

Federal Communications Commission

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GENERAL EXEMPTIONS

§ 1.1204 Exempt ex parte presentations and proceedings.

(a) *Exempt ex parte presentations.* The following types of presentations are exempt from the prohibitions in restricted proceedings (§ 1.1208), the disclosure requirements in permit-but-disclose proceedings (§ 1.1206), and the prohibitions during the Sunshine Agenda period prohibition (§ 1.1203):

(1) The presentation is authorized by statute or by the Commission's rules to be made without service, see, e.g., § 1.333(d), or involves the filing of required forms;

(2) The presentation is made by or to the General Counsel and his or her staff and concerns judicial review of a matter that has been decided by the Commission;

(3) The presentation directly relates to an emergency in which the safety of life is endangered or substantial loss of property is threatened, provided that, if not otherwise submitted for the record, Commission staff promptly places the presentation or a summary of the presentation in the record and discloses it to other parties as appropriate.

(4) The presentation involves a military or foreign affairs function of the United States or classified security information;

(5) The presentation is to or from an agency or branch of the Federal Government or its staff and involves a matter over which that agency or branch and the Commission share jurisdiction provided that, any new factual information obtained through such a presentation that is relied on by the Commission in its decision-making process will, if not otherwise submitted for the record, be disclosed by the Commission no later than at the time of the release of the Commission's decision;

(6) The presentation is to or from the United States Department of Justice or Federal Trade Commission and involves a communications matter in a proceeding which has not been designated for hearing and in which the relevant agency is not a party or commenter (in an informal rulemaking or Joint board proceeding) *provided that*,

any new factual information obtained through such a presentation that is relied on by the Commission in its decision-making process will be disclosed by the Commission no later than at the time of the release of the Commission's decision;

NOTE 1 TO PARAGRAPH (a): Under paragraphs (a)(5) and (a)(6) of this section, information will be relied on and disclosure will be made only after advance coordination with the agency involved in order to ensure that the agency involved retains control over the timing and extent of any disclosure that may have an impact on that agency's jurisdictional responsibilities. If the agency involved does not wish such information to be disclosed, the Commission will not disclose it and will disregard it in its decision-making process, unless it fits within another exemption not requiring disclosure (e.g., foreign affairs). The fact that an agency's views are disclosed under paragraphs (a)(5) and (a)(6) does not preclude further discussions pursuant to, and in accordance with, the exemption.

(7) The presentation is between Commission staff and an advisory coordinating committee member with respect to the coordination of frequency assignments to stations in the private land mobile services or fixed services as authorized by 47 U.S.C. 332;

(8) The presentation is a written presentation made by a listener or viewer of a broadcast station who is not a party under § 1.1202(d)(1), and the presentation relates to a pending application that has not been designated for hearing for a new or modified broadcast station or license, for renewal of a broadcast station license or for assignment or transfer of control of a broadcast permit or license;

(9) The presentation is made pursuant to an express or implied promise of confidentiality to protect an individual from the possibility of reprisal, or there is a reasonable expectation that disclosure would endanger the life or physical safety of an individual;

(10) The presentation is requested by (or made with the advance approval of) the Commission or staff for the clarification or adduction of evidence, or for resolution of issues, including possible settlement, subject to the following limitations:

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(i) This exemption does not apply to restricted proceedings designated for hearing;

(ii) In restricted proceedings not designated for hearing, any new written information elicited from such request or a summary of any new oral information elicited from such request shall promptly be served by the person making the presentation on the other parties to the proceeding. Information relating to how a proceeding should or could be settled, as opposed to new information regarding the merits, shall not be deemed to be new information for purposes of this section. The Commission or its staff may waive the service requirement if service would be too burdensome because the parties are numerous or because the materials relating to such presentation are voluminous. If the service requirement is waived, copies of the presentation or summary shall be placed in the record of the proceeding and the Commission or its staff shall issue a public notice which states that copies of the presentation or summary are available for inspection. The Commission or its staff may determine that service or public notice would interfere with the effective conduct of an investigation and dispense with the service and public notice requirements;

(iii) If the presentation is made in a proceeding subject to permit-but-disclose requirements, disclosure of any new written information elicited from such request or a summary of any new oral information elicited from such request must be made in accordance with the requirements of § 1.1206(b), provided, however, that the Commission or its staff may determine that disclosure would interfere with the effective conduct of an investigation and dispense with the disclosure requirement. As in paragraph (a)(10)(ii) of this section, information relating to how a proceeding should or could be settled, as opposed to new information regarding the merits, shall not be deemed to be new information for purposes of this section;

NOTE 2 TO PARAGRAPH (a): If the Commission or its staff dispenses with the service or notice requirement to avoid interference with an investigation, a determination will be made in the discretion of the Commission

or its staff as to when and how disclosure should be made if necessary. *See Amendment of Subpart H, Part I, 2 FCC Red 6053, 6054 ¶¶ 10–14 (1987).*

(iv) If the presentation is made in a proceeding subject to the Sunshine period prohibition, disclosure must be made in accordance with the requirements of § 1.1206(b) or by other adequate means of notice that the Commission deems appropriate;

(v) In situations where new information regarding the merits is disclosed during settlement discussions, and the Commission or staff intends that the product of the settlement discussions will be disclosed to the other parties or the public for comment before any action is taken, the Commission or staff in its discretion may defer disclosure of such new information until comment is sought on the settlement proposal or the settlement discussions are terminated.

(11) The presentation is an oral presentation in a restricted proceeding not designated for hearing requesting action by a particular date or giving reasons that a proceeding should be expedited other than the need to avoid administrative delay. A detailed summary of the presentation shall promptly be filed in the record and served by the person making the presentation on the other parties to the proceeding, who may respond in support or opposition to the request for expedition, including by oral *ex parte* presentation, subject to the same service requirement.

(12) The presentation is between Commission staff and:

(i) The administrator of the interstate telecommunications relay services fund relating to administration of the telecommunications relay services fund pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 225;

(ii) The North American Numbering Plan Administrator or the North American Numbering Plan Billing and Collection Agent relating to the administration of the North American Numbering Plan pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 251(e);

(iii) The Universal Service Administrative Company relating to the administration of universal service support mechanisms pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 254; or

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(iv) The Number Portability Administrator relating to the administration of local number portability pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 251(b)(2) and (e), provided that the relevant administrator has not filed comments or otherwise participated as a party in the proceeding;

(v) The TRS Numbering Administrator relating to the administration of the TRS numbering directory pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 225 and 47 U.S.C. 251(e); or

(vi) The Pooling Administrator relating to the administration of thousands-block number pooling pursuant to 47 U.S.C. 251(e).

(b) *Exempt proceedings.* Unless otherwise provided by the Commission or the staff pursuant to §1.1200(a), *ex parte* presentations to or from Commission decision-making personnel are permissible and need not be disclosed with respect to the following proceedings, which are referred to as “exempt” proceedings:

(1) A notice of inquiry proceeding;

(2) A petition for rulemaking, except for a petition requesting the allotment of a broadcast channel (see also §1.1206(a)(1)), or other request that the Commission modify its rules, issue a policy statement or issue an interpretive rule, or establish a Joint Board;

(3) A tariff proceeding (including directly associated waiver requests or requests for special permission) prior to it being set for investigation (see also §1.1206(a)(4));

(4) A proceeding relating to prescription of common carrier depreciation rates under section 220(b) of the Communications Act prior to release of a public notice of specific proposed depreciation rates (see also §1.1206(a)(9));

(5) An informal complaint proceeding under 47 U.S.C. 208 and §1.717 of this chapter or 47 U.S.C. 255 and either §§6.17 or 7.17 of this chapter; and

(6) A complaint against a cable operator regarding its rates that is not filed on the standard complaint form required by §76.951 of this chapter (FCC Form 329).

NOTES 1-3 TO PARAGRAPH (b): [Reserved]

NOTE 4 TO PARAGRAPH (b): In the case of petitions for rulemaking that seek Commission preemption of state or local regulatory authority, the petitioner must serve the original petition on any state or local government, the actions of which are specifically cited as a basis for requesting preemption.

Service should be made on those bodies within the state or local governments that are legally authorized to accept service of legal documents in a civil context. Such pleadings that are not served will be dismissed without consideration as a defective pleading and treated as a violation of the *ex parte* rules unless the Commission determines that the matter should be entertained by making it part of the record under §1.1212(d) and the parties are so informed.

[62 FR 15855, Apr. 3, 1997, as amended at 64 FR 63251, Nov. 19, 1999; 64 FR 68948, Dec. 9, 1999; 76 FR 24381, May 2, 2011]

NON-RESTRICTED PROCEEDINGS

§ 1.1206 Permit-but-disclose proceedings.

(a) Unless otherwise provided by the Commission or the staff pursuant to §1.1200(a), until the proceeding is no longer subject to administrative reconsideration or review or to judicial review, *ex parte* presentations (other than *ex parte* presentations exempt under §1.1204(a)) to or from Commission decision-making personnel are permissible in the following proceedings, which are referred to as permit-but-disclose proceedings, provided that *ex parte* presentations to Commission decision-making personnel are disclosed pursuant to paragraph (b) of this section:

NOTE 1 TO PARAGRAPH (a): In the case of petitions for declaratory ruling that seek Commission preemption of state or local regulatory authority and petitions for relief under 47 U.S.C. 332(c)(7)(B)(v), the petitioner must serve the original petition on any state or local government, the actions of which are specifically cited as a basis for requesting preemption. Service should be made on those bodies within the state or local governments that are legally authorized to accept service of legal documents in a civil context. Such pleadings that are not served will be dismissed without consideration as a defective pleading and treated as a violation of the *ex parte* rules unless the Commission determines that the matter should be entertained by making it part of the record under §1.1212(d) and the parties are so informed.

(1) An informal rulemaking proceeding conducted under section 553 of the Administrative Procedure Act other than a proceeding for the allotment of a broadcast channel, upon release of a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (see also §1.1204(b)(2));