



# NEWS

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This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.  
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Circ 1974).

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## **FCC DEDICATES SPECTRUM ENABLING MEDICAL BODY AREA NETWORKS TO TRANSFORM PATIENT CARE, LOWER HEALTH CARE COSTS, AND SPUR WIRELESS MEDICAL INNOVATION**

*New Rules Make U.S. First in the World to Allocate Spectrum for Medical Area Body Networks (MBANs)*

Washington, D.C.—The Federal Communications Commission today advanced its wireless health care agenda by adopting rules that will enable Medical Body Area Networks (MBANs), low-power wideband networks consisting of multiple body-worn sensors that transmit a variety of patient data to a control device. MBAN devices free patients from cumbersome cables that tether them to their hospital bed. MBANs provide a cost effective way to monitor every patient in a healthcare institution, so clinicians can provide real-time and accurate data, allowing them to intervene and save lives.

Wireless devices that operate on MBAN spectrum can be used to actively monitor a patient's health, including blood glucose and pressure monitoring, delivery of electrocardiogram readings, and even neonatal monitoring systems. MBAN devices will be designed to be deployed widely within a hospital setting and will make use of inexpensive disposable body-worn sensors. MBAN technology will also make it easier to move patients to different parts of the health care facility for treatment and can dramatically improve the quality of patient care by giving health care providers the chance to identify life-threatening problems or events before they reach critical levels.

In the First Report and Order, the Commission allocates 40 MHz of spectrum at 2360-2400 MHz for MBAN use on a secondary basis. It will accommodate MBAN use through an expansion of the existing Medical Device Radiocommunication (MedRadio) Service in Part 95 of our rules. This structure, which will permit MBAN devices to operate on a 'license-by-rule' basis in which users will not have to apply for and receive individual station licenses, will lead to the rapid and widespread development of innovative new MBAN applications.

Each year, millions of Americans deal with the discomfort and risk of infection that result from the attachment to medical equipment cables, and the limitations of these physical cables keep nearly half of all patients from being actively monitored. MBANs allow for ubiquitous and reliable monitoring, and give health care providers the chance to identify life-threatening problems or events before they occur. According to a study by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, a monitored hospital patient has a 48% chance of surviving a cardiac arrest—this number plummets as low as 6% without monitoring.

The 2010 *National Broadband Plan* recognized that the use of spectrum-agile radios and other techniques can significantly increase the efficient use of radio spectrum to meet growing demand for this valuable resource. The development of the MBAN concept illustrates how advanced technology can enable the more efficient use of spectrum to deliver innovative new services. Because MBAN devices will share the

spectrum with existing primary users, the rules contain registration and coordination provisions to protect vital flight testing operations conducted by aeronautical mobile telemetry (AMT) licensees.

All MBAN use of the 2360-2390 MHz band will be subject to registration with an MBAN coordinator and additional coordination if warranted by location. Use of this 30 megahertz band will be restricted to indoor operation at health care facilities. MBAN devices that operate in the 2390-2400 MHz band will not require registration and coordination, and may be used in any location – including in-home residential settings. A Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking asks questions about the selection of an MBAN coordinator or coordinators.

Action by the Commission on May 24, 2012 by First Report and Order and Further Notice of Proposed Rulemaking. Chairman Genachowski, Commissioners McDowell, Clyburn, Rosenworcel and Pai. Separate statements issued by Chairman Genachowski, Commissioners McDowell, Clyburn, Rosenworcel and Pai.

ET Docket No. 08-59.

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