

§ 73.641 Subscription TV definitions.

(a) *Subscription television.* A system whereby subscription television programs are transmitted and received.

(b) *Subscription television program.* A television broadcast program intended to be received in intelligible form for a fee or charge.

[52 FR 6154, Mar. 2, 1987]

§ 73.642 Subscription TV service.

(a) Subscription TV service may be provided by:

(1) Licensees and permittees of commercial and noncommercial TV stations, and

(2) Licensees and permittees of low power TV stations.

(b) A licensee or permittee of a commercial or noncommercial TV station or a low power TV station may begin subscription TV service upon installation of encoding equipment having advance FCC approval. However, the licensee or permittee of a TV broadcast station (not applicable to low power TV stations) must send a letter to the FCC in Washington, DC, that subscription TV service will commence at least 30 days prior to commencement of such service. In that letter, to be entitled "Notice of Commencement of STV Operations," the licensee or permittee is to state that it will comply with the provisions of paragraphs (e)(1) through (e)(3) and § 73.644(c) of this chapter and identify the make and type of encoding system to be used. A similar notice must be submitted if the licensee or permittee commences using another type of encoding system. (See section 644(h).) A notice must also be submitted to the FCC in Washington, DC, if encoded subscription TV service is to be discontinued, at least 30 days prior to such discontinuance.

(c) The station proof of system compliance measurement data (see § 73.644(c)) need not be submitted to the FCC, however, the measurement data must be available to the FCC upon request.

(d) The use of the visual vertical blanking interval or an aural subcarrier for transmitting subscriber decoder control code signals during periods of normal non-encoded programming may be used only upon specific

FCC authorization. Letter requests to use either the video blanking intervals or aural subcarriers during periods of non-subscription programming are to be sent to the FCC in Washington, D.C.

(e) A licensee or permittee of a commercial or noncommercial TV broadcast or low power TV station may not transmit a subscription service if it has a contract, arrangement, or understanding expressed or implied, that:

(1) Prevents or hinders it from rejecting or refusing any subscription TV broadcast program that it reasonably believes to be unsatisfactory or unsuitable or contrary to the public interests; or substituting a subscription or conventional program that, in its opinion, is of greater local or national importance; or

(2) Delegates to any other person the right to schedule the hours of transmission of subscription programs. However, this rule does not prevent a licensee or permittee from entering into an agreement or arrangement whereby it agrees to schedule a specific subscription TV broadcast program at a specific time or to schedule a specific number of hours of subscription programs during the broadcast day (or segments thereof) or weeks; or

(3) Deprives it of the right of ultimate decision concerning the maximum amount of any subscription program charge or fee.

(4) Has provisions that do not comply with the following policies of the FCC:

(i) Unless a satisfactory signal is unavailable at the location where service is desired, subscription TV service must be provided to all persons desiring it within the Grade A contour of the station broadcasting subscription programs. Geographic or other reasonable patterns of installation for new subscription services is permitted and, for good cause, service may be terminated.

(ii) Charges, terms and conditions of service to subscribers must be applied uniformly. However, subscribers may be divided into reasonable classifications approved by the FCC, and the impositions of different sets of terms and conditions may be applied to subscribers in different classifications. Further, for good cause, within such classification, deposits may be required

from some subscribers and not of others; and, also for good cause, if a subscription system generally uses a credit-type decoder, cash operated decoders may be installed for some subscribers.

[48 FR 56392, Dec. 21, 1983, as amended at 52 FR 6154, Mar. 2, 1987; 66 FR 58982, Nov. 26, 2001]

§ 73.643 Subscription TV operating requirements.

The non-technical rules and policies applicable to regular TV broadcast stations are applicable to subscription TV operations, except where specifically exempted in the provisions of those rules and policies.

[48 FR 56392, Dec. 21, 1983]

§ 73.644 Subscription TV transmission systems.

(a) Licensees and permittees of commercial and noncommercial TV broadcast and low power TV stations may conduct subscription operations only by using an encoding system that has been approved in advance by the FCC. Such advance approval may be applied for and granted in accordance with the procedures given in subpart M part 2 of the Rules.

(b) The criteria for advance approval of subscription TV transmitting systems by the FCC are as follows:

(1) Spectral energy in the transmitted signal must not exceed the limitations given in § 73.687(e).

(2) No increase in width of the television broadcast channel (6 MHz.) is permitted.

(3) The technical system must enable stations to transmit encoded subscription TV programs without increasing the RMS output power from either the video or audio transmitters over that required to transmit the same program material using normal transmission standards.

(4) Modification of a type accepted TV broadcast or low power TV transmitter for encoded transmissions must not render transmitter incapable of operating in accordance with the operating specifications upon which type acceptance was granted. (See § 2.1001 (b), (k))

(5) Interference to reception of conventional television either of co-channel or adjacent channel stations must

not increase over that resulting from the transmission of programming with normal transmission standards.

(6) Subscriber decoder devices must meet the provisions, where required, of subpart H of part 15 of the FCC Rules for TV Interface Devices.

(c) Prior to commencing the transmission of encoded subscription programming, the licensee or permittee of a TV broadcast or low power TV station must perform such tests and measurements to determine that the transmitted encoded signal conforms to the radiated radio frequency and demodulated baseband and waveforms, transmitter operating power determination, and the occupied bandwidth limitations specified in the application for advance FCC approval of the system being used. A copy of the measurement data is to be maintained in the station files and made available to the FCC upon request.

(d) The licensee of a station transmitting an encoded subscription service must have at the transmitter control point the technical specifications for the system being used of both the aural and visual baseband signals and the transmitted radiofrequency signals, and have the necessary measuring and monitoring equipment, including transmitter output power measuring equipment, to determine that the transmissions conform to the advance approval specifications on file with the FCC. Full operating specifications for the system must be available to representatives of the FCC upon request.

(e) The operating power of the transmitters during encoded operations must be determined and maintained according to the procedures given in the application for advance approval.

(f) A station using an encoding system in accordance with the specifications filed with the application for advance approval is deemed to be exempted from those technical regulations of this subpart and subpart H to the extent they are specifically detailed in the application.

(g) No protection from interference of any kind will be afforded to reception of encoded subscription programming over that afforded reception of non-encoded signals.