings (specifying the relevant page and/or paragraph numbers where such data or arguments can be found) in lieu of summarizing them in the memorandum. Documents shown or given to Commission staff during ex parte meetings are deemed to be written ex parte presentations and must be filed consistent with section 1.1206(b). In proceedings governed by section 1.49(f) or for which the Commission has made available a method of electronic filing, written ex parte presentations and memoranda summarizing oral ex parte presentations, and all attachments thereto, must be filed through the electronic comment filing system available for that proceeding, and must be filed in their native format (e.g., .doc, .xml, .ppt, searchable .pdf). Participants in this proceeding should familiarize themselves with the Commission's ex parte rules.

Accessible Materials. To request materials in accessible formats for people with disabilities (Braille, large print, electronic files, audio format), send an e-mail to fcc504@fcc.gov or call the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau at 202-418-0530.

Additional Information. For additional information on this proceeding, contact William Wallace, Disability Rights Office, Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau, at 202-418-2716, or William.Wallace@fcc.gov.

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