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TO: All Commercial Webcasters (including broadcasters simulcasting an AM or FM transmission and/or “internet-only” webcasters)

FROM: SoundExchange, Inc.

DATE: July 28, 2021

SUBJECT: **REMINDER** - 2021 Payment and Reporting Requirements under the Section 112 & 114 Statutory Licenses

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This memorandum contains information about the obligations for a commercial webcaster that is currently relying on the statutory licenses set forth in Sections 112 and 114 of the U.S. Copyright Act (the “statutory license”). We are writing to remind you about the obligations for commercial webcasters for 2021.

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Copyright Royalty Judges only recently announced the 2021-2025 webcasting rates and terms on Friday, June 11. **The new rates and terms include increases in both the annual minimum fee and the performance rate itself**, and these are described in further detail in Part I of this document.

If they have not already done so, we encourage services to log into [Licensee Direct](#) **to confirm/calculate, certify and pay for their 2021 minimum fees**, which were due on or before February 1, 2021 for all services streaming in January 2021.

Part I briefly summarizes the commercial webcaster rates and terms in effect, beginning in 2021. The best sources of information are the rates and terms themselves, however, and you should study them closely when determining how to proceed for 2021. We also strongly urge you to seek independent legal advice.

Part II briefly discusses the scope of the statutory license that SoundExchange administers.

Part III briefly provides reminders about our procedures.

Please use **SoundExchange Licensee Direct** for *all* royalty submissions, including Reports of Use: <http://licenseedirect.soundexchange.com>. All forms and information described in this memo can also be found on the SoundExchange website at [www.soundexchange.com](http://www.soundexchange.com).



## I. Rates and Terms for Commercial Webcasters (CRB)

**IMPORTANT:** Please remember that SoundExchange **does not invoice services**. Each service is obligated to submit payments, Statements of Account, and Reports of Use regularly and in accordance with applicable rates and terms for the statutory license.

The royalty rates for Commercial Webcasters in 2021 as set by the Copyright Royalty Board (“CRB”) are as follows: **\$0.0021 per performance for nonsubscription transmissions (an increase from \$0.0018 in 2020), and \$0.0026 per performance for subscription transmissions (an increase from \$0.0024 in 2020).**

The annual minimum fee was due on February 1, 2021, and is **\$1,000 for each station or channel, subject to a \$100,000 cap (an increase from \$500 in 2020, with a \$50,000 cap)**. This minimum fee is recoupable, and services do not submit additional payment for streaming activity in 2021 until this amount has been exhausted.

Commercial Webcasters must calculate royalties, and certify monthly Statement of Account forms, which may be done using [Licensee Direct](#). Monthly Statements of Account are due within 45 days after the end of each calendar month, even if the licensee does not owe a payment. If the Statement of Account indicates a payment *is* owed, that payment is due with the Statement of Account, and can also be made using [Licensee Direct](#). (For information about alternative methods of submission, please see Section III.)

As the 2021 rates were not yet determined prior to the beginning of the year, we reminded Commercial Webcasters in last December’s memorandum<sup>1</sup> to timely pay for any 2021 statutory licensing activity using the 2020 rates until the Copyright Royalty Judges announced the new rates. Now that the new rates are available, applicable webcasters’ accounts within Licensee Direct will automatically reflect the retroactive adjustments; licensees may review and confirm this information, and any amounts owed for this reconciliation should be readily apparent when accessing your account online. SoundExchange will not assess late fees on any submissions (including payments) that services make by Monday, August 16 to reconcile the increases in the minimum fee and (if applicable) the per performance rate.

The final regulations for the delivery and format of Reports of Use are codified at 37 CFR Part 370. *All webcasters should review these regulations closely. It is your obligation to make sure that you are providing to SoundExchange what is legally required.* Proposed changes to the notice and recordkeeping regulations are pending review by the CRB, so there may be changes or clarification to the notice and recordkeeping terms for statutory licensees at some point in the future. Please visit our website regularly, and as changes occur, we will update our website accordingly.

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<sup>1</sup> This memorandum was published on December 16, 2020.

Under the current regulations, most Commercial Webcasters must provide year-round census reporting. In addition, the Reports of Use from those services must identify the total number of performances of each sound recording being reported; reporting on an aggregate tuning hour basis is not permitted. Finally, Reports of Use must be submitted monthly, and they are due by no later than the 45th day after the end of each month. "Eligible minimum fee webcasters" who (1) do not exceed the \$1,000 per station/channel minimum fee, *and* (2) are owned/operated by FCC-licensed AM or FM broadcasters may choose to alternatively submit *sample* Reports of Use (consisting of two seven-consecutive-24 hour day periods). These are due *quarterly*, within 45 days after the end of each quarter. Reports of Use must be formatted and delivered to SoundExchange in a specific manner; please visit our website for more information: <http://www.soundexchange.com/service-provider/commercial-webcaster/commercial-webcaster-crb/>.

We encourage licensees to use [Licensee Direct](#) for their Reports of Use submission, as it offers enhanced quality assurance and the ability to receive "real time" data feedback and statistics, prior to completing submission. At this time, services are still able to alternatively submit Reports of Use via email ([reports@soundexchange.com](mailto:reports@soundexchange.com)) or secure file transfer protocol ("sFTP"). If you need additional assistance with Report of Use delivery to us, [please contact us](#).

## II. The Statutory License

As a reminder to services of what the statutory license administered by SoundExchange covers, the statutory license is for the **public performance of sound recordings** by means of certain **eligible non-interactive digital audio transmissions**.

**Musical works licensing:** If you are webcasting, you almost certainly need to obtain a public performance license for the *musical works* (i.e. the underlying notes and lyrics) as well as for the sound recordings. SoundExchange does not administer licenses relating to the public performance of musical works. You should contact ASCAP, BMI, SESAC and Global Music Rights, as appropriate, for those rights.

**Interactive streaming and downloads:** In addition, the statutory license administered by SoundExchange does not cover interactive streaming or downloads of any kind, including downloadable "podcasts" of archived programming. **If you are offering podcasts that include sound recordings, then you may need to obtain a direct license from the relevant copyright owners. SoundExchange does not administer licenses for podcasting.**

As always, if you have any questions about whether your activities are within the scope of the statutory license, you should contact your own legal counsel.



### III. Procedural Changes and/or Reminders

**A. SoundExchange ISRC Search:** Use of International Standard Recording Codes (ISRCs) is the *preferred* way for licensees to identify sound recordings within Reports of Use. (Services not using ISRCs must provide both album name and marketing label to identify sound recordings within Reports of Use.) SoundExchange ISRC Search is a *free* option for licensees and others to search for (and download) ISRCs from our renowned repertoire database. Please visit <http://isrc.soundexchange.com> today to look up ISRCs for any recordings! We also offer an API for services to develop integrated access to this site. Please contact [RepMatchService@soundexchange.com](mailto:RepMatchService@soundexchange.com) for more information.

**B. Repertoire Match Service:** SoundExchange also offers a *free* matching service to our vast repertoire database. You can upload a file containing all tracks in your catalog through Licensee Direct. We'll match them to ISRCs provided by the rights owners themselves and return the file, so you can update your entire catalog at once. Please visit [SoundExchange Licensee Direct](#) for more information.

**C. ROU Augmentation:** Services logging into [SoundExchange Licensee Direct](#) may access versions of their submitted ROUs that we have augmented (where possible) with ISRCs, populated from our vast repertoire database. In addition, we highlight which parts of your submissions were potentially missing required information. We encourage you to regularly download these augmented files, in order to populate your own databases with this important identification field for sound recordings, so that your future submissions can include them, improving the efficiency for the entire royalty distribution process.

**D. Delivery Address for Payments and Minimum Fee Statements of Account:** We encourage all services to use SoundExchange Licensee Direct to calculate, certify and pay for royalties online, including the renewal of their minimum fee if no changes occurred to their service from the previous year. New services should submit their Minimum Fee Statement of Account *online* using [Licensee Direct](#). Existing services should *also* submit their Minimum Fee Statement of Account *online* after signing in to [Licensee Direct](#). If prospective and current licensees are unable to submit their Statement of Account online, please contact us at [licenseerelations@soundexchange.com](mailto:licenseerelations@soundexchange.com).

Physical delivery (payments *only*):

Standard USPS Mail  
SoundExchange, Inc.  
P.O. Box 75202  
Baltimore, MD 21275-5202

Overnight Delivery / Courier Service  
Lockbox Services 75202  
Wells Fargo Bank  
7175 Columbia Gateway Drive  
Attn: SoundExchange, Inc., Lockbox 75202  
Columbia, MD 21046  
Tel.: 1-800-289-3557



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All payments should be made payable to “**SoundExchange**” or “**SoundExchange, Inc.**” All payments sent to the above physical addresses *must* be accompanied by physical copy of the signed Statement of Account, printed from Licensee Direct.

Any and all *other* correspondence may be sent to the attention of Licensee Relations at SoundExchange, 733 10<sup>th</sup> Street NW, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Washington, DC 20001 or emailed to [licenseerelations@soundexchange.com](mailto:licenseerelations@soundexchange.com). **Please do not send payments/forms to our DC address, unless instructed to do so by a Licensee Relations team member.**

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This memorandum does not constitute a waiver of our members’ right to recover damages incurred by virtue of any unlicensed transmissions or reproductions of copyrighted sound recordings, and such rights as well as claims for other relief are expressly retained. You should be aware that SoundExchange does not make any determination as to whether a service is in fact eligible to use the statutory license. Instead, the applicable authorization for such services to publicly perform sound recordings derives from federal law, and eligibility for such activity is a matter of law. Accordingly, SoundExchange’s acceptance of any payments, Statements of Account, Reports of Use, or anything else, does not express or imply any acknowledgment that a service is or has been eligible to make use of the statutory license or that a service is otherwise in compliance with the statutory license. SoundExchange, as well as the performers and copyright owners on whose behalf SoundExchange collects royalties expressly reserve their rights and all other claims for relief.

Please understand that we are not providing you with legal advice about rights or royalties under the Copyright Act or regulations promulgated pursuant thereto. Furthermore, any communications between you and SoundExchange shall not create an attorney-client relationship and the information herein is not subject to any attorney-client confidentiality privileges. You should consult with your own legal counsel before taking any actions based upon statements made in this memorandum.

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If you have any difficulty accessing the forms from the website, or have any questions about the above information, please do not hesitate to contact our Licensee Relations team at 202-559-0555 or email us at [licenseerelations@soundexchange.com](mailto:licenseerelations@soundexchange.com). Additionally, if you believe this memorandum has reached you in error or you wish future correspondence from SoundExchange to be directed to another individual and/or address, please contact us via the above e-mail address.