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FCC Releases Procedures to Seek Relief From FY 2020 Reg Fees

The FCC has released procedures for submitting requests for relief from the agency's fiscal year 2020 regulatory fees, which it says it expects in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. Regulatory fees are due Sept. 25, and those not paid will be subject to a 25% late payment penalty and will accrue interests. "The Commission anticipates that due to the ongoing economic effects of the pandemic, some regulatees will require some form of regulatory fee relief," the agency said in a public notice released Friday. "While the Commission's authority to provide relief is limited, the Commission intends to use its existing authority to offer assistance to regulatees experiencing financial hardship arising from the pandemic, by streamlining and easing its processes for requesting and obtaining waiver, deferral and installment payment relief for FY 2020 regulatory fees. However, the Commission's standard for granting a waiver request remains the same. The Commission may waive reduce or defer payment of a regulatory fee in a specific instance if a regulatee demonstrates good cause for the relief sought and that waiver, reduction or deferral of the fee promotes the public interest. Fee relief may be granted, but only to those regulatees 'unambiguously articulating "extraordinary circumstances" outweighing the public interest in recouping the cost of the Commissions regulatory services.'"

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