



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF  
**COMMERCE**  
**NEWS**  
WASHINGTON, DC 20230

**National  
Telecommunications &  
Information  
Administration**

## **Commerce's NTIA Welcomes Congressional Action on DTV Delay as Opportunity for More Americans to Prepare for the End of the Digital TV Transition**

*For Immediate Release: February 5, 2009*

*Contact: Bart Forbes, (202) 482-7002 or [press@ntia.doc.gov](mailto:press@ntia.doc.gov)*

WASHINGTON—The Commerce Department's National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) today welcomed the additional time to assist America's switch to digital broadcasting afforded by the House's and Senate's passage of the "DTV Delay Act." This measure allows full-power television stations to continue analog broadcasts past the current deadline of February 17, 2009, to June 12, 2009.

"The DTV Delay Act is good for the American people. It acknowledges the need for more time so we can give the American consumers the assistance they need to acquire coupons and the importance of giving the public safety community access to additional spectrum to improve communications," said Acting NTIA Administrator Anna Gomez. "If NTIA receives additional budget authority for the TV Converter Box Coupon Program, our first priority will be to provide coupons for those households currently on the waiting list, as well as maximize further distribution of coupons."

The TV Converter Box Coupon Program helps households with analog television sets -- not connected to cable, satellite or other pay TV service -- to buy a converter box so their TV sets can receive digital broadcasts. The DTV Delay Act allows the NTIA to issue to a requesting household one replacement coupon for each coupon that was issued and that expired without being redeemed. However, this will not take effect until the enactment of additional budget authority.

### **Background:**

The Digital Television Transition and Public Safety Act of 2005 originally required full-power television stations to cease analog broadcasts and switch to digital after February 17, 2009. The Act authorized NTIA to create the TV Converter Box Coupon Program and is funded by the recent airwaves auction. The Act funded the Program at \$1.5 billion, which included an obligation limit of \$1.34 billion for ordered and redeemed coupons. Funds are obligated when coupons are issued. If coupons are not used and expire, those funds are returned to the Program to fill requests. The transition to digital broadcast television will free up the airwaves for better communications among emergency first responders and new telecommunication services and will offer consumers a clearer picture and more programming choices.

The TV Converter Box Coupon Program permits all households to request up to two coupons - each worth \$40 - toward the purchase of certified converter boxes. Coupons may be requested while supplies last, and only one coupon can be used to purchase each coupon-eligible converter box. Coupon requests are now placed on a waiting list and are being fulfilled as funds become available. Consumers can purchase a converter box at one of the more than 34,000 participating local, phone or online retailers. Consumers will receive a list of eligible converter boxes and participating retailers with their coupons. Also, consumers should call stores before shopping to ensure the desired converter box is available. Converter boxes generally cost between \$40 and \$80 and coupons expire 90 days from the date they are mailed.

When consumers receive their coupons in the mail, they should buy a converter box as soon as possible, and try the box with their television to address any potential technical issues. Some viewers watch programs over translators or other low-power stations which may continue broadcasting analog signals after the digital television transition deadline. Those viewers may wish to select a converter box that will pass through analog signals.

Households may apply for coupons online at [www.DTV2009.gov](http://www.DTV2009.gov), by phone at 1-888-DTV-2009 (1-888-388-2009), via fax at 1-877-DTV-4ME2 (1-877-388-4632) or by mail to P.O. Box 2000, Portland, OR 97208-2000. Deaf or hard of hearing callers may dial 1-877-530-2634 (English TTY) or 1-866-495-1161 (Spanish TTY). Nursing home residents may apply with the paper application available downloadable at [www.DTV2009.gov](http://www.DTV2009.gov).

For more information about the Coupon Program, please visit [www.DTV2009.gov](http://www.DTV2009.gov) and for questions about the DTV transition, go to [www.dtv.gov](http://www.dtv.gov) or call 1-888-CALL-FCC.

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