

Filing Dates Set as FCC Prepares to Auction 119 New FM Radio Channels in March 2012; Related Freeze on All Minor FM Mods Imposed Jan. 3-12, 2012

November 8, 2011 by [Brendan Holland](#)

The Commission today released its further [Public Notice](#) establishing the filing dates and adopting the procedures for the upcoming auction of **119 New FM Radio channels**, scheduled to start on March 27, 2012. The auction has been designated as FM Auction No. 93 and offers vacant FM allotments in various communities across the country. Although the Commission removed four allotments from the slate of available channels, the remaining 119 channels are up for grabs. A full list of the licenses available in the auction can be found [here](#). Anyone potentially interested in bidding on these new FM stations should start doing their due diligence now (and see our [earlier posting](#) for tips about specific issues to consider).

The auction process will start with a filing window from January 3 to January 12, 2012 for the submission of an FCC Form 175 "short form" application expressing interest in the auction. All potential bidders must submit a **Form 175 by 6:00 PM ET on January 12, 2012** in order to be eligible to bid. Next, applicants will need to make an **Upfront Payment by 6:00 PM ET on February 22, 2012**, in order to deposit funds with the Commission equal to the starting price for at least one of the licenses for which they are interested in bidding. In order to be eligible to participate in the auction, bidders will need to follow both steps and timely file an acceptable short form application and wire a sufficient upfront payment. The FCC will hold a **Mock Auction on March 23, 2012** to allow bidders to test the bidding software and familiarize themselves with the auction process, and the real auction will kick off on **Tuesday, March 27, 2012**.

In connection with Auction 93, the FCC will **temporarily freeze** the submission of all minor change applications for both commercial and noncommercial FM stations from January 3 through January 12, 2012. This freeze will prevent existing stations from filing minor modification applications that might be mutually exclusive with the preferred allotment site coordinates that a potential bidder might specify on its short form application. Licensees of existing stations should plan accordingly and file any minor modifications before January 3rd lest they have to wait until the freeze is lifted following the close of the Auction filing window on January 12.

Disclaimer

This advisory is a publication of Davis Wright Tremaine LLP. Our purpose in publishing this advisory is to inform our clients and friends of recent legal developments. It is not intended, nor should it be used, as a substitute for specific legal advice as legal counsel may only be given in response to inquiries regarding particular situations.