

FCC Clarifies Post Transition TV Call Sign Procedures



The FCC has recently clarified its call sign procedures for full power television stations following the DTV transition.

During the transition, full power stations that were assigned a digital companion channel retained their existing analog call sign and were assigned the same call sign with a “-DT” suffix for their digital facilities.

The Commission clarified that following a station’s transition to digital-only broadcasting, its call sign will default to the station’s existing analog call sign. Stations that wish to continue using their existing analog call sign after the transition do not need to take any action. Stations that want to use the “-DT” suffix rather than their analog call sign may elect to do so without charge through the FCC’s call sign reservation system after they have completed their transition to their final DTV channel. Note that the “-TV” suffix cannot be removed if the call sign is shared with another broadcast station.

Digital-only stations that did not have an analog channel will, by default, retain their digital “-DT” suffix. Those stations may also request a change to “-TV” without charge. If their four-letter call sign is not also used by another broadcast station, they may request to use their four-letter call sign without any suffix.

If you have any questions or would like assistance in modifying a call sign, please contact your primary attorney in our office.

This memorandum is intended only as a general discussion of these issues and should not be regarded as legal advice. We would be pleased to provide additional details or advice about specific situations if desired.

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