



Complaints about Broadcast Journalism

The FCC receives a wide variety of comments and complaints about the accuracy or bias of news networks, stations, reporters, or commentators in how they cover – or sometimes opt not to cover – events. Other complaints concern the conduct of journalists in the gathering and reporting of news.

The FCC's authority to respond to these complaints is narrow in scope, and the agency is prohibited by law from engaging in censorship or infringing on First Amendment rights of the press. Moreover, the FCC cannot interfere with a broadcaster's selection and presentation of news or commentary.

What responsibilities do broadcasters have?

Broadcasters may not intentionally distort the news. The FCC states that "rigging or slanting the news is a most heinous act against the public interest."

What if I have comments or concerns about a specific news broadcast or commentary?

All comments and/or concerns about a specific news broadcast or commentary should be directed to the local station and network involved, so that the people responsible for making the programming decisions can become better informed about audience opinion.

What can the FCC do?

The FCC may act only when it has received documented evidence, such as testimony from persons who have direct personal knowledge of an intentional falsification of the news. Without such documented evidence, the FCC generally cannot intervene.

Filing a complaint

You have multiple options for filing a complaint with the FCC:

- File a complaint online at <https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov>
- By phone: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322); TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322); ASL: 1-844-432-2275
- By mail (please include your name, address, contact information and as much detail about your complaint as possible):

Federal Communications Commission
Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau
Consumer Inquiries and Complaints Division
45 L Street NE
Washington, DC 20554

Alternate formats

To request this article in an alternate format - braille, large print, Word or text document or audio - write or call us at the address or phone number at the bottom of the page, or send an email to fcc504@fcc.gov.

Last Reviewed: 12/27/19

