



CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE VIRTUAL MEETING

**Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC**

**Monday, April 27, 2020
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.**

10:30 AM

Welcome and Call to Order

- Steve Pociask, CAC
Chairperson
- Debra Berlyn, CAC Vice
Chairperson

10:35 AM

**Introductions and Meeting
Logistics**

- Steve Pociask, CAC
Chairperson
- Scott Marshall, CAC
Designated Federal Officer

10:40 AM

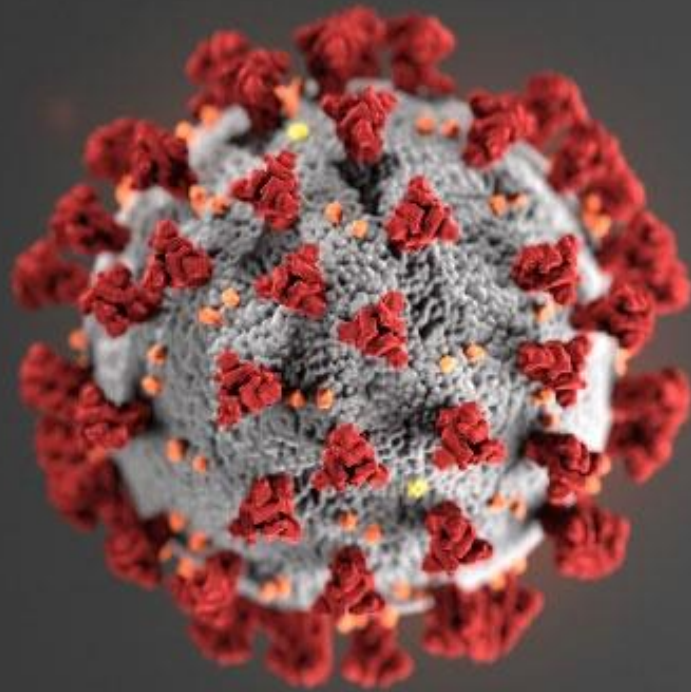
**Overview of FCC
Presentations**

- Patrick Webre, Chief, CGB

10:45 AM

**Network Performance During
COVID-19 (Public Safety and
Homeland Security Bureau and
Wireless Telecommunications
Bureau)**

- Justin N. Cain, Acting Chief,
Operations and Emergency
Management Division, PSHSB
- Charles Mathias, Associate Chief,
WTB
- C. Sean Spivey, Legal and Policy
Advisor, Office of the Bureau
Chief, WTB



COVID-19: COMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY SUPPORT

April 27, 2020

Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau
Federal Communications Commission





OVERVIEW

- **FCC purpose is to “make available to all the people of the United States, a rapid, efficient, Nation-wide, and world-wide wire and radio communication service for the purpose of the national defense [and] safety of life and property.” See 47 U.S.C. § 151.**
- **FCC participates in the whole-of-government response, as outlined in the National Response Framework.**



INDUSTRY OUTREACH

- **FCC, in coordination with DHS CISA, has been conducting outreach calls to industry since March 3, 2020.**
 - **Alltice, AT&T, Charter, Century Link, Comcast, Competitive Carriers Association, ComTech, Cox, Intrado, National Association of Broadcasters, Sprint, T-Mobile, U.S. Cellular, U.S. Telecom, and Verizon.**
- **Topics**
 - **Pandemic / Business Continuity Preparedness and Planning**
 - **Network Performance**
 - **Network Capacity**
 - **Usage**
 - **Industry Concerns**



OBSERVATIONS

- Each organization is a member of the Communications Information Sharing and Analysis Center and participates in weekly DHS National Coordinating Center for Communications Director Calls. The Comm-ISAC has established a Pandemic Response Working Group which meets every Monday at 10:00 AM to discuss industry concerns.
- Each major organization maintains and has implemented a formalized continuity or pandemic response plan, travel restrictions, and aggressive telework schedules.
- Communications providers report that congestion has not been a major issue.



OBSERVATIONS (CONT'D)

- Carriers have programs in-place or are working to implement programs to aid low-income families and schools in low-income neighborhoods to augment communications capabilities should network communications needs change due to COVID-19 impacts (i.e. telework and remote access to school resources).
- Primary concerns are unforeseen business continuity issues brought about by the impacts of COVID-19; state and local regulations and actions that would prevent companies from implementing remote/telework programs; and physical access to restore communications in quarantined areas.
- FCC is coordinating with DHS NCC to work with carriers, FEMA, and State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial jurisdictions to synchronize preparedness planning and avoid potential access or telework restrictions.



FCC ACTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- FCC Chairman Pai asked broadband and telephone service providers to take the Keep Americans Connected Pledge. For 60 days, providers pledge to:
 1. not terminate service to any residential or small business customers because of their inability to pay their bills due to the disruptions caused by the coronavirus pandemic;
 2. waive any late fees that any residential or small business customers incur because of their economic circumstances related to the coronavirus pandemic; and
 3. open its Wi-Fi hotspots to any American who needs them.
- FCC has recommended that providers make network performance information available to the public.
- FCC took actions to increase funding for telehealth (<https://www.fcc.gov/covid-19-telehealth-program>)
- FCC took actions to increase funding for Rural Health Care (<https://www.fcc.gov/general/rural-health-care-program>)

**ALL FCC COVID-19 RELATED ACTIVITIES ARE
AVAILABLE AT**

[HTTPS://WWW.FCC.GOV/CORONAVIRUS](https://www.fcc.gov/coronavirus)

Special Temporary Authority

Granting Wireless Service Providers Additional Spectrum to Support Increased Broadband Usage in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

- ▶ Charles Mathias - Associate Bureau Chief, WTB
- ▶ C. Sean Spivey - Legal & Policy Advisor, WTB

Applications for Special Temporary Authority

What are STAs?

An application for special temporary authority (“STA”) allows an applicant to obtain immediate or temporary operation of certain radio facilities. An STA may be granted in the following circumstances:

1. In emergency situations, such as natural disasters;
2. To permit restoration or relocation of existing facilities to continue communication service;
3. For a temporary, non-recurring service where a regular authorization is not appropriate; and
4. In other situations involving circumstances which are of such extraordinary nature that delay in the initiation of temporary operation would seriously prejudice the public interest.

See section 1.931 of the FCC’s rules for more details on STAs.

Applications for Special Temporary Authority

STAs in the COVID-19 Era

The FCC has granted STAs to a number of fixed and mobile wireless companies to use additional spectrum in order to ensure that they are able to meet their customers' needs:

- [AT&T](#) - The FCC granted numerous STAs to AT&T for the use of [AWS spectrum](#) and for certain Fixed Service links.
- [T-Mobile](#) - The FCC granted numerous emergency STAs to T-Mobile to use additional 600 MHz spectrum to help meet increased consumer demand.
- [Verizon](#) - The FCC granted numerous STAs to Verizon for the use of [AWS spectrum](#) and for certain Fixed Service links.
- [U.S. Cellular](#) - The FCC granted several STAs to U.S. Cellular to use AWS spectrum to provide additional capacity to customers in several states.
- [Rural Carriers](#) - The FCC granted STAs to Bluegrass Cellular (KY) and Union Wireless (WY) to use AWS spectrum to increase mobile wireless broadband capacity available in their service areas.
- [WISPs](#) - The FCC has granted more than 75 STAs to wireless internet service providers (WISPs) seeking to use the lower portion of the 5.9 GHz band to provide fixed wireless broadband service, primarily to rural communities.

Applications for Special Temporary Authority

STAs to Expand Connectivity on Tribal Lands

The FCC has also granted COVID-19-related STAs for 2.5 GHz spectrum to provide broadband service on Tribal Lands, where the digital divide is particularly acute:

- **A: SHIWI College & Career Readiness Center** - On March 30, the FCC granted an STA to provide wireless broadband service over the reservation of the Pueblo of Zuni in New Mexico, in light of increased demand due to the pandemic.
- **Navajo Nation** - On April 17, the FCC granted an STA to allow the Navajo Nation to use unassigned spectrum in the 2.5 GHz band to provide wireless broadband service over its reservation (the Nation is located within parts of Arizona, New Mexico, and Utah).
- The FCC has also granted STAs to NTUA Wireless, LLC to use 700 MHz band spectrum to provide service to the Navajo Nation.

11:05 AM

**Promoting Telehealth and
Distance Learning During
COVID-19 (Wireline
Competition Bureau)**

- Adam Copeland, Associate Chief,
WCB
- Gabriela L. Gross, Deputy Chief,
Telecommunications Access Policy
Division, WCB
- Chas Eberle, Senior Counsel,
Telecommunications Access Policy
Division, WCB

Rural Health Care Program-Related Actions the FCC Has Undertaken to Assist with the COVID-19 Pandemic



Adam Copeland

Associate Bureau Chief

Wireline Competition Bureau

Federal Communications Commission

* This presentation is for informational purposes only; the Commission's Orders implementing these actions represent the binding determinations of the Commission.

Commission Order funding all Funding Year (FY) 2019 program demand (March 13, 2020)

Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) waiver of the RHC (and E-Rate) gift rules (March 18, 2020) (Expires September 30, 2020)

- Enables RHC program participants to solicit and accept equipment and/or services from service providers to address COVID-19-related needs
- Permits service providers to forego payment or accept partial payment of the non-discount share of RHC program supported services to ease financial burdens on health care providers responding to COVID-19

WCB additional waiver order (March 26, 2020)

- Issues a series of waivers to assist rural health care providers in maintaining their focus on dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic rather than administrative matters connected to the RHC Program

Keeping Americans Connected & E-Rate Program COVID-19 –Related Relief



Gabriela L. Gross

Deputy Division Chief, E-Rate Program
Telecommunications Access Policy Division
Wireline Competition Bureau
Federal Communications Commission

* This presentation is for informational purposes only; the Commission's Orders implementing these actions represent the binding determinations of the Commission.

The FCC is committed to supporting remote learning efforts during the coronavirus pandemic.

- **Keep Americans Connected Pledge:**
- More than 700 companies and associations have signed the Keep Americans Connected Pledge, ensuring that Americans do not lose their broadband or telephone connectivity as a result of these exceptional circumstances.

- **E-Rate Program COVID-19 –Related Relief:**
- The FCC is also working to help schools and libraries that participate in the E-Rate program transition to online learning by issuing guidance and waiving and extending several program rules and deadlines.
- Gift Rule Waiver
- Extension of the FY2020 Application Filing Window
- One-Year Extension of the Service Implementation Deadline for Special Construction to Deploy Fiber
- Community Use

**11:25 AM Consumer and Governmental
Affairs Bureau Update: Focus on
CGB Response to COVID-19
Pandemic**

- Mark Stone, Deputy Chief,
CGB
- Barbara Esbin, Deputy Chief,
CGB
- Diane Burstein, Deputy Chief,
CGB
- Eduard Bartholme, Associate
Chief, CGB

11:50 AM

Consideration of Truth-in-Billing Recommendation

- Joslyn Day, Co-Chair of the Truth-in-Billing Working Group
- Vonda Long-Dillard, Co-Chair of the Truth-in-Billing Working Group

**12:10 PM CAC Member Discussion and
Tentative Details for Next
Meeting**

12:20 AM Comments from the Public

12:30 PM Adjournment

THANK YOU!

<https://www.fcc.gov/consumer-advisory-committee>