

<b>FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION</b> Washington, D.C. 20554  <b>FCC DIRECTIVE</b>	TITLE	
	<b>FCC Directives System</b>	
	Directive Number: FCCINST 1114.4	Effective Date: September 2024

1. **PURPOSE:** This directive sets forth the Federal Communication Commission’s (“Commission” or “FCC”) policies, procedures, and responsibilities relating to drafting, modifying, amending, and implementing agency-wide policies, procedures, requirements, and other information of general applicability issued to Commission employees through the use of directives. Directives are the primary means within the FCC to issue, establish, and describe agency policies, organization, responsibilities, methods, and procedures for internal activities. This directive does not affect the authority of any official to make substantive policy or issue regulations. It affects only the methods, formats, and procedures for ensuring uniformity, orderliness, and completeness in the promulgation and distribution of policy, including regulations, where appropriate.
2. **CANCELLATION:** This instruction supersedes FCCINST 1114.3, FCC Directives System, dated July, 2024.
3. **SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY:** This directive applies to headquarters and field units.
4. **AUTHORITY:** The Managing Director is authorized to administer directives under 47 C.F.R. § 0.11(a)(2) of the Commission’s rules.
5. **POLICY:**
  - A. The FCC Directives System utilizes two types of formats:
    - (1) **Directives.** These documents prescribe mandatory agency-wide policies. They may be permanent or temporary. If the policies are temporary, such as for one-time reports or data collections, an expiration or rescission date must be specified. Directives should convey overarching, broad policies and responsibilities, and limit discussion of more specific, granular procedures to the extent necessary to explain and provide context to those broad policies. Lengthy, detailed procedures, especially those likely to be regularly modified, should be issued separately in a handbook or another internal document and referenced in the directive.
    - (2) **Handbooks.** These documents prescribe mandatory agency-wide procedures or operational requirements implementing policies contained in directives. Handbooks may be designed to add technical or procedural detail to requirements established in a related directive. Like directives, they may be permanent or temporary. If procedures are temporary, such as

for one-time activities, the expiration or rescission date should be clearly stated.

- B. Identification and numbering of directives, manuals, and handbooks will use a classification system based on subject rather than organization. The classification system and associated list of subjects shall be maintained by the Managing Director or his/her designee.
- C. Documents published as part of the FCC Directives System should not repeat material published in Government-wide documents, such as by the Office of Personnel Management or Office of Management and Budget, except when doing so would add important detail or clarity to the document. FCC directives and handbooks should refer to those documents when appropriate.
- D. FCC directives must follow established formats and procedures found in Appendix A.
- E. Directives and handbooks will be reviewed periodically by the organizations that produced them in conjunction with the FCC internal controls program, but no less than once every five (5) years. If it is determined that a directive or handbook needs to be revised due to changes in policies or procedures, the revision will be scheduled for the following fiscal year. Pursuant to the FCC's implementation of Office of Management and Budget Circular A-123, *Management's Responsibility for Internal Control*, the head of each organization with responsibility for producing directives will certify in their annual internal controls assertion letter that all of their directives have been reviewed and identify those for which revision is required.
- F. Drafts of new or revised directives shall be coordinated with all potentially impacted Bureaus and Offices to ensure procedures are correctly and unambiguously expressed, so any proposed changes in existing policies and procedures are communicated and opportunity is provided for feedback.
- G. Distribution of directives, manuals, and handbooks is accomplished by electronic means only. The documents are posted to the FCC Intranet and, if determined not to contain sensitive material, to [www.FCC.gov](http://www.FCC.gov).
- H. Statement Regarding Whistleblower Rights. All directives, manuals, and handbooks that address or pertain to policies, forms, or agreements related to non-disclosure or confidentiality of agency information by current or former employees shall include the following statement in a separate section of the document: "These provisions are consistent with and do not supersede, conflict with, or otherwise alter the employee obligations, rights, or liabilities created by existing statute or Executive Order relating to (1) classified information, (2) communications to Congress, (3) the reporting to an Inspector General or the Office of Special Counsel of a violation of any law, rule, or regulation, or mismanagement, a gross waste of funds, an abuse of authority, or a substantial and specific danger to public health or safety, or (4) any other whistleblower

protection. The definitions, requirements, obligations, rights, sanctions, and liabilities created by controlling Executive Orders and statutory provisions are incorporated into this agreement and are controlling.”

6. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. The Managing Director. The Managing Director oversees the directives management program. As such, the Managing Director or his/her designee will:
- (1) Establish policy, procedures, and guidance regarding the management of an effective FCC Directives Management System and ensure their implementation.
  - (2) Evaluate all phases of directives activities within the agency and implement changes when appropriate.
  - (3) Issue a new or revised directive when there is a change in law, in government-wide policy, or in FCC’s basic mission, objectives, or internal policies or procedures; the document itself is used as a mechanism for delegating the Chairman’s authority; or the document would reflect new or revised policies or procedures governing the benefits, rights, or responsibilities of members of the public.
  - (4) Develop and recommend guidelines to implement the FCC directives management program.
  - (5) Oversee the subject classification table and assigning numbers for all directives.
  - (6) Maintain the directives page on the Commission website.
  - (7) Recommend improvements to proposed and existing directives.
  - (8) Ensure all Bureaus and Offices follow the process for drafting, reviewing, and approving directives.
  - (9) Ensure all new directives are posted on the FCC intranet and internet, except for directives requiring special handling due to sensitive content.
  - (10) Administer the coordination of directives with Bureaus and Offices prior to enactment.
  - (11) With assistance from Labor Relations, coordinate with the FCC chapter of the National Treasury Employees Union before a new or revised directive is enacted when it includes changes to employee working conditions.
  - (12) Ensure that all directives are reviewed at least once every five (5) years by the issuing Bureau or Office to ensure that they remain applicable and

accurately represent current agency policy and procedures. In the event of a material change to the operation or management of the FCC or one of its operating units (such as, for example, an agency-wide reorganization), undertake a rapid evaluation of directives to determine which, if any, have been impacted by such changes and commence the process for revisions, even if less than five years have passed since the previous review.

- (13) With the concurrence of (and coordination with) the Office of General Counsel and/or Administrative Operations/Security Operations Center, if a directive is later determined to include content that should not be publicly disclosed, in full or in part, due to security or legal reasons or because it contains incorrect or insensitive content, remove the directive from the internet or intranet. The Office of General Counsel shall make any final determination to permanently remove content for legal reasons, in full or in part, consistent with the standards of the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.
  - (14) Issue changes to this directive that are necessary to implement and manage the FCC's directive management program.
- B. The Office of General Counsel. The Office of General Counsel shall be responsible for reviewing all new and revised directives for legal sufficiency. In conjunction with the Office of Managing Director, the Office of General Counsel shall make a determination whether a directive should not be disclosed on [www.FCC.gov](http://www.FCC.gov), in full or in part, consistent with the standards of the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. § 552.
- C. The Office of Legislative Affairs. The Office of Legislative Affairs is responsible for notifying the originating Bureaus and Offices of relevant changes in legislation that may impact programs and require new or revised FCC directives.
- D. Bureau and Office Chiefs. Bureau and Office Chiefs shall:
- (1) Establish necessary internal procedures to administer the directives program, including an internal checkpoint to review internal directives and handbooks for content and accuracy.
  - (2) In accordance with section 6.A.(12), conduct periodic reviews no less than once every five (5) years of directives, manuals, and handbooks originating in or applying to their Bureaus or Offices to determine if such documents require revision or cancellation.
  - (3) Ensure that directives, manuals, and handbooks clearly document programs, policies, functions, and procedures for which the Bureau or Office is responsible.
  - (4) Provide training to appropriate personnel to ensure that the procedures described in directives, manuals, and handbooks are correctly followed.

- (5) Coordinate draft directives and handbooks originating in their Bureaus or Offices with all impacted organizations within the agency. Coordinating Bureaus and Offices shall comment promptly and confine their comments to their functional areas.
  - (6) Attempt to resolve all comments before finalizing the directive.
  - (7) Track draft and final directives originating in their Bureaus or Offices through the review and clearance process. When a directive is ready to be issued, the originating Bureau or Office shall electronically deliver the document to the Managing Director or his/her designee. The originating Bureau or Office shall indicate a contact point with expertise and authority to discuss a draft directive with the Office of Managing Director and make any requested changes. Draft handbooks do not need to be coordinated with the Office of Managing Director and shall become effective upon final approval of the Chief of the originating Bureau or Office.
7. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION. This directive is effective immediately and shall be implemented promptly upon distribution.

Mark Stephens  
Managing Director

## APPENDIX A

### PREPARATION, REVIEW, AND SUBMISSION OF DIRECTIVES

1. Language Usage.
  - A. Write in clear, simple, easily understandable English. Write short sentences. Avoid repetition and excessive detail, technical or legalistic jargon, and gender-specific language.
  - B. Locate information in a logical sequence where the user expects it to be.
  - C. Identify the audience early and write with the intended users foremost in mind, so that further explanation in the form of local supplements will not be necessary.
  - D. Use the active voice to make it clear who is supposed to do what and to eliminate ambiguity about responsibilities.
  - E. Use brief, descriptive headings for chapters, paragraphs, appendices, and figures.
  - F. Use acronyms sparingly and write the complete words for the acronym the first time it is used.
2. Margins. The text in each chapter should be prepared with standard 1-inch margins on all sides.
3. Font. Font used should be 12-point Times New Roman.
4. Page Numbering. Number the pages of all directives. Page numbering should be consecutive and centered at the bottom of each page.
5. Section Size. Sections and subsections are intended to convey policy and basic requirements and should generally be limited to a few pages. If a section becomes too lengthy, consider sub-dividing topics into separate sections, if appropriate.
6. Document Headers. A standard page header is required for the first page of each directive. These page headers will be in bold type, flush left, beginning on the first line of the first page of the Directive. The header will have the following format:

<b>FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION</b> Washington, D.C. 20554  <b>FCC DIRECTIVE</b>	TITLE	
	[Title of Directive]	
	Directive Number: FCCINST XXXX.X	Effective Date: [XXXX], [Year]

7. Directive Numbers. Each directive shall be assigned a unique number by OMD’s Performance & Program Management office. The initial directive on a particular topic will be given the suffix of “.1,” which will increase by one (i.e., .2, .3, etc.) for each successive version of the directive.
  
8. Section Headings. Each directive shall be structured with a series of section headings assigned successive Roman numerals. The following is a list and description of common headings that are typically to be used. Depending on the subject matter and complexity of a directive, not all section headings will be appropriate or necessary. Additional headings may be used when they would improve the readability of a particular directive. When used, the common headings below should be placed in the order in which they are listed.
  - (1) Purpose. Briefly state the intent of the chapter and/or the program, policy, etc.
  - (2) Cancellation. If the directive replaces a prior version, include language such as “This instruction supersedes FCCINST XXXX.X, [Title of Directive], dated [Effective Date of Prior Directive].”
  - (3) Background. If the Purpose section is insufficient to adequately set forth the intent of the directive and any underlying program, provide a lengthier summary here. Such description should be limited to what is necessary to provide a basic understanding of the intent of the directive and any underlying program, and not be intended to be an all-encompassing recitation of law and policy. In drafting a Background section, focus on maximizing readability for the intended audience.
  - (4) Scope and Applicability. Identify who or what is covered by the policy.
  - (5) Authority. Authority to perform a program responsibility is generally assumed. If the authority is derived from a specific or special act, or a particular Presidential or executive agency directive, a short authority statement should be included. Otherwise, a separate authority section should be omitted.
  - (6) References. Where possible, cite references at points in the text where it is most appropriate. If there is no other appropriate place, list citations in a reference section. References should be used only when the reference is essential to proper understanding of the directive.
  - (7) Definitions. Define technical terms if necessary for the understanding of the substantive content of the directive. Terms of general usage, including those that are

widely understood within the telecommunications industry, need not be defined unless they would add to the understanding of the policies and procedures described in the document. If the number of definitions required is large, the definitions should be included in an appendix to the basic document. In a handbook-type directive where the list of definitions or glossary of terms is lengthy, it should immediately follow the table of contents under the heading of “Definitions” or “Glossary of Terms.”

(8) Policy. Briefly state the requirements and purpose addressed by and contained in the directive.

(9) Roles and Responsibilities. Insert a subsection for each organizational unit or individual that/who is assigned duties under the directive. Each subsection should clearly set forth assignments, but need not include steps on how to accomplish each particular duty unless vital to the performance of the task. The focus should be on broad responsibilities whenever possible. Responsibilities shared by multiple offices or individuals should be repeated in all relevant subsections.

(10) General Procedures. When necessary, statements describing the sequence of processing and decision making, variations in procedures at headquarters and in the field, alternative methods, legal questions, and other significant information should be covered here. Focus on broad procedures and not the minute detail of how particular tasks are to be accomplished, which are more likely to be regularly revised. Lengthy, detailed procedures should be issued separately in a handbook or another internal document.

(11) Reports and Forms. When possible, reporting requirements and forms required for implementing the directive should be identified in the “Roles and Responsibilities” and/or “General Procedures” sections. When it would improve readability, consider creating this separate section of the directive to describe such reporting requirements and forms. Due dates, documentation requirements, and how to obtain or access the reports and forms should be provided. Include Web sites where applicable.

(12) Effective, Issuance, and Expiration Dates. Directives, handbooks, and instructional memoranda are normally effective the date they are signed by the approving official. At the end of the directive, include a statement such as, “EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION. This directive is effective immediately and shall be implemented promptly upon distribution.” Include a specific date if necessary. Only include an expiration date if the document is intended to be temporary.

## 9. Supplemental Material.

A. Figures. When figures are used, they will be placed at the end of the directive or handbook. Use figures to include forms or formats, illustrations, charts, tables, and other short supplemental materials. If a directive prescribes use of a form, include as a figure a copy of a completed form.

B. Appendices. When lengthy supplemental information is referred to in a directive or handbook, it will be placed after any figures and will be labeled as an “appendix.”



Specific forms may be included as separate appendices if it would improve understanding of the requirements, but are not necessary.