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Copyright Royalty Board

37 CFR Part 381

[Docket No. 2025-CRB-0011-PBR (2023-2027) COLA (2026)]

Cost of Living Adjustment to Public Broadcasters Compulsory License Royalty Rate

AGENCY: Copyright Royalty Board, Library of Congress.

ACTION: Final rule; cost of living adjustment.

SUMMARY: The Copyright Royalty Judges announce a cost of living adjustment (COLA) to the royalty rate that noncommercial radio stations at certain colleges, universities, and other educational institutions that are not affiliated with National Public Radio must pay for the use in 2026 of published nondramatic musical compositions in the SESAC Performing Rights, LLC (SESAC), and Global Music Rights, LLC, (GMR), repertories pursuant to the statutory license under the Copyright Act for noncommercial broadcasting.

DATES: *Effective date:* [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

Applicability dates: These rates are applicable to the period January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Anita Brown, CRB Program Specialist, (202) 707-7658, crb@loc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 118 of the Copyright Act, title 17 of the United States Code, creates a statutory license for the use of published nondramatic musical works and published pictorial, graphic, and sculptural works in connection with noncommercial broadcasting.

On June 28, 2023, the Copyright Royalty Judges (Judges) adopted final

regulations governing the rates and terms of copyright royalty payments under section 118 of the Copyright Act for the license period 2023-2027. *See* 88 FR 41827. Pursuant to these regulations, on or before December 1 of each year, the Judges shall publish in the *Federal Register* notice of the change in the cost of living and a revised schedule of the rates codified at § 381.5(c)(3) and (4) relating to compositions in the repertory of SESAC and GMR. The adjustment, fixed to the nearest dollar, shall be the greater of (1) the change in the cost of living as determined by the Consumer Price Index (all consumers, all items) (“CPI-U”) “during the period from the most recent index published prior to the previous notice to the most recent index published prior to December 1 of that year” or (2) 1.5%. 37 CFR 381.10.

The change in the cost of living as determined by the CPI-U during the period from the most recent index published prior to the previous notice, *i.e.*, before December 1, 2024, to the most recent index published before December 1, 2025, is 2.9%.¹ In accordance with 37 CFR 381.10(b), the Judges announce that the COLA for calendar year 2026 shall be 2.9%. Application of the 2.9% COLA to the 2025 rates for the performance of published nondramatic musical compositions in the repertory of SESAC and GMR—\$199 per station—results in an adjusted rate of \$205 per station, rounded to the nearest dollar.

List of Subjects in 37 CFR Part 381

Copyright, Music, Radio, Rates, Television.

Final Regulations

¹ The CPI-U announced on October 24, 2025, by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in its *Consumer Price Index News Release – Consumer Price Index*, is available at <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/cpi.pdf> at Table 1. The Copyright Royalty Judges note that the October 24, 2025, publication is the most recent CPI-U published by the Secretary of Labor before December 1 of the preceding year of this COLA adjustment (*i.e.* 2026). The Bureau of Labor statistics has explained “BLS could not collect October 2025 reference period survey data due to a lapse in appropriations.” *See* <https://www.bls.gov/bls/2025-lapse-revised-release-dates.htm> (last visited Nov. 25, 2025). The “change in the cost of living during the period from the most recent index published prior to the previous notice to the most recent index published prior to December 1” of this year, *i.e.*, the change from October 2024 to September 2025, is 2.9% ((324.800-315.664)/315.664).

In consideration of the foregoing, the Judges amend part 381 of title 37 of the Code of Federal Regulations as follows:

PART 381—USE OF CERTAIN COPYRIGHTED WORKS IN CONNECTION WITH NONCOMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTING

1. The authority citation for part 381 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 17 U.S.C. 118, 801(b)(1) and 803.

2. Section 381.5 is amended by revising paragraphs (c)(3)(iv) and (c)(4)(iv) as follows:

§ 381.5 Performance of musical compositions by public broadcasting entities licensed to colleges and universities.

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(c) * * *

(3) * * *

(iv) 2026: \$205 per station.

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(4) * * *

(iv) 2026: \$205 per station.

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Dated: November 25, 2025.

Christina L. Shifton,
Interim Chief Copyright Royalty Judge.