



Sponsorship Identification Rules

When a broadcast station transmits any matter for which money, service, or other valuable consideration is paid or promised to, or charged or accepted by such station, federal law and FCC rules require the broadcaster to announce, at the time of the broadcast, that such matter is sponsored, paid for, or furnished and the identification of the sponsor.

What the rules say

The Communications Act and the FCC's rules require that:

- When a broadcast station transmits any matter for which money, service, or other valuable consideration is paid or promised to, or charged or accepted by such station, the station, at the time of the broadcast, must announce: (1) that such matter is sponsored, paid for, or furnished, either in whole or in part; and (2) by whom or on whose behalf such consideration was supplied.
- In the case of broadcast matter advertising commercial products or services, an announcement stating the sponsor's corporate or trade name, or the name of the sponsor's product, when it is clear that the mention of the name of the product constitutes a sponsorship identification, is sufficient.
- When anyone provides or promises to provide money, service, or other valuable consideration to someone to include program matter in a broadcast, that fact must be disclosed in advance of the broadcast, ultimately to the station over which the matter is to be aired. Both the person providing or promising to provide the money, service, or other valuable consideration and the recipient are obligated to make this disclosure so that the station may broadcast the sponsorship identification announcement.
- Broadcast licensees must exercise reasonable diligence to obtain from their employees and from other persons with whom they deal directly in connection with any matter for broadcast information to enable such licensees to make required sponsorship identification announcements.

These rules apply to program material aired over broadcast radio and television stations. Some of these rules also may apply to cablecasts.

Filing a Complaint

If you suspect a violation of the sponsorship identification rule, you can file a complaint with the FCC. To assist the FCC in its review, the complaint should include the following:

- Details of the content of the broadcast;
- The date and time of the broadcast;
- Why you believe that payment or other consideration was provided, requiring the airing of a sponsorship identification announcement;
- The call sign of the broadcast station involved;
- The fact that no sponsorship identification was aired; and
- Any documents that you believe establish any of the foregoing.

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 12/30/19

