

Low Power FM Radio Scams

The FCC is aware of scams targeting low power FM radio station applicants. Applicants report they have received emails or letters offering to “jet start” an LPFM station or telling them to buy equipment or services that may not be useful or necessary. Perpetrators of these scams may refer to the equipment or station as a “Part 15 device” or “Part 15 transmitter.”

Part 15 devices or transmitters are low-power, non-licensed transmitters. Examples of these types of transmitters are cordless phones, baby monitors, garage door openers, wireless home security systems and hundreds of other types of common electronic equipment that utilize very little power. Operators of Part 15 devices are not required to obtain a license from the FCC to use them.

The scammers advertise the Part 15 devices as a means to start an LPFM radio station. Some perpetrators have advised potential applicants to use their expertise/services for a fee to prevent FCC rejection of their applications.

Ways to reduce risk

Don't be fooled into buying an unnecessary product or service. Buying a Part 15 device or transmitter will not automatically allow you to start an LPFM radio station. The FCC authorizes all licenses for LPFM radio stations. The license is free and is required before construction or operation of the station can begin.

To start an LPFM radio station, potential applicants must file an application during a certain time frame, when their applicable filing window is open. When new filing window dates are announced, notices are posted on the FCC's web page at www.fcc.gov/lpfm. Information about how to apply for a license is included there.

Consumer Help Center

For more information on consumer issues, visit the FCC's Consumer Help Center at www.fcc.gov/consumers.

Alternate formats

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