



FCC Broadcast license renewal guide, 2011-2014

All broadcast stations, including LPFMs, must renew their FCC license sometime between July 2011 and 2014. The process includes reading on air announcements at specific dates and times, as well as filing Form 303-S with the FCC.

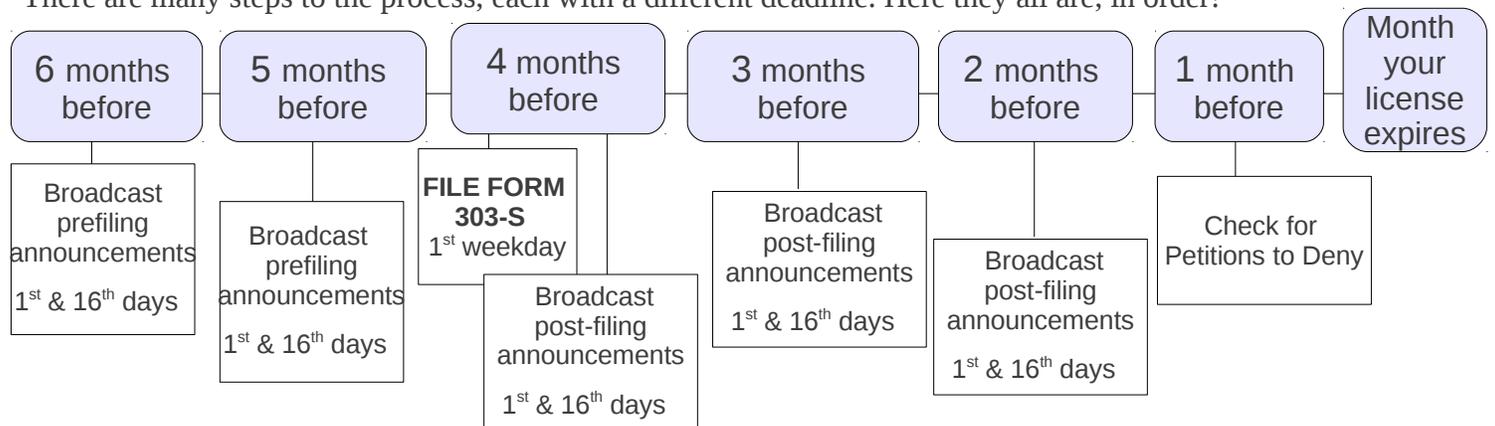
These instructions are for Low Power FM non commercial stations only. This is a guide prepared for LPFM stations by the Prometheus Radio Project to guide you through the process, but is not meant as legal advice. More information about the renewal process can be found at the FCC's website at:

<http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/renewal/index.html>

Step 1: Check your information in the FCC database, and find out your expiration date

Strangely enough, the date your license expires has nothing to do with when you got your license. **Your expiration date is based on the state your station is located in.** The earliest renewals start in June of 2011, and the process goes until 2014. Find your expiration date on the FCC website here: <http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/renewal/renewal-dates-by-date.pdf>

There are many steps to the process, each with a different deadline. Here they all are, in order!



You should also check if you have a current email and mailing address on file at the FCC as soon as possible. If you need to change your contact info, you can log in to the FCC's CDBS website and change it. It will be called an informal filing. Here are instructions from the FCC on that process:

http://licensing.fcc.gov/prod/cdbforms/prod/faq_informal.htm#3

The CDBS system is no picnic, but if you get started now, you'll be ready to use it to file your renewal application online.

Step 2: Broadcast Announcements on the air

Before filing your application you will need to notify listeners on the air that you have applied for renewal so they have a chance to object to your application(or sing your praises to the FCC!) You can read aloud the sample notice provided by the FCC here:

<http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/renewal/2003-06-pre-post-renewal-announcements.pdf>

Read these notices on the **1st and 16 days of the two months before** you file your renewal application.

At least 2 of these notices should be read between 7-9 AM and/or 4-6PM

Exceptions:

- If you are not on the air from 7-9am or 4-6 PM three of your announcements must be made in your first two hours of broadcasting.
- If your station is currently silent, you must publish the announcements in a newspaper of general circulation in the community or area served on the same scheduled dates as indicated above for operating stations.

Step 3: Fill out the renewal form - 303-S

First: Gather some information in advance to help you navigate the application process more quickly!

Previous Application:

The questions on the renewal form are the same or similar to the questions you answered when you applied. (Yes, here we go again!) Grab a copy of your previous application and think about what's changed since you applied for your station. You need to answer the questions based on your current board, but they will be the same questions you already answered. You can find your application online at the FCC's CDBS application search: http://licensing.fcc.gov/prod/cdbspubacc/prod/app_sear.htm When you search for your call sign, include -LP at the end, and make sure you look up your original application that was accepted for filing. (You should be able to tell by the dates and status.)

Station Information:

You will need the legal name of the licensee of your station, your facility ID, your FCC Registration Number (FRN), and your Community of License. These can be found in the FCC database, and should be on your old application, unless you have changed them through the FCC since you applied.

Environmental Protections:

If you have not changed your power or your antenna height since you applied for your station, you do not need to recalculate your RF levels, but if you have moved your transmitter you will need to know the wattage and height of your transmitter.

Once you have this info ready, you can take the plunge into the FCC's website, where you will fill out the application online. You can log in here:

<https://licensing.fcc.gov/cgi-bin/ws.exe/prod/cdbspubacc/forms/prod/cdbsmenu.htm>

Filling out the form:

(This mostly covers the content of the form, for help with the CDBS online system, read the FCC's guide here:

http://licensing.fcc.gov/prod/cdbspubacc/forms/prod/cdbspubacc_ug.htm

Section 1: **FILL OUT THIS SECTION**

1. Station Information.

Use the Legal Name of the licensee as it appears on your original application. (Unless you have applied for and received a transfer of license.)

The FCC will contact you if there is a problem with your application, so make sure your contact info is correct.

Make sure your correct FRN and facility id number are used (you can double check your previous application.)

2. Contact Representative

This should be the name and address of an individual the FCC can contact about the application. (If you are filling out the application, it may be you, but think about listing someone who will be at the station for the long term.)

3. Waiver of Fees

If you are operating an LPFM you should be a noncommercial educational licensee, or possibly a governmental entity, so check whichever describes you.

4. Purpose of the application

If this is your first try, check Renewal. If you have to amend your application later, you will check the Amendment box.

5. Facility Information

If you're an LPFM, you should be a Noncommercial Educational Facility, so check this box.

6. Service and Community of License

- a. Check the box for LPFM, and fill in your community of license. (This should be that same as what's on your original application, unless you have applied to move your station since you originally applied.)
- b. Check N/A, since you cannot hold a license for a translator and an LPFM.

7. Other Authorizations

Check N/A unless you are applying to renew an FM booster.

Section II. FILL OUT THIS SECTION

Get ready for some legal jargon in this section of the application. In order to certifying that you meet the requirements for renewal listed in each question, check YES. All the same requirements (like em or not) that are involved with applying for a broadcast license are also involved in applying for a renewal. If you need to check NO for one of these questions, you may be able to explain yourself in an Exhibit and still be renewed. **It's very important to be truthful on legal documents submitted to the FCC.**

- If you're experiencing some deja vu, its because these are mostly questions that appeared on your original application. If your organization and your board hasn't changed you should be able to provide the same answers.
- Many questions refer to the parties to your application. For non profit organizations, this refers to your executive officers, your board of directors, or anyone who holds more than 5% of the "votes," in governing your organization. Whoever plays this role in your official licensee are the parties to your application.

Onto the questions (or, lets get these "parties" started!)

1. Certification

Check yes to show your application is true as far as you know.

2. Character Issues

Check yes to both these questions to show that the parties to your application are not a part of any broadcast applications with unresolved character issues. (If someone on your board has applied for a broadcast license previously, you may want to check with them about this.)

3. Adverse Findings

Check yes to show that your licensee, and the individual parties to your application have not been found guilty of any of the following things:

- a criminal felony,
- unlawful mass media related antitrust or unfair competition activity,
- fraudulent statements to any government entity,
- unlawful racial, sex, or ethnic discrimination.

4. FCC violations

Check Yes to show your station has not violated any broadcast laws or FCC regulations. (If you have violated FCC regulations, you will need to explain the situation in an exhibit)

5. Alien Ownership and Control

Check Yes to show that at least 80 percent of the parties to your application are US citizens.

6. Anti-Drug Abuse Certification:

Check Yes to show that no parties to your application have been convicted of possessing or using illegal drugs. If someone has been convicted of this, you may still be able to answer yes if they were convicted of possession or use of illegal drugs, but did not lose benefits under 21 U.S.C. § 862. This is a very specific law that that authorizes a judge to take away certain federal benefits because of a conviction for distribution or possession of illegal drugs.

SKIP Sections III, and IV.

Section V. FILL OUT THIS SECTION

1. Station Information: this is repeated from Section I, so use the same information you did there.

2. Operational Status.

- a. Check Yes to show that you are currently broadcasting. If you are not broadcasting check no, and explain the reasons for your status in an attached exhibit. (You should also have filed for a Special Temporary Authority (STA) to be silent with the FCC.)
- b. Check N/A since LPFMs do not rebroadcast signals of other stations.
- c. Check N/A since LPFMs do not rebroadcast signals of other stations.

3. For FM Translator Applicants Only :

Check N/A for all these questions. (Unless you are also renewing a translator application, seek additional help or advice in this case.)

4. For Low Power TV Applicants Only:

Check N/A for this question.

5. Environmental Effects:

Check Yes to show that your transmitter has acceptable levels of RF exposure. If your transmitter placements and power level have not changed since your original application, you can check yes based on your previous application. If your transmitter has moved, you should fill out the Environmental Effects worksheet provided by the FCC and include it with your application.

That's the end of the form! Make sure you include any exhibits you might need, for example if you answered no to a certification and need to explain your answer, or if you filled out an RF worksheet because of changes in your tower position.

Step 4: Broadcast EVEN MORE announcements on the air

One more step, and you'll be done! After filing your application you must let your listeners know the good news that you've applied for a renewal, so they have another chance to object to your application to the FCC. You can read aloud the sample notice provided by the FCC here:

<http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/renewal/2003-06-pre-post-renewal-announcements.pdf>

Read these notices on the 1st and 16th days of the month in which you apply, and the two months after.

The notices must be read at the following times:

- 3 notices between 7-9am and/or 4-6pm
- 1 notice between 9am and Noon
- 1 notice between Noon and 4pm
- 1 notice between 7pm and Midnight

Exceptions:

- If you are not on the air from 7-9am or 4-6 PM three of your announcements must be made in your first two hours of broadcasting.
- If your station is currently silent, you must publish the announcements in a newspaper of general circulation in the community or area served on the same scheduled dates as indicated above for operating stations.

And you're done! If a petition to deny your application is filed within 3 months days of your renewal application, you should contact a lawyer, or call Prometheus if you do not have one. Also, the FCC may ask you for clarification on your application through email or by mail. Otherwise, throw a celebration with all the parties to your application, and wait for the FCC to notify you about your status.