

Sheppard Mullin's Telecom team provides experienced counsel in every sector of the Telecom industry, including wireline and wireless carriers, radio and television broadcasters, multichannel video programming distributors, equipment manufacturers and satellite companies.

Litigation

Our litigators are widely recognized as go-to counsel for complex communications disputes, often those involving issues of first impression or that carry broad precedential implications. They regularly appear before all levels of courts and administrative tribunals, federal and state, trial and appellate. Among other things, the team has extensive knowledge on infrastructure issues and the deployment of competitive networks and services, including access to rights-of-way, conduits, and utility poles; municipal franchising disputes; and disputes related to municipal and state-mandated franchise fees and fees in support of Public, Educational and Government ("PEG") channels.

We also regularly defend companies against putative class actions and represent companies in government and internal investigations, including those implicating the FCC E-Rate program.

Transactional

We handle complex domestic and international corporate transactions on behalf of clients of all sizes, from start-ups to multinational companies. Our transactional experience includes:

- Drafting and negotiating stock purchase agreements, asset purchase agreements, merger agreements, and complex commercial agreements
- Providing advice in connection with regulatory due diligence efforts required for equity investments, license transfers, and transactions involving participants in the FCC's E-Rate program
- Prosecuting applications for license assignment and transfer before the FCC
- Bankruptcy restructuring matters including providing regulatory and transactional advice to official committees of unsecured creditors of FCC regulated entities in bankruptcy
- Structuring and negotiating program carriage agreements

Regulatory Advocacy and Compliance

The Sheppard Mullin Communications team is actively engaged in regulatory advocacy and compliance. When important issues of first impression arise in the telecom industry, clients turn to us for focused insight and effective problem solving. We regularly assist clients in navigating FCC, state and international regulations. We frequently represent clients in FCC complaint and rulemaking proceedings, and counsel companies regarding the regulatory requirements related to, among other things, the deployment of broadband and IP-enabled services, such as VoIP. Sheppard Mullin attorneys have provided experienced legal counsel in the structural rules governing cable system ownership; program access and program carriage rules; local franchising

authority negotiations; proposed changes to local franchising requirements; copyright laws; and the legal and business aspects of the production, licensing, and distribution of programming.

We represent wireless and wireline carriers in their provision of video and data services. Our experience on wireline issues includes:

- Regulation of VoIP and other Internet Protocol (IP-)enabled services, including emergency 911 and CALEA
- Universal Service, intercarrier compensation, and access charge reform
- Communications privacy issues

We also advise clients in connection with:

- Spectrum rebanding and restructuring proceedings and related auctions
- Rulemaking proceedings, including cognitive radio technology, RFID technology, and hearing aid compatibility
- Advice on tower siting issues

Sheppard Mullin also is well-positioned to advise wireline and wireless clients on issues arising from their entry into the market for the delivery of video content.

We have counseled broadcast clients in FCC regulatory matters, including:

- Content regulation issues, including indecency, sponsorship identification rules, payola/plugola, closed captioning, the provision of emergency information, children's television obligations, contests and promotions, and political broadcasting
- Licensing issues, including auction of broadcast construction permits, character qualification issues, ownership reporting, renewal applications, foreign ownership limits, national, multiple and cross-ownership rules
- Compliance with tower siting requirements, federal environmental and endangered species statutes, related FAA and FCC rules, and antenna structure registration

We have represented several major manufacturers of consumer electronics and equipment. Manufacturers turn to us for advice on the following policies and FCC regulations:

- Part 15 Rule Compliance
- Equipment Certification
- Device Interoperability Issues
- Copy Protection Mandates and Technologies
- Compliance with the Twenty-First Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act