

**EB - BROADCAST - CONTESTS****Search the FCC:**[Go](#) [Help](#) | [Advanced](#)[FCC](#) > [EB](#) > [Broadcast](#) > Contests[site map](#)

The statutory provision regarding contests is set forth at Section 508 of the Communications Act of 1934, as amended (the "Act") (47 U.S.C. § 509). Section 508(a) of the Act (47 U.S.C. § 509(a)) provides that it is unlawful for any person, with intent to deceive the listening or viewing public:

1. To supply to any contestant in a purportedly bona fide contest of intellectual knowledge or intellectual skill any special and secret assistance whereby the outcome of such contest will be in whole or in part prearranged or predetermined.
2. By means of persuasion, bribery, intimidation, or otherwise to induce or cause any contestant in a purportedly bona fide contests of intellectual knowledge or intellectual skill to refrain in any manner from using or displaying his knowledge or skill in such contests, whereby the outcome thereof will be in whole or in part prearranged or predetermined.
3. To engage in any artifice or scheme for the purpose of prearranging or predetermining in whole or in part the outcome of a purportedly bona fide contest of intellectual knowledge, intellectual skill, or chance.
4. To produce or participate in the production for broadcasting of, to broadcast or participate in the broadcasting of, to offer to a licensee for broadcasting, or to sponsor, any radio program, knowing or having reasonable ground for believing that, in connection with a purportedly bona fide contest of intellectual knowledge, intellectual skill, or chance constituting any part of such program, any person has done or is going to do any act or thing referred to in paragraph (1), (2), or (3) above.
5. To conspire with any other person or persons to do any act or thing prohibited by paragraph (1), (2), (3), or (4) above, if one or more of such persons do any act to effect the object of such conspiracy.

For purposes of Section 508, the term "contest" means any contest broadcast by a broadcast station in connection with which any money or any other thing of value is offered as a prize or prizes to be paid or presented by the program sponsor or by any other person or persons, as announced in the course of the broadcast.

For purposes of Section 508, the term "listening or viewing public" means those members of the public who, with the aid of radio receiving sets, listen to or view programs broadcast by radio or television stations.

Whoever violates Section 508(a) of the Act shall be fined no more than \$10,000 or imprisoned not more than one year, or both. These penalties are in addition to any civil penalties or other enforcement action that may be assessed by the FCC.

The Commission's requirements governing the broadcast of licensee-conducted contests are set forth in Section 73.1216 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 73.1216. This rule requires that a licensee that broadcasts or advertises information about a contest that it conducts shall fully and accurately disclose the material terms of the contest, and shall conduct the contest substantially as announced or advertised. No contest description shall be false, misleading or deceptive with respect to any material term.

For purposes of Section 73.1216, the term "contest" is defined as a scheme in which a prize is offered or awarded, based upon chance, diligence, knowledge or skill, to members of the public. "Material terms" include those factors which define the operation of the contest and which affect participation therein. Although the material terms may vary widely depending upon the exact nature of the contest, they will generally include: (1) how to enter or participate; (2) eligibility restrictions; (3) entry deadline dates; (4) whether prizes can be won; (5) when prizes can be won; (6) the extent, nature, and value of the prizes; (7) the basis for valuation of prizes; (8) time and means of selection of winners; and/or (9) tie-breaking procedures.

In general, the time and manner of disclosure of the material terms of a contest are within the licensee's discretion. However, the obligation to disclose the material terms arises at the time that the audience is first told how to enter or participate and continues thereafter. The material terms should be disclosed periodically by announcements broadcast on the station conducting the contest, but need not be enumerated each time an announcement promoting the contest is broadcast. Disclosure of material terms in a reasonable number of announcements is sufficient. In addition to the required broadcast announcements, disclosure of the material terms may be made in a non-broadcast manner.

The broadcast contest rule is not applicable to: (1) licensee-conducted contests not broadcast or advertised to the general public or to a substantial segment thereof; (2) contests in which the general public is not requested or permitted to participate; (3) the commercial advertisement of non-licensee-conducted contests; or (4) a contest conducted by a non-broadcast division of the licensee or by a non-broadcast company related to the licensee.

Enforcement Actions

12-17-2018	Sound Ideas, LLC, Eufaula, AL	(ORDER & CONSENT DECREE)
03-20-2014	South Central Communications Corporation	(NAL)
03-20-2014	Boonville Broadcasting Company, Inc.	(NAL)
03-08-2013	Journal Broadcast Corporation, Boise, Idaho	(FORFEITURE ORDER)
02-28-2013	Greater Boston Radio, Inc.	(NAL)
09-13-2012	NVT PORTLAND LICENSEE, LLC	(ORDER & CONSENT DECREE)
09-07-2012	GOOD KARMA BROADCASTING, LLC, Cleveland, Ohio	(FORFEITURE ORDER)
08-21-2012	CBS Radio Holdings, Inc.	(NAL)
05-25-2012	Fisher Broadcasting - Seattle Radio, L.L.C.	(ORDER & CONSENT DECREE)
01-19-2012	Clear Channel Communications, Inc.	(NAL)
12-05-2011	Saga Communications of New England, L.L.C., WAQY(FM), Springfield, Massachusetts	(ORDER ON REVIEW)
07-11-2011	Chico License, L.L.C., KNVN(TV), Chico, California	(ORDER & CONSENT DECREE)
07-11-2011	Catamount Broadcasting of Chico-Redding, Inc., KHSL-TV, Chico, California	(ORDER & CONSENT

		DECREE)
12-16-2010	Tri-State public communications, Inc.	(ORDER & CONSENT DECREE)
12-08-2010	Good Karma Broadcasting, LLC, WKNR(AM), Cleveland, Ohio	(NAL)
08-23-2010	Nassau Broadcasting III, L.L.C., WWEG(FM), Myersville, Maryland	(NAL)
04-30-2010	CBS Radio East inc., KDKA(AM), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	(ORDER & CONSENT DECREE)
04-01-2010	Saga Communications of New England, L.L.C., WAQY(FM), Springfield, Massachusetts	(PFR Order)
03-24-2010	Journal Broadcast Corporation, KJOT(FM), Boise, Idaho	(NAL)
09-25-2009	CBS Radio Inc. of Philadelphia, WIP(AM), Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	(ORDER & CONSENT DECREE)
09-25-2009	Saga Communications of New England, L.L.C., WAQY(FM), Springfield, Massachusetts	(FORFEITURE ORDER)
08-26-2009	CBS Radio Inc. of Philadelphia, WIP(AM), Philadelphia, PA	(PFR Order)
04-08-2009	Greater Boston Radio, Inc., WMJX(FM), Boston, Massachusetts	(NAL)
02-12-2009	AMFM Broadcasting Licenses, LLC, Los Angeles, California	(NAL)
02-05-2009	CBS Radio East Inc., KDKA(AM), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	(NAL)
02-05-2009	Entercom Wichita License, LLC, KDGS(FM), Andover, Kansas	(FORFEITURE ORDER)
07-10-2008	CBS Radio Inc. of Philadelphia	(FORFEITURE ORDER)
12-13-2007	Multicultural Radio Broadcasting Licensee, LLC, KAZN(AM), Pasadena, California	(NAL)
03-02-2007	Saga Communications of New England, L.L.C.	(NAL)
03-02-2007	Entercom Wichita License, LLC, KDGS(FM), Andover, Kansas	(NAL)
03-02-2007	CBS Radio Inc. of Philadelphia	(NAL)
03-02-2007	Access 1 New Jersey License Company, LLC, WTKU-FM, Ocean City, New Jersey	(NAL)
07-20-2006	NM LICENSING LLC, WYAV(FM), Myrtle Beach, South Carolina	(NAL)
06-20-2006	Clear Channel Broadcasting Licenses, Inc., WRUM(FM), Orlando, Florida	(NAL)
04-20-2006	Clear Channel Broadcasting Licenses, Inc.	(NAL)
06-23-2005	CBS Broadcasting Inc., KCBS-TV, Los Angeles, California	(ORDER ON RECON.)
06-23-2005	Capstar TX Limited Partnership, WKSS(FM), Hartford-Meriden, Connecticut	(ERRATUM)
06-22-2005	Capstar TX Limited Partnership, WKSS(FM), Hartford-Meriden, Connecticut	(NAL)

08-12-2004	Infinity Radio Operations, Inc., WBLK(FM), Buffalo, New York	(FORFEITURE ORDER)
05-25-2004	New Northwest Broadcasters, L.L.C., Walla Walla, Kennewick, Washington	(NAL)
12-08-2003	ABC, Inc., WDRQ(FM), Detroit, Michigan	(NAL)
12-03-2003	Isothermal Community College, WNCW(FM), Spindale, North Carolina	(ERRATUM)
11-14-2003	Isothermal Community College	(NAL)
11-14-2003	Isothermal Community College, WNCW(FM), Spindale, North Carolina	(NAL)
05-09-2000	Citicasters Co., KITT(FM), Shreveport, Louisiana	(NAL)
04-19-2000	AK Media Group, Inc., KJR-FM, Seattle, Washington	(NAL)
02-10-2000	Clear Channel Broadcasting Licensees, Inc.	(NAL)

Complaints

Parties wishing to file complaints alleging violation of Section 508(a) of the Act or Section 73.1216 of the Commission's rules should send them to the Federal Communications Commission, Enforcement Bureau, Investigations & Hearings Division, 445 12th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20554. Complaints should be in writing and provide the call sign and community of license of the station and a full description of the contest in question, including the dates and terms of the contest. Where possible, a complainant should also include any material it may have received regarding the rules of the contest and a copies of any correspondence between the complainant and the station regarding the contests.

In addition to the above, complaints alleging violation of Section 508(a) of the Act should include a description, with as many details as possible, which provides the basis for the complainant's belief that the contest was conducted in violation of Section 508(a). In addition, the complaint should include as much detail as possible of the nature of the contest

In addition to the above, complaints alleging violation of Section 73.1216 of the Commission's rules should provide the basis for the complainant's belief that the contest was conducted by the station rather than by a programmer or advertiser.

last reviewed/updated on Mon Dec 17 13:20:09 EST 2018

[FCC Home](#) | [Search](#) | [RSS](#) | [Updates](#) | [E-Filing](#) | [Initiatives](#) | [Consumers](#) | [Find People](#)

Federal Communications
Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554
[More FCC Contact
Information...](#)

Phone: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322)
TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322)
Fax: 1-866-418-0232

- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Website Policies & Notices](#)
- [Required Browser Plug-ins](#)
- [Freedom of Information Act](#)