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INFORMATION BULLETIN



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

FM BROADCAST STATION SELF - INSPECTION CHECKLIST

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FM SELF-INSPECTION CHECKLIST

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the FM Broadcast Station Self-Inspection Checklist.

The Enforcement Bureau (EB) of the FCC is committed to improving licensee compliance with the broadcast regulations. We do this through a combination of educational and enforcement efforts. The enforcement effort usually involves an on-scene station inspection conducted by FCC personnel. Most on-scene inspections are conducted without prior notification to the station licensee.

This checklist has been developed to assist broadcast station management in conducting a self-inspection of their station. It provides an opportunity for the broadcaster to review and correct any deficiencies associated with the operation of a station without an actual on-scene visit by the Commission.

While not all broadcast regulations are covered by this checklist, you will be able to assess your compliance with the most frequently violated broadcast regulations. Each question contains a reference to the relevant rule section(s) to facilitate your review. These references pertain to Title 47 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) Parts 11, 17 and 73.

The following boxes are provided throughout the checklist to aid the broadcaster in determining the stations compliance:

Y = **YES**. The station is in compliance with this item.

P = The station is not in compliance with this item. Corrective action is **PENDING**.

N/A = **NOT APPLICABLE** to this station. If this response is not provided then this question is applicable to all FM stations.

All of the above responses are not applicable to every question. Only appropriate responses will be provided for each question.

You will note that the above responses do not include a "NO" answer. Any question in which a "NO" answer is applicable would be a violative condition requiring corrective action. Stations encountering such situations should take immediate steps to correct the problem.

WHERE TO GET ASSISTANCE, FORMS and OTHER INFORMATION

On June 3, 1996, the FCC established a national call center in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. This call center is operated by the FCC Consumer and Governmental Affairs Bureau (CGB). This facility is capable of providing services for the hearing impaired and the center is staffed full-time with bi-lingual (English and Spanish) Specialists. The toll free telephone number for this call center is 1-888-CALLFCC (1-888-225-5322).

If you have any questions about this self inspection checklist or the applicability of any regulation to your operation, you may contact the FCC Call Center. **DO NOT MAIL THIS CHECKLIST TO THE FCC FOR OUR REVIEW!**

Information and materials relating to the Emergency Alert System (EAS) may be found through the FCC, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau web page at <http://www.fcc.gov/pshs/services/eas/index.html>.

Requests for any [FCC form](#) or bulletin can be directed to the Commission's forms distribution contractor at 1-800-418-FORM (1-800-418-3676). This is a voice mail answering system. You should have the number of the form available when you call.

Some forms, bulletins and other documents, including a copy of this checklist, are also available through the Internet by visiting the FCC Homepage at "<http://www.fcc.gov>". Please check this Homepage for the latest update to the checklist. Some forms may also be filed through the use of the Internet.

The FCC, Media Bureau, Audio Division maintains a webpage at "<http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio>". This page provides information relating to radio broadcast, including a list of current telephone numbers available for inquiries. Current rules pertaining to AM and FM stations are maintained at "<http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/bickel/amfmrule.html>". Information on EEO requirements for broadcasters are maintained at <http://www.fcc.gov/mb/policy/eo> or by calling EEO staff at (202)418-1450.

The FCC maintains a fax on demand service at (202)418-2830. Through this service you may obtain information on the following:

Daily Digest	News Releases	Speeches	
Fact Sheets	Current List of Events	Public Notices	Auctions

The government printing office (<http://www.gpo.gov>) maintains current copies of the Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.) in both printed and electronic form. A beta online version of Title 47 C.F.R. Parts 11, 17 and 73 can be found at:

Part 11: http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=dfb774ab024c5b210621bfd118f08f1&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title47/47cfr11_main_02.tpl

Part 17: http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=dfb774ab024c5b210621bfd118f08f1&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title47/47cfr17_main_02.tpl

Part 73: http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/cgi/t/text/text-idx?c=ecfr&sid=dfb774ab024c5b210621bfd118f08f1&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title47/47cfr73_main_02.tpl

SECTION I: ADMINISTRATIVE AND NON-TECHNICAL

- A. **AUTHORIZATIONS:** The station license, construction permit, renewal certificate, auxiliary transmitter authorization, special temporary authorization (STA), and/or any other instrument of authorization shall be readily available and easily accessible at the station's principal control point. Renewal certificates should be associated with the corresponding station authorization.
[See [73.1230\(a\)](#), [73.1635](#), [73.1670](#), [73.3533](#), [73.3536](#), [73.3537](#) and [73.3539](#)]

1. Y P AUTHORIZATIONS: Are current station authorizations posted or readily available at the principal control point for the station?

B. STATION LOGS/RECORDS:

STATION LOGS include entries pertaining to equipment status, equipment calibration, the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and, when applicable, the recording of tower light outages. STATION RECORDS include, but are not limited to chief operator designations and equipment performance measurements.

The station logs and records are to be kept in an orderly and legible manner, in suitable form and with sufficient detail. Station logs and records are to be retained for a period of two years, unless specified otherwise, and they shall be made available for inspection or duplication at the request of the FCC or its representatives. Required logs and records are to be readily available for inspection.

[See [73.1225](#), [73.1226](#), [73.1590](#), [73.1800](#), [73.1820](#) and [73.1840](#)]

2. Y P LOGS/RECORDS: Are required station logs retained for a period of 2 years?
[See [73.1840\(a\)](#)]

3. Y P AVAILABILITY: Are station logs/records readily available for inspection and/or duplication at the request of the FCC or its representatives?
[See [73.1225](#) and [73.1226](#)]

4. Y P N/A EQUIPMENT PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENTS: Are the latest Equipment Performance Measurements maintained and readily available? [See [73.1590\(a\)](#)]

5. Y P CLARITY: Are the station logs legible and in such detail that they clearly document any problems that may have occurred at the station? [See [73.1800\(b\)](#)]

SECTION I: Continued

C. CHIEF OPERATORS: Each station must designate a chief operator. The designation is to be in writing with a copy posted with the station authorization. Agreements with chief operators serving on a contract basis must be in writing with a copy kept in the station files. The chief operator is to review the station logs at least once each week to determine if required entries are being made correctly and to **SIGN AND DATE** the log upon completion of the review. The chief operator is also responsible for inspection and calibration of the transmission system, monitors, metering and control systems in addition to any equipment performance measurements or other tests as specified in the rules or terms of station authorization. [See [73.1870](#)]

NOTE: An electronic signature is acceptable in lieu of a written signature for those making, or reviewing, entries in station logs and records which are maintained on digital media.

- 6. Y P CHIEF OPERATOR DESIGNATION: Has the licensee designated a person to serve as the station chief operator? [See [73.1870\(a & b\)](#)]
- 7. Y P DESIGNATION POSTING: Is the designation in writing with a copy of the document posted or readily available? [See [73.1870\(b\)](#)]
- 8. Y P STATION LOG REVIEW: Does the station's chief operator review the station logs at least once each week to determine if required entries are being made? [See [73.1870\(c\)](#)]
- 9. Y P SIGNING STATION LOGS: Does the chief operator or a designee date and sign the logs upon completion of the weekly review of these documents? [See [73.1870\(c\)](#)]

D. STATION IDENTIFICATION: Station identification shall be made at the beginning and ending of each period of operation, and hourly, as close to the hour as feasible, at a natural break in program offerings. The identification shall consist of the station's call letters immediately followed by the community of license. Any reference to additional communities must be made after the community of license. The name of the licensee, or the station frequency, channel number, or both, may be inserted between the call letters and community of license. No other insertion is permissible. Simulcasted AM and FM stations may identify jointly if owned by the same licensee. [See [73.1201](#)]

- 10. Y P IDENTIFICATION: Is the station identification made in accordance with [73.1201](#)?

SECTION I: Continued

E. TELEPHONE ACCESS TO STATION: Each station must maintain a local or toll free telephone number within its community of license. Stations operating from studio locations outside of the community of license must make sure residents in the community have access to this number. [See [73.1125](#)]

11. Y P TELEPHONE ACCESS: Does the station maintain a local or toll-free telephone number in its community of license? [See [73.1125\(e\)](#)]

F. PUBLIC INSPECTION FILE: All stations are to maintain a public inspection file at the main studio of the station. The file shall be available for public inspection at any time during regular business hours. Regular business hours are generally any eight hour period between the hours of 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. The licensee may require members of the public to provide personal information as a prerequisite to granting access to the public file. However, such personal information is limited to the name and address of the person(s) seeking access to the file. The licensee may not require identification of the person's organizations or affiliations they may be associated with.

All or part of the file may be maintained in a computer database as long as the computer terminal is made available to members of the public who wish to review it. If a station is concerned about documents being stolen or destroyed, then copies of required documents may be placed into the file in lieu of the originals.

The contents of the file are to be made available within a reasonable time for printing or machine reproduction upon request made in person, provided the requesting party pays the reasonable cost of reproduction. The licensee may require guarantee of payment in advance for any such requests. The licensee shall also mail photocopies of documents from the file upon request made in person, by telephone, by mail or by e-mail, with all postage paid by the station. [See [73.3526](#) for commercial station public file rules and [73.3527](#) for non-commercial station public file rules]

12. Y P FILE MAINTAINED: Does the station maintain a separate public inspection file at the main studio for each station authorized? [[73.3526\(a\)&\(b\)](#) or [73.3527\(a\)&\(b\)](#)]

13. Y P AVAILABILITY: Is the file available for public inspection at any time during regular business hours? [See [73.3526\(c\)](#) or [73.3527\(c\)](#)]

14. Y P REPRODUCTION: Can all of the materials contained in the public file be reproduced and provided upon request made either in person, by phone or by mail? [See [73.3526\(c\)](#) or [73.3527\(c\)](#)]

15. Y P AUTHORIZATION: Is a copy of the current FCC authorization to construct or operate the station being maintained in the file? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(1\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(1\)](#)]

SECTION I: Continued

16. Y P APPLICATIONS: Does the public file contain copies of all applications, exhibits, letters, initial and final decisions in hearing cases, and other documents pertaining to the station which were filed with the Commission and which are open for public inspection at the FCC? This includes applications granted pursuant to a waiver.
[See [73.3526\(e\)\(2\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(2\)](#)]
Note: Applications retained in file until final action taken on the application.
17. Y P N/A CITIZEN AGREEMENTS: For commercial stations, are copies of any written agreements with local viewers or listeners (citizen agreements) maintained in the file for the term of the agreement? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(3\)](#)]
18. Y P N/A CONTOUR MAPS: Is a copy of any service contour map, submitted with any application tendered for filing with the FCC, together with any other information in the application showing service contours and/or main studio and transmitter location in the file? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(4\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(3\)](#)]
19. Y P N/A RETENTION OF CONTOUR MAPS: Are the station's contour maps retained for as long as they reflect current, accurate information regarding the station?
[See [73.3526\(e\)\(4\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(3\)](#)]
20. Y P N/A OWNERSHIP REPORTS: For station licensees who are not sole proprietorships, or partnerships comprised entirely of natural persons, does the public file contain copies of ownership reports and supplemental ownership reports filed with the Commission, including all exhibits, letters, and other documents associated with these filings? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(5\)](#), [73.3527\(e\)\(4\)](#) and [73.3615](#)]
21. Y P N/A OWNERSHIP INFORMATION: For non-commercial stations, does the ownership information on file with the Commission reflect the current ownership (board members, officers, etc.) of this station? [See [73.3527\(e\)\(4\)](#) and [73.3615\(d,e&f\)](#)]
22. Y P N/A CONTRACTS: For all stations, does the public file contain either a copy of the contracts listed in the latest ownership reports or an up to date list of such contracts for as long as they are in effect?
[See [73.3526\(e\)\(5\)](#), [73.3527\(e\)\(4\)](#), [73.3613](#), [73.3615\(a\)\(4\)\(i\)](#) and [73.3615\(d\)\(3\)](#)]
23. Y P RETENTION OF OWNERSHIP REPORTS: Are the ownership reports retained until a new, complete ownership report is filed with the FCC with a copy placed in the public inspection file? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(5\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(4\)](#)]
24. Y P N/A POLITICAL: Does the licensee have a complete record of all requests for broadcast time made by or on behalf of candidates for public office, together with an appropriate notation showing the disposition made by the licensee of such requests, and the charges made, if any, if the request was granted?
[See [73.1943](#) and either [73.3526\(e\)\(6\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(5\)](#)]

SECTION I: Continued

25. Y P N/A FREE POLITICAL TIME: If free time was provided for use by or on behalf of such candidates, has a record of the free time that was provided been placed into the file? [See [73.1943](#) and either [73.3526\(e\)\(6\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(5\)](#)]
26. Y P N/A RETENTION OF POLITICAL RECORDS: Are these records retained for a period of two years? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(6\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(5\)](#)]
27. Y P N/A EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO): Does the station file have a copy of each annual EEO report filed since the last station license renewal? [See [73.2080](#) and either [73.3526\(e\)\(7\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(6\)](#)]
28. Y P N/A RETENTION OF EEO REPORTS: Are these reports retained until the next grant of the station renewal application has become final? [See [73.2080](#) and either [73.3526\(e\)\(7\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(6\)](#)]
29. Y P PUBLIC AND BROADCASTING: Does the station file have a copy of the most recent version of the manual entitled "The Public and Broadcasting" available in the file at all times? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(8\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(7\)](#)]
http://www.fcc.gov/mb/audio/decdoc/public_and_broadcasting.html
30. Y P N/A LETTERS FROM PUBLIC: For commercial stations, does the licensee retain all written comments and suggestions received from the public, including e-mail, regarding operation of their station unless the writer requested that the correspondence not be made public or the licensee felt that it must be excluded because of the nature of its content, such as a defamatory or obscene letter? E-mail copies may be kept either on the computer or on paper. [See [73.1202](#) and [73.3526\(e\)\(9\)](#)]
31. Y P N/A RETENTION OF LETTERS: For commercial stations, are all letters retained for three years from the date received? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(9\)](#)]
32. Y P N/A INVESTIGATIVE MATERIAL: Does the station have any material having a substantial bearing on a matter which is the subject of an FCC investigation or complaint to the FCC of which the licensee has been advised? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(10\)](#) or [73.3527\(11\)](#)]
33. Y P N/A RETENTION OF INVESTIGATIVE MATERIAL: Has this material been retained until the licensee is notified in writing that the material may be discarded? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(10\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(11\)](#)]
34. Y P ISSUES-PROGRAM LISTS: Has the licensee maintained a list of programs that have provided the station's most significant treatment of community issues during the preceding calendar quarter? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(12\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(8\)](#)]
35. Y P FILED QUARTERLY: Was the issues-programs list filed by the tenth day of the succeeding calendar quarter (e.g. January 10, April 10, July 10, & October 10)? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(12\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(8\)](#)]
36. Y P NARRATIVES: Do the issues-programs lists include a brief narrative describing what issues were given significant treatment and the programming that provided this treatment? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(12\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(8\)](#)]
37. Y P DESCRIPTIONS: Does the description of the programs include at a minimum the time, date, duration and title of each program in which the issue was treated? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(12\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(8\)](#)]

SECTION I: Continued

38. Y P RETENTION OF ISSUES-PROGRAMS LISTS: Are the issues-programs lists retained until the next grant of the station renewal application has become final? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(12\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(8\)](#)]
39. Y P N/A DONOR LISTS: For non-commercial stations, does the licensee maintain a list of donors supporting specific programs? [See [73.3527\(e\)\(9\)](#)]
40. Y P N/A RETENTION OF DONOR LISTS: For non-commercial stations, does the licensee retain such donor list(s) for a period of two years? [See [73.3527\(e\)\(9\)](#)]
41. Y P N/A TIME BROKERAGE AGREEMENTS: For commercial stations, does the public file contain a copy of every agreement or contract involving time brokerage of the licensee's station, or of another station by the licensee? Confidential or proprietary information may be removed. See [73.3526\(e\)\(14\)](#) and [73.3613\(d\)\(1\)](#)
42. Y P N/A RETENTION OF TIME BROKERAGE AGREEMENTS: Are these records maintained as long as the contract or agreement is in force? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(14\)](#)]
43. Y P N/A JOINT SALES AGREEMENTS: For commercial stations, does the public file contain a copy of every agreement involving the joint sale of advertising time involving this station? Confidential or proprietary information may be removed. [See [73.3526\(e\)\(16\)](#) and [73.3613\(d\)\(2\)](#)]
44. Y P N/A RETENTION OF JOINT SALES AGREEMENTS: While there is currently no rule indicating a specific retention period, these agreements should be maintained as long as the agreement is in force.
45. Y P N/A LOCAL ANNOUNCEMENTS: Was a statement certifying compliance with the local public notice filing announcements placed into the file within 7 days of the last day of broadcast of such announcements? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(13\)](#), [73.3527\(e\)\(10\)](#) and [73.3580\(h\)](#)]
46. Y P N/A RETENTION OF LOCAL ANNOUNCEMENTS: Was the statement certifying compliance with [73.3580\(h\)](#) retained until final action is taken on the application to which it refers to? [See [73.3526\(e\)\(13\)](#) or [73.3527\(e\)\(10\)](#)]

G. MAIN STUDIO PRESENCE: Each station must maintain a full time managerial and non-managerial presence at the main studio during normal business hours so members of the public can reach responsible station personnel and receive access to the public inspection file. In addition, a main studio presence allows the licensee to make the station available for inspection at any time during normal business hours. Normal hours are typically an 8 hour period between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. local time Monday through Friday. This requirement is separate from the unattended transmitter operation rules. [See [73.1125](#) and [73.1225\(a\)](#)]

47. Y P MAIN STUDIO PRESENCE: Does the licensee maintain a human presence of at least 8 hours per week day at the station's main studio? [See [73.1125](#) and [73.1225\(a\)](#)]

Note: Full time in this context is the entire time the studio is open to the public and not the full or part time status of any one employee.

SECTION I: Continued

H. **MAIN STUDIO LOCATION:** The main studio for each station shall be located within the principal community signal strength contour of any broadcast station licensed to that same community or 25 miles from the reference coordinates of the center of its community of license, whichever the licensee chooses. [See [73.1125](#)]

48. Y P **MAIN STUDIO LOCATION:** Is the main studio for this station located within the principal community contour of any station or within 25 miles of the reference center? [See [73.1125](#)]

I. **SUBCHANNEL LEASING AGREEMENTS:** FM subchannel leasing agreements for subsidiary communications are to be kept at the station and made available for inspection by any authorized representative of the FCC upon request. [See [73.1226\(c\)](#) and [73.3613](#)]

49. Y P N/A **SCA AGREEMENTS:** Are all subchannel leasing agreements maintained and available at the station? [See [73.1226\(c\)\(2\)](#)]

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