

FCC Compliance – Key Notes for Programmers

Why This Matters

- FCC compliance is essential for protecting community radio.
- Recent regulatory shifts may impact noncommercial radio, requiring us to stay informed.
- Key figure: **Brendan Carr**, an FCC commissioner advocating for deregulation and scrutiny of public media.
- **Project 2025** proposes removing NPR, Pacifica, and other public stations' NCE status, cutting funding, and reallocating frequencies.

Potential Policy Changes & Their Impact

1. **Defunding the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB)**
 - Would eliminate federal funding, jeopardizing financial stability for NPR, Pacifica, and local community stations.
2. **Stripping NCE Status from Public Radio Stations**
 - Claims that public stations are ideological rather than educational.
 - Could remove reserved frequency protections, forcing stations to operate under commercial rules.
3. **Tightening FCC Regulations for Noncommercial Stations**
 - Stricter educational content requirements.
 - Increased scrutiny of programming compliance.
4. **Reallocating NCE Frequencies for Commercial Use**
 - Potential loss of community radio stations' spectrum rights.
5. **Legal Challenges Against Public Media**
 - Potential lawsuits claiming public media competes unfairly with private broadcasters.

Protecting Community Radio

- **Ensure Programming Meets Educational Standards.**
- **Diversify Funding to Reduce Dependence on CPB Grants.**
- **Maintain Compliance Records & Public Service Reports.**
- **Monitor FCC Changes & Advocate for Frequency Protections.**
- **Engage Local Support to Build Resistance Against Defunding.**

WSLR Noncommercial Compliance Guidelines

Legal ID

- **Must be aired at the top of every hour.**
 - *Example: "WSLR-LP 96.5 FM in Sarasota and WBPV-LP 100.1 FM in Bradenton."*

Underwriting Rules

- **No Paid Advertisements** – Funding comes from underwriting, grants, and listener support.
- **Underwriting Guidelines:**
 - No price information (e.g., "discounts," "specials," "Black Friday").
 - No calls to action (e.g., "Call now," "Visit today").
 - No inducements to buy (e.g., "award-winning," "best").
 - No qualitative or comparative language (e.g., "most delicious," "cheapest").
 - **Underwriting scripts must be approved by the Program Director.**
 - **30-second limit** for underwriting spots.

Playola & Plugola (Serious FCC Violations)

- **Playola:** Accepting compensation (money, tickets, gifts) in exchange for airplay or promotions **without disclosure**.
- **Plugola:** Promoting a personal business interest on air **without disclosure**.
- **Violations can result in:**
 - **Fines, license revocation, and even felony charges.**
 - If unsure, **ask the Program Director.**

Political Endorsements & Content Disclaimers

- **No endorsements or opposition of candidates or parties.**
- **Personal opinions must be stated clearly as personal views.**
 - *Example: "The following views are my own and do not necessarily reflect those of WSLR."*
- **Sensitive content requires disclaimers at the start and end of the show.**
 - *Example: "The views expressed in this program do not necessarily reflect WSLR."*

Guest Guidelines

- **Guests CAN discuss their work, but CANNOT promote or mention pricing.**
- **No calls to action.** Avoid "Come see me at..." "Buy my album..." "Visit our store..."
- **Before going on air, review the Guest Instruction Guide.**
 - Helps guests understand FCC rules.

Final Takeaways

- **FCC compliance protects WSLR and our ability to amplify independent voices.**
- **Following these guidelines ensures we maintain our license and mission.**
- **Your role as a programmer is vital to the integrity of this community station.**
- **If unsure, ask the Program Director—transparency is key,**