

Federal Communications Commission

§ 7.20

§ 7.17 Informal complaints; form and content.

(a) An informal complaint alleging a violation of section 255 of the Act or this subpart may be transmitted to the Commission by any reasonable means, e.g., letter, facsimile transmission, telephone (voice/TRS/TTY), Internet e-mail, ASCII text, Internet e-mail, audio-cassette recording, and braille.

(b) An informal complaint shall include:

(1) The name and address of the complainant;

(2) The name and address of the manufacturer or provider against whom the complaint is made;

(3) A full description of the telecommunications equipment or CPE and/or the telecommunications service about which the complaint is made;

(4) The date or dates on which the complainant either purchased, acquired or used, or attempted to purchase, acquire or use the telecommunications equipment, CPE or telecommunications service about which the complaint is being made;

(5) A complete statement of the facts, including documentation where available, supporting the complainant's allegation that: such telecommunications service, or such telecommunications equipment or CPE, is not accessible to, or usable by, a person with a particular disability or persons with disabilities within the meaning of this subpart and section 255 of the Act; or that the defendant has otherwise failed to comply with the requirements of this subpart.

(6) The specific relief or satisfaction sought by the complainant, and

(7) The complainant's preferred format or method of response to the complaint by the Commission and defendant (e.g., letter, facsimile transmission, telephone (voice/TRS/TTY), Internet e-mail, ASCII text, audio-cassette recording, braille; or some other method that will best accommodate the complainant's disability).

§ 7.18 Procedure; designation of agents for service.

(a) The Commission shall promptly forward any informal complaint meeting the requirements of § 7.17 to each manufacturer and provider named in or

determined by the staff to be implicated by the complaint. Such manufacturer(s) or provider(s) shall be called on to satisfy or answer the complaint within the time specified by the Commission.

(b) To ensure prompt and effective service of informal and formal complaints filed under this subpart, every manufacturer and provider subject to the requirements of section 255 of the Act and this subpart, shall designate an agent, and may designate additional agents if it so chooses, upon whom service may be made of all notices, inquiries, orders, decisions, and other pronouncements of the Commission in any matter before the Commission. Such designation shall include, for both the manufacturer or the provider, a name or department designation, business address, telephone number, and, if available TTY number, facsimile number, and Internet e-mail address.

§ 7.19 Answers to informal complaints.

Any manufacturer or provider to whom an informal complaint is directed by the Commission under this subpart shall file an answer within the time specified by the Commission. The answer shall:

(a) Be prepared or formatted in the manner requested by the complainant pursuant to § 7.17, unless otherwise permitted by the Commission for good cause shown;

(b) Describe any actions that the defendant has taken or proposes to take to satisfy the complaint;

(c) Advise the complainant and the Commission of the nature of the defense(s) claimed by the defendant;

(d) Respond specifically to all material allegations of the complaint; and

(e) Provide any other information or materials specified by the Commission as relevant to its consideration of the complaint.

§ 7.20 Review and disposition of informal complaints.

(a) Where it appears from the defendant's answer, or from other communications with the parties, that an informal complaint has been satisfied, the Commission may, in its discretion, consider the informal complaint

closed, without response to the complainant or defendant. In all other cases, the Commission shall inform the parties of its review and disposition of a complaint filed under this subpart. Where practicable, this information, the nature of which is specified in paragraphs (b) through (d) of this section, shall be transmitted to the complainant and defendant in the manner requested by the complainant, (e.g., letter, facsimile transmission, telephone (voice/TRS/TTY), Internet e-mail, ASCII text, audio-cassette recording, or braille).

(b) In the event the Commission determines, based on a review of the information provided in the informal complaint and the defendant's answer thereto, that no further action is required by the Commission with respect to the allegations contained in the informal complaint, the informal complaint shall be closed and the complainant and defendant shall be duly informed of the reasons therefor. A complainant unsatisfied with the defendant's response to the informal complaint and the staff decision to terminate action on the informal complaint may file a formal complaint with the Commission, as specified in §7.22 of this subpart.

(c) In the event the Commission determines, based on a review of the information presented in the informal complaint and the defendant's answer thereto, that a material and substantial question remains as to the defendant's compliance with the requirements of this subpart, the Commission may conduct such further investigation or such further proceedings as may be necessary to determine the defendant's compliance with the requirements of this subpart and to determine what, if any, remedial actions and/or sanctions are warranted.

(d) In the event that the Commission determines, based on a review of the information presented in the informal complaint and the defendant's answer thereto, that the defendant has failed to comply with or is presently not in compliance with the requirements of this subpart, the Commission may order or prescribe such remedial actions and/or sanctions as are authorized under the Act and the Commis-

sion's rules and which are deemed by the Commission to be appropriate under the facts and circumstances of the case.

§7.21 Formal complaints, applicability of §§1.720 through 1.736 of this chapter.

Formal complaints against a manufacturer or provider, as defined under this subpart, may be filed in the form and in the manner prescribed under §§1.720 through 1.736 of this chapter. Commission staff may grant waivers of, or exceptions to, particular requirements under §§1.720 through 1.736 for good cause shown; provided, however, that such waiver authority may not be exercised in a manner that relieves, or has the effect of relieving, a complainant of the obligation under §§1.720 and 1.728 of this chapter to allege facts which, if true, are sufficient to constitute a violation or violations of section 255 of the Act or this chapter.

§7.22 Formal complaints based on unsatisfied informal complaints.

A formal complaint filing based on an unsatisfied informal complaint filed pursuant to §4.16 of this chapter shall be deemed to relate back to the filing date of the informal complaint if it is filed within ninety days from the date that the Commission notifies the complainant of its disposition of the informal complaint and based on the same operative facts as those alleged in the informal complaint.

§7.23 Actions by the Commission on its own motion.

The Commission may on its own motion conduct such inquiries and hold such proceedings as it may deem necessary to enforce the requirements of this part and Section 255 of the Communications Act. The procedures to be followed by the Commission shall, unless specifically prescribed in the Act and the Commission's rules, be such as in the opinion of the Commission will best serve the purposes of such inquiries and proceedings.