

100% of a television station's non-exempt programming in both English and Spanish must be captioned. 75% of the non-exempt English and Spanish content first aired before January 1, 1998 must be captioned.

Quality of closed captions:

Complaints About Poor/Missing Captions:

If you see something, say something! The FCC is not watching television for bad captions. They will only take action if a consumer complains. Television networks must make their contact information available to the public as well as the FCC and keep this information up to date. Complaints must be filed in writing with the FCC or the television network within sixty days of the airing of the program in question, and must include the rule broken and evidence of the violation. Complaints should include, along with a detailed description of the captioning problem and any evidence to support it: the television channel number, call sign, and network, what cable or satellite provider you use, if applicable, the name of the program as well as the date and time of airing.

What should you expect from a program's closed captions?

**Accuracy:** Captions must match the spoken words verbatim and convey non-spoken sounds.

**Synchronous:** Timing of captions must not only match with the occurrence of the event, but also need to appear and disappear at a speed that can be easily read.

**Complete:** Captions must appear through the entire program.

**Properly placed:** Captions must not block other important visual information, such as lower thirds.

March 16, 2015 -- New FCC requirements go into effect. These regulations include a requirement for television stations to maintain records of closed captioning monitoring and maintenance, obtain certification from programming suppliers documenting their compliance with FCC quality standards and best practices, and updates to the Electronic Newsroom Technique (ENT) procedures for captioning live news broadcasts.