

Statewide Cable TV Franchise

Frequently Asked Questions

Here are some answers to questions we receive frequently from the public about statewide cable franchise filing. We provide this for informational purposes only. It does not constitute legal advice.

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General Information

1. What's the purpose of the State Cable Franchise law?

The law doesn't have a purpose statement. We've been told that the reason the law was passed was to increase competition. It is believed that increased competition will lead to better service and more choices.

2. Who issues State Cable TV Franchises?

Technically, no one does. The way it works is this:

- ❖ We review the Notice of Franchise someone submits to see if it's complete and the fee's been paid.
- ❖ If it's complete and the fee's been paid, we file the Notice of Franchise. At that point, the filer has a State Franchise.

3. Where can I find the Administrative Rules for Cable Filings?

[Click here](#) to go to the Administrative Rules for Statewide Cable Franchise Filings.

4. I'm interested in State Cable Franchises. What does the Secretary of State have to do with them?

We do all of these things:

- ❖ Develop forms
- ❖ Adopt technical rules
- ❖ Accept forms people submit
- ❖ Review the forms people submit to see if they're complete and legible.
- ❖ Accept required fees
- ❖ Post the filed documents on our website (or an index of the documents).

We don't enforce the State Cable Franchise law.

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Cable TV Franchise Applicant

5. Where can I find the cable franchise forms?

[Click here](#) for the forms. Here's a list of the forms and the fees you have to pay when you file:

Form Name	Form Number	Fee
Notice of Franchise	C-01	\$125.00
Notice of Commencement of Service	C-02	No Fee
Notice of Withdrawal	C-03	No Fee
Annual Service Report	C-04	\$200.00
Notice of Change in Ownership	C-05	No Fee

6. What does "filed with the Department of the Secretary of State" mean?

You submit the paperwork to us. We review it. If everything's there and you've paid the fee, we file it. It's not complete until we file it.

7. I want to file a Notice of Cable Franchise. What do I have to do?

You have to submit all of these things to us

- a. A complete, legible Notice of Franchise Form
- b. A paper map of the franchise service area
- c. An electronic map of the franchise service area
- d. The filing fee
- e. Copies of everything in a-c.

8. I'm ready to submit a Franchise. What will you look for when you review it?

We look to see if:

- a. The Notice of Franchise form is:
 - Complete and
 - Legible
- b. There's both a paper map and an electronic map.
- c. The maps match (cover the same area).
- d. You paid the right fee.
- e. You sent in the right number of copies.

9. I'm about to file a Notice of Franchise. Can you deny it or reject it?

Yes, we can reject it if it's not complete. We'll send it back to you and tell you what needs to be fixed. We won't send your money back. We'll keep it and use it for the corrected filing when you re-submit it. We won't refund the money unless you tell us in writing that you're cancelling the filing.

10. You sent my Notice of Franchise back. I've corrected it and am getting ready to send it to you. What will its effective date be?

The effective date will be the same as the date you first submitted it to us. In other words, the effective date won't be the date we get the corrected form.

11. How long does it take you to process a Cable Franchise document?

It usually takes us between 2 and 3 business days.

12. Can I e-file my Cable Franchise documents?

No, you can't e-file. After we review it and file it, we'll send you a copy of the filed document by email. We'll send it to the email address you put on the Notice of Franchise.

13. How do I contact you or submit a document?

Telephone	919-807-2156
E-mail	whaynes@sosnc.com
US Postal Service	NC Department of the Secretary of State ATTN: Cable Franchises PO Box 29622 Raleigh, NC 27626-0622
Hand Delivery or Delivery Service	NC Department of the Secretary of State ATTN: Cable Franchises 2 South Salisbury Street Raleigh, NC 27601

14. Who negotiates the terms of Cable Franchise Agreements?

The answer to that question depends on whether it's a State or local franchise:

- a. If it's a State franchise:

There is no statewide franchise agreement. We don't negotiate franchise agreements. Companies can offer customers the agreements they think are appropriate and legal.

- b. If it's a Local franchise:

You can tell by looking at your bill. If your bill lists a local government (city, county, town), then it's a local franchise agreement. That means it was in effect on January 1, 2007. It also means a local government negotiated the franchise agreement.

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Cable TV Franchise Holder

15. I have filed a Notice of Franchise. Do I have to file a Notice of Commencement of Service?

Yes, if you have a Franchise, you'll have to file a Notice of Commencement of Service. The law says you have to start providing service in your franchise area within 120 days after the Notice of Franchise is filed. You have to file the Notice of Commencement of Service within 10 days after you first begin providing service in the franchise area.

16. Can I search all of the Cable Franchises online?

Yes, you can search them on line on our website. You can search by the franchise name or by city or county. [Click here](#) to search.

17. I'm trying to look at or download a cable franchise map. I'm having trouble doing that. What can I do?

Here are some options:

- a. You can try a different computer.
- b. You can call us and ask us to send you a copy of the map. There may be a copying fee. Call 919-807-2225.
- c. You can visit our office and look at the map.
- d. You can send an email to our registrar at cable@sosnc.com.

18. I have a State Cable TV Franchise. When do I have to provide cable TV service to customers?

Once a company gets a State Cable TV Franchise, it has 120 days to “pass” at least one household. Basically, that means the company has to offer service to at least one household in the franchise area.

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Cable TV Customer

19. I'm having problems with my Cable TV company? Can you help me?

No, we can't help you. These are some steps you can take to get help with a cable TV problem:

- a. Call or contact your cable TV company. Their number should be on your bills.
- b. Look at your bill:
 - ❖ If it lists a local government (city, county, town), call the number on the bill. If your bill lists a local government, then your local government is in charge of the cable franchise.

- ❖ If it lists the NC Department of Justice or the NC Attorney General, your cable TV is provided under a State cable franchise. The Attorney General has some power to help with State cable franchise issues. Call the number for the Attorney General on your bill or:

NC Department of Justice
Consumer Protection Division
9001 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-9001
1-877-5-NO-SCAM
(919) 716-6000
<http://www.ncdoj.gov/Consumer.aspx>

20. Why can't you help me with my cable TV complaint?

The North Carolina General Assembly tells us what we can and can't do. With regard to cable TV complaints, they have said:

- ❖ We can't resolve cable TV complaints.
- ❖ The NC Attorney General can help with some cable TV complaints.
- ❖ In some instances, local governments can help with cable TV complaints.

Look at your bill. It should either list a local government and its telephone number or the Attorney General and a phone number. That's the number you should call if you have a cable TV complaint.

21. Someone told me I have rights as a cable TV customer under federal law. How can I find out more?

You can contact the Federal Communications Commission (FCC): www.fcc.gov.

You can also contact the Consumer Protection Division of the [Attorney General's office](#).

22. How can I find out if a State Franchise holder has passed a household in the service area?

We can't tell you the answer to that question. A Franchise holder may have to file a Notice of Commencement of Service. That Notice means that the franchise holder has "passed" at least one household in its franchise service area. "Passing" a household means offering

service to it. It doesn't necessarily mean that the household chose to take the service. If the Franchise holder has to file a Notice of Commencement of Service with us, we will post it on our website or in the index. [Click here for that webpage.](#)