

(viii) Create or designate a manual of style to be applied in an effort to achieve uniformity in presentation.

(ix) Employ frequent and regular evaluations to ensure standards are maintained.

(x) Inform video programmers of appropriate uses of real-time and offline captioning and strive to provide offline captioning for prerecorded programming.

(A) Encourage use of offline captioning for live and near-live programming that originally aired on television and re-feeds at a later time.

(B) Encourage use of offline captioning for all original and library prerecorded programming completed well in advance of its distribution on television.

(xi) For better coordination for ensuring high quality captions and for addressing problems as they arise, understand the roles and responsibilities of other stakeholders in the closed-captioning process, including video program distributors, video programmers, producers, equipment manufacturers, regulators, and viewers, and keep abreast of issues and developments in those sectors.

(l) [Reserved]

(m) *Video programmer certification.* (1) On or before July 1, 2017, or prior to the first time a video programmer that has not previously provided video programming shown on television provides video programming for television for the first time, whichever is later, and on or before July 1 of each year thereafter, each video programmer shall submit a certification to the Commission through a web form located on the Commission's Web site stating that:

(i) The video programmer provides closed captioning for its programs in compliance with the Commission's rules; and

(ii) The video programmers' programs either satisfy the caption quality standards of paragraph (j)(2) of this section; or in the ordinary course of business, the video programmer has adopted and follows the Best Practices set forth in paragraph (k)(1) of this section.

(2) If all of video programmer's programs are exempt from the closed captioning rules under one or more of the

exemptions set forth in this section, in lieu of the certification required by paragraph (m)(1) of this section, the video programmer shall submit a certification to the Commission through a web form located on the Commission's Web site stating that all of its programs are exempt from the closed captioning rules and specify each category of exemption claimed by the video programmer.

(3) If some of a video programmer's programs are exempt from the closed captioning rules under one or more of the exemptions set forth in this section, as part of the certification required by paragraph (m)(1) of this section, the video programmer shall include a certification stating that some of its programs are exempt from the closed captioning rules and specify each category of exemption claimed by the video programmer.

(4) A television broadcast station licensed pursuant to part 73 of this chapter or a low power television broadcast station licensed pursuant to part 74, subpart G, of this chapter, or the owner of either such station, is not required to provide a certification for video programming that is broadcast by the television broadcast station.

[62 FR 48493, Sept. 16, 1997, as amended at 63 FR 55962, Oct. 20, 1998; 64 FR 33424, June 23, 1999; 65 FR 58477, Sept. 29, 2000; 69 FR 72047, Dec. 10, 2004; 74 FR 1604, Jan. 13, 2009; 74 FR 46703, Sept. 11, 2009; 75 FR 7369, Feb. 19, 2010; 77 FR 19515, Mar. 30, 2012; 77 FR 48104, Aug. 13, 2012; 79 FR 17926, Mar. 31, 2014; 79 FR 77916, Dec. 29, 2014; 81 FR 57485, Aug. 23, 2016]

§ 79.2 Accessibility of programming providing emergency information.

(a) *Definitions.* (1) For purposes of this section, the definitions in §§ 79.1 and 79.3 apply.

(2) *Emergency information.* Information, about a current emergency, that is intended to further the protection of life, health, safety, and property, *i.e.*, critical details regarding the emergency and how to respond to the emergency. Examples of the types of emergencies covered include tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, tidal waves, earthquakes, icing conditions, heavy snows, widespread fires, discharge of toxic gases, widespread power failures, industrial explosions, civil disorders, school closings and changes in school bus

schedules resulting from such conditions, and warnings and watches of impending changes in weather.

NOTE TO PARAGRAPH (a)(2): Critical details include, but are not limited to, specific details regarding the areas that will be affected by the emergency, evacuation orders, detailed descriptions of areas to be evacuated, specific evacuation routes, approved shelters or the way to take shelter in one's home, instructions on how to secure personal property, road closures, and how to obtain relief assistance.

(b) Requirements for accessibility of programming providing emergency information.

(1) Video programming distributors must make emergency information, as defined in paragraph (a) of this section, that is provided in the audio portion of the programming accessible to persons with hearing disabilities by using a method of closed captioning or by using a method of visual presentation, as described in § 79.1.

(2) Video programming distributors and video programming providers must make emergency information, as defined in paragraph (a) of this section, accessible as follows:

(i) Emergency information that is provided visually during a regularly scheduled newscast, or newscast that interrupts regular programming, must be made accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired; and

(ii) Emergency information that is provided visually during programming that is neither a regularly scheduled newscast, nor a newscast that interrupts regular programming, must be accompanied with an aural tone, and beginning May 26, 2015 except as provided in paragraph (b)(6) of this section, must be made accessible to individuals who are blind or visually impaired through the use of a secondary audio stream to provide the emergency information aurally. Emergency information provided aurally on the secondary audio stream must be preceded by an aural tone and must be conveyed in full at least twice. Emergency information provided through use of text-to-speech ("TTS") technologies must be intelligible and must use the correct pronunciation of relevant information to allow consumers to learn about and respond to the emergency, including,

but not limited to, the names of shelters, school districts, streets, districts, and proper names noted in the visual information. The video programming distributor or video programming provider that creates the visual emergency information content and adds it to the programming stream is responsible for providing an aural representation of the information on a secondary audio stream, accompanied by an aural tone. Video programming distributors are responsible for ensuring that the aural representation of the emergency information (including the accompanying aural tone) gets passed through to consumers.

(3) This rule applies to emergency information primarily intended for distribution to an audience in the geographic area in which the emergency is occurring.

(4) Video programming distributors must ensure that emergency information does not block any closed captioning and any closed captioning does not block any emergency information provided by means other than closed captioning.

(5) Video programming distributors and video programming providers must ensure that aural emergency information provided in accordance with paragraph (b)(2)(ii) of this section supersedes all other programming on the secondary audio stream, including video description, foreign language translation, or duplication of the main audio stream, with each entity responsible only for its own actions or omissions in this regard.

(6) Beginning July 10, 2017, multichannel video programming distributors must ensure that any application or plug-in that they provide to consumers to access linear programming on tablets, smartphones, laptops, and similar devices over the MVPD's network as part of their multichannel video programming distributor services is capable of passing through to consumers an aural representation of the emergency information (including the accompanying aural tone) on a secondary audio stream.

(c) *Complaint procedures.* A complaint alleging a violation of this section may be transmitted to the Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau by any

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reasonable means, such as the Commission's online informal complaint filing system, letter, facsimile transmission, telephone (voice/TRS/TTY), Internet email, audio-cassette recording, and Braille, or some other method that would best accommodate the complainant's disability. The complaint should include the name of the video programming distributor or the video programming provider against whom the complaint is alleged, the date and time of the omission of emergency information, and the type of emergency. The Commission will notify the video programming distributor or the video programming provider of the complaint, and the distributor or the provider will reply to the complaint within 30 days.

[65 FR 26762, May 9, 2000, as amended at 65 FR 54811, Sept. 11, 2000; 78 FR 31797, May 24, 2013; 80 FR 39714, July 10, 2015]

§ 79.3 Video description of video programming.

(a) *Definitions.* For purposes of this section the following definitions shall apply:

(1) *Designated Market Areas (DMAs).* Unique, county-based geographic areas designated by The Nielsen Company, a television audience measurement service, based on television viewership in the counties that make up each DMA.

(2) *Video programming provider.* Any video programming distributor and any other entity that provides video programming that is intended for distribution to residential households including, but not limited to, broadcast or nonbroadcast television networks and the owners of such programming.

(3) *Video description/Audio Description.* The insertion of audio narrated descriptions of a television program's key visual elements into natural pauses between the program's dialogue.

(4) *Video programming.* Programming provided by, or generally considered comparable to programming provided by, a television broadcast station, but not including consumer-generated media.

(5) *Video programming distributor.* Any television broadcast station licensed by the Commission and any multi-channel video programming distributor (MVPD), and any other distributor of video programming for residential re-

ception that delivers such programming directly to the home and is subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission.

(6) *Prime time.* The period from 8 to 11 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 7 to 11 p.m. on Sunday local time, except that in the central time zone the relevant period shall be between the hours of 7 and 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 6 and 10 p.m. on Sunday, and in the mountain time zone each station shall elect whether the period shall be 8 to 11 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 7 to 11 p.m. on Sunday, or 7 to 10 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 6 to 10 p.m. on Sunday.

(7) *Live or near-live programming.* Programming performed either simultaneously with, or recorded no more than 24 hours prior to, its first transmission by a video programming distributor.

(8) *Children's Programming.* Television programming directed at children 16 years of age and under.

(b) The following video programming distributors must provide programming with video description as follows:

(1) Beginning July 1, 2015, commercial television broadcast stations that are affiliated with one of the top four commercial television broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, Fox, and NBC), and that are licensed to a community located in the top 60 DMAs, as determined by The Nielsen Company as of January 1, 2015, must provide 50 hours of video description per calendar quarter, either during prime time or on children's programming, and, beginning July 1, 2018, 37.5 additional hours of video description per calendar quarter between 6 a.m. and 11:59 p.m. local time, on each programming stream on which they carry one of the top four commercial television broadcast networks. If a station in one of these markets becomes affiliated with one of these networks after July 1, 2015, it must begin compliance with these requirements no later than three months after the affiliation agreement is finalized;

(2) [Reserved]

(3) Television broadcast stations that are affiliated or otherwise associated with any television network must pass through video description when the network provides video description and