



# RATINGS BEST PRACTICES GUIDANCE FOR STREAMING SERVICES

Updated as of October 21, 2024

There are a growing number of streaming platforms available to children and families. According to a September 2024 survey of parents conducted on behalf of the TV Parental Guidelines Monitoring Board (the “Board”), 87% of children are watching some content via streaming services. Given the popularity of these platforms, some of which do not use the TV Parental Guidelines, the Board developed the following ratings guidance to encourage a consistent ratings experience for parents regardless of whether they and their families are watching content via linear TV networks or through streaming services.

1. Video streaming services in the United States should at a minimum strive to replicate the ratings experience available for programming that is shown on television, including the use of an age-based rating and applicable descriptors (together, “TV Ratings”).
2. Video streaming services should include TV Ratings for movies and episodes of programs (“Programming”) that were shown on television with ratings and for all Programming originally produced for streaming (other than with respect to news, sports, advertisements, promotional materials or movies rated by the Motion Picture Association (“MPA”)). For movies rated by the MPA (and not edited for television), the applicable MPA rating and descriptor should be incorporated and displayed.
3. For all Programming that is rated, video streaming services should display TV Ratings on-screen at the time that a viewer initiates playback. This display should be either: (1) an overlay of the TV Ratings icons at the beginning of video playback; or (2) inclusion of the TV Ratings icons on a stand-alone advisory bumper card that appears on-screen immediately prior to video playback. (For the purposes of clarity, on-screen display information need not be “burned in” or otherwise permanently attached to a video file; the information must simply be visible to the end user at the time that video playback is initiated).
4. Video streaming services should also include age-based ratings within the product experience (e.g., as part of narrative program summaries contained on program description screens or within online menus and navigation guides) to the extent practicable, after considering technical and other reasonable limitations (such as screen size and platform capabilities).
5. Video streaming services may elect to include additional information such as parental advisories, content labels with details about the types of content contained within Programming (e.g., suicide, smoking, domestic violence, sexual assault or non-

sexual nudity), or outreach resources for viewers who need help or want to learn more.

6. Video streaming services should apply TV Ratings on an episode-by-episode basis for episodically rated programs.
7. For those series acquired from a third party that were not originally shown on television with TV Ratings in the United States, video streaming services should at a minimum apply ratings on a per-series or per-season basis (even though they may also apply TV Ratings on a per-episode basis). Alternatively, services can apply a Not Rated (NR) classification if the streaming service's parental control functions can recognize an NR classification and if those functions would preclude viewers from accessing NR content when parental controls have been activated.
8. Unless the Programming has been edited, video streaming services should apply the same TV Ratings in the streaming environment as were applied the content when it was shown on television with ratings. When previously rated Programming is sold or licensed to third party streaming services, the entity that initially rated the content shall upon request provide the third-party service with the applicable TV Ratings information. If the Programming has been edited, video streaming services should rerate the content as needed to ensure the accurate TV Rating is applied.
9. Video streaming services will continue to study ratings capabilities and, when practicable in the future, apply TV Ratings to additional content, including, for example, archival content that was originally shown on television prior to the adoption of the TV Parental Ratings system.