

MAIN STUDIO RULE WAIVER REQUEST

West Virginia Educational Broadcasting Authority (“WVEBA”) hereby requests a waiver of Section 73.1125(a)¹ of the Commission’s rules to permit the noncommercial educational (“NCE”) FM station proposed herein (“Proposed NCE Station”) to operate without a main studio in its proposed community of license, Matewan, West Virginia. Specifically, WVEBA requests the instant waiver to enable the Proposed NCE Station to be operated as a satellite station as part of a centralized network of NCE radio stations operated in West Virginia by WVEBA. Each of the satellite stations that comprise this centralized network share the main studio facilities of WVPN(FM), Charleston, West Virginia, Facility ID No. 70604 (“WVPN”) and WVEBA proposes for the Proposed NCE Station also to share the WVPN main studio.

Section 73.1125(a) requires each broadcast station to maintain a main studio located (i) within the station’s community of license; (ii) within the principal community contour of any other broadcast station licensed to the station’s community of license; or (iii) within 25 miles of the reference coordinates of the center of the station’s community of license. However, pursuant to Sections 73.1125(b)(2), a broadcast station may locate its main studio in a location other than that described in Section 73.1125(a) if “good cause” exists to do so and the proposed main studio location “would be consistent with the operation of the station in the public interest.” Further, Section 73.1125(d) requires an FM licensee to obtain prior authority from the Audio Division of the Media Bureau to locate an FM station’s main studio outside the locations specified in Section 73.1125(a).

¹ 47 C.F.R. § 73.1125(a).

It is the Commission's longstanding policy to grant "waivers to state and regional public television and radio networks to operate satellite stations that do not necessarily meet the requirements of a main studio" because the satellite stations are operated as part of a network of NCE stations that share a centralized main studio.² The Commission has recognized "the realities of public broadcasting funding and the ongoing problems of educational licensees in raising the necessary funds to expand and provide noncommercial programming," which requires such NCE licensees "necessarily [to] find ways to get cost efficient programming to as many viewers as possible."³ The Commission has determined that such centralized NCE broadcast networks can enable their licensees to realize savings "from not having to construct a main studio" and that such savings can be used "in expanding quality programming to a greater number of viewers."⁴ As a result, the Commission generally has found that "'good cause' exists to waive the main studio location requirement where satellite operations are proposed."⁵

WVEBA is committed to providing high-quality educational programming to residents in the Matewan area and throughout West Virginia. To fulfill its local service obligations to the residents of Matewan, the Proposed NCE Station will hire a local public affairs representative to respond to the interests, concerns, and needs of the local community. The local public affairs representative will serve as a liaison between the Matewan residents and WVEBA programming personnel and

² The President and Board of Trustees of the Miami University, *Hearing Designation Order*, 7 FCC Rcd 2902, ¶ 6 (AD/MB 1992) (internal quotations and citations omitted); *see also* Amendment of Sections 73.1125 and 73.1130 of the Commission's Rules, *Memorandum Opinion and Order*, 3 FCC Rcd 5024, ¶¶ 25-31 (1988) (citing Nebraska Educational Television Commission, *Memorandum Opinion and Order*, 4 Rad. Reg. 2d 771, ¶ 2 (1965)) ("Main Studio Order"); Sound of Life, Inc., *Hearing Designation Order*, 4 FCC Rcd 8273, ¶¶ 3-4 (AD/MB 1989); The Cedarville College, *Hearing Designation Order*, 6 FCC Rcd 538, ¶¶ 5-6 (1990); John Griffith Johnson, Esq., *Letter*, 20 FCC Rcd 10903 (VD/MB 2005).

³ Lift Him Up Outreach Ministries, Inc., *Hearing Designation Order*, 3 FCC Rcd 5571, ¶¶ 8-9 (AD/MB 1988).

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Jeffrey D. Southmayd, Esq., *Letter*, 2002 FCC Lexis 6524, 1800B3-RAB (AD/MB rel. Dec. 10, 2002); *see also* *Main Studio Order*, at ¶ 30 (permitting NCE stations to seek "good cause" waivers of the main studio rule to permit the NCE stations to "recognize[] the benefits of centralized operations").

will conduct interviews and surveys of local community leaders and residents on at least a quarterly basis. These activities will enable WVEBA to ensure that it broadcasts public affairs programming that addresses the interests, concerns, and needs of Matewan listeners. WVEBA also will maintain a toll-free telephone number as required by Section 73.1125(d)⁶ of the Commission's rules to enable the citizens of Matewan to contact the WVPN main studio, which also will serve as the Proposed NCE Station's main studio. In addition, WVEBA will maintain a public inspection file at the main studio as required by Section 73.3527 of the Commission's rules.

For the reasons set forth above, WVEBA submits that the requested waiver is supported by the public interest. Therefore, WVEBA respectfully requests the Commission to grant the instant waiver request to enable the Proposed NCE Station to provide cost-effective, quality educational programming consistent with the needs of the Matewan community and its surrounding rural areas.

⁶ 47 C.F.R. § 73.1125(d).