



NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

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AMENDED RULES BECOME EFFECTIVE THAT ENSURE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES ARE ABLE TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN FCC PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

Washington, DC – On April 28, the Commission's amended rules to ensure that persons with disabilities are able to participate fully in FCC programs and activities became effective.

The rules were adopted in an Order (FCC 03-48) on March 4 and published in the *Federal Register* (68 Fed Reg 22315) on April 28

The amended rules include adoption of the *Section 504 Programs & Activities Accessibility Handbook*, which is a clear and comprehensive collection of guidelines, information, and procedures to ensure that the Commission is accessible to individuals with disabilities. The *Handbook* will be particularly helpful for planning events so that persons with disabilities will be able to participate fully. The FCC has long been committed to fostering an attitude of inclusion and a commitment to access in all Commission programs and activities.

The *Handbook* is available to the public for viewing and downloading on the FCC's website at http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/dro/section_504.html. It is also available in PDF, HTML, text, and electronic downloadable braille.

The new rules, in part:

- State that requests for accommodation requiring the assistance of other persons (e.g., an American Sign Language interpreter) should be made five business days before a Commission event. If the request is made on less than five days notice, however, the Commission will make every effort to secure the services of a person to provide the requested assistance' ;
- Specify that the Commission will conduct a self-evaluation process every three years. During the reviews the Commission will seek public comment on the accessibility of its programs and activities as required by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

- Amend the language to reflect the language in the Americans with Disabilities Act. This included replacing terms “handicap,” “individual with a handicap,” and “individuals with handicaps” with the terms “disability,” “individual with a disability,” and “individuals with disabilities,” respectively.

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