

UNIFORM VIDEO SERVICES LOCAL FRANCHISE ACT (EXCERPT)
Act 480 of 2006

484.3304 Public, education, and government access channels; availability; manner of retransmission; interconnection; editorial control; liability; access to signals of local broadcast television station; prohibited conduct by provider; use of reception technology; use for noncommercial purposes; applicability of subsections (7) to (11); request specifying number of channels in actual use.

Sec. 4. (1) A video service provider shall designate a sufficient amount of capacity on its network to provide for the same number of public, education, and government access channels that are in actual use on the incumbent video provider system on the effective date of this act or as provided under subsection (14).

(2) Any public, education, or government channel provided under this section that is not utilized by the franchising entity for at least 8 hours per day for 3 consecutive months may no longer be made available to the franchising entity and may be programmed at the provider's discretion. At such time as the franchising entity can certify a schedule for at least 8 hours of daily programming for a period of 3 consecutive months, the provider shall restore the previously reallocated channel.

(3) The franchising entity shall ensure that all transmissions, content, or programming to be retransmitted by a video service provider is provided in a manner or form that is capable of being accepted and retransmitted by a provider, without requirement for additional alteration or change in the content by the provider, over the particular network of the provider, which is compatible with the technology or protocol utilized by the provider to deliver services.

(4) A video service provider may request that an incumbent video provider interconnect with its video system for the sole purpose of providing access to video programming that is being provided over public, education, and government channels for a franchising entity that is served by both providers. Where technically feasible, interconnection shall be allowed under an agreement of the parties. The video service provider and incumbent video provider shall negotiate in good faith and may not unreasonably withhold interconnection. Interconnection may be accomplished by any reasonable method as agreed to by the providers. The requesting video service provider shall pay the construction, operation, maintenance, and other costs arising out of the interconnection, including the reasonable costs incurred by the incumbent provider.

(5) The person producing the broadcasts is solely responsible for all content provided over designated public, education, or government channels. A video service provider shall not exercise any editorial control over any programming on any channel designed for public, education, or government use.

(6) A video service provider is not subject to any civil or criminal liability for any program carried on any channel designated for public, education, or government use.

(7) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (8), a provider shall provide subscribers access to the signals of the local broadcast television station licensed by the federal communications commission to serve those subscribers over the air. This section does not apply to a low-power station unless the station is a qualified low-power station as defined under 47 USC 534(h)(2). A provider is required to only carry digital broadcast signals to the extent that a broadcast television station has the right under federal law or regulation to demand carriage of the digital broadcast signals by a cable operator on a cable system.

(8) To facilitate access by subscribers of a video service provider to the signals of local broadcast stations under this section, a station either shall be granted mandatory carriage or may request retransmission consent with the provider.

(9) A provider shall transmit, without degradation, the signals a local broadcast station delivers to the provider. A provider is not required to provide a television station valuable consideration in exchange for carriage.

(10) A provider shall not do either of the following:

(a) Discriminate among or between broadcast stations and programming providers with respect to transmission of their signals, taking into account any consideration afforded the provider by the programming provider or broadcast station. In no event shall the signal quality as retransmitted by the provider be required to be superior to the signal quality of the broadcast stations as received by the provider from the broadcast television station.

(b) Delete, change, or alter a copyright identification transmitted as part of a broadcast station's signal.

(11) A provider shall not be required to utilize the same or similar reception technology as the broadcast stations or programming providers.

(12) A public, education, or government channel shall only be used for noncommercial purposes.

(13) Subsections (7) to (11) apply only to a video service provider that delivers video programming in a video service area where the provider is not regulated as a cable operator under federal law.

(14) If a franchising entity seeks to utilize capacity designated under subsection (1) or an agreement under section 13 to provide access to video programming over 1 or more public, governmental, and education channels, the franchising entity shall give the provider a written request specifying the number of channels in actual use on the incumbent video provider's system or specified in the agreement entered into under section 13. The video service provider shall have 90 days to begin providing access as requested by the franchising entity.

History: 2006, Act 480, Eff. Jan. 1, 2007.