



# COMMUNITY NETWORK SERVICE PROVIDER LICENSE

(CNSP\_L)

APPLICATION GUIDE \_v2.0

## LICENSE APPLICATION GUIDE & CHECKLIST

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## Background

This guide is prepared to guide individuals or organizations prepare and apply for the Network Infrastructure License , Application Service Provider and/or Content Service Provider licenses under the Unified License Framework. The focus however is on Community Network Service Provider License for Community Networks operators. The aim of this guide is to create awareness and promote compliance in the telecommunications industry.

The guide is prepared and organized by Alphonse Odhiambo. Alphonse has vast understanding and knowledge on the community network operations and models. He has successfully mentored over 11 community networks in Kenya on network and infrastructure services.

## Disclaimer

The values and figures used here are based on the Communications Authority (CA) revised market analysis and might be subject to change as per the Communications Authority new standards. Therefore, I encourage that you consider checking the current rates and tariffs as per the CA.

## Importance of obtaining a license

1. The license allows you to operate legally within defined frameworks and regulations.
2. License helps in creating an enabling environment for operators by outlining the scope and controlling unethical competition.
3. The license has the potential of opening up funding opportunities for operators either from lending institutions or donors or through USF Kitty.
4. The license makes you compliant with the country's legal provisions.
5. The license contributes to your credibility in operations by giving users assurance that you are a recognized operator.
6. Opportunity to obtain ASN number and public IPs and join other bodies like TESPOK
7. Opportunity to peer with other ISPs at the Internet Exchange Point (IXPs)

## Terms

CNs - Community Networks  
ULF - Unified License Framework  
NFP - Network Facility Provider  
ASP - Application Service Provider  
CSP - Content Service Provider  
ISP - Internet Service Provider  
QoS - Quality of Service

## Prerequisites

1. Certificate of registration of the organization (Preferably Not-for-profit for CNs) such as a Community-Based Organization (CBO), NGO, Society, Business, Company, or Trust
2. Organizational KRA PIN Certificate
3. Community Engagement / Presence
4. Business plan
5. Network Topology /Technological Design
6. Category of ISP (T1, T2, T3, CNSP\_L)

## **Procedure**

Step 1: Download the application from the CA website (Links provided below)

Step 2: Fill in the form accurately

Step 3: Attach all the required supporting documents to the checklist above

Step 4: Pay the stated amount to the account provided on the application form

Step 5: Submit your application either physically or via email indicated on the form

## **License Stages**

### **Stage 1: RECEIVING DESK - AT CA DESK**

- The receiving officer will counter check the documents to ensure that all necessary documents are available and if there is a need for correction.
- This stage assumes that you have completed the above procedures.

### **Stage 2: BUSINESS REVIEW COMMITTEE**

- At this stage, the designated committee looks into the organization's business model based on the Business plan to understand the viability and sustainability of the business model.
- Community ownership and involvement must be clear and reasonable.
- At this stage, the following documents are reviewed: Business Plan, SLA, and Quality of Service (QoS), DP Policy assurance document.

### **Stage 3: TECHNICAL REVIEW COMMITTEE**

- This stage is composed of a technical committee that performs the review of the technology deployed or to be deployed.
- They look at the network deployment topology and the technologies used such as FTTx, WISPs, Spectrum, and Frequency.
- They ensure that you are using type-approved equipment and technology and are in compliance with the Spectrum and Frequency guidelines.

### **Stage 4: PHYSICAL SITE VISITS**

- The Communication Authority assigns a team to visit the applicant's organizations to counter-verify the existence of the organization and also to conduct other need-based surveys.
- This stage is informed by the joint decision from the committees doing the application review.

#### Stage 5: BOARD DECISION

- Based on the response from the above stages, BOARD will then go ahead to either award the license or not. For any kind of decision made, CA will communicate to the applicant and explain the reasons.

#### Stage 6: ISSUANCE OF OFFER LETTER

- Offer letter is issued with details of payment and CA financial period (e.g normally June 2023 to July 2024 upon which renewal is effective)
- NOTE: This letter is not the License! Should you feel like you can't pay the stated amount, you can decline the offer and the Licensing process is then canceled.

#### Stage 7: LICENSE AWARD

- Should the board approve the application, then a license will be awarded to the applicant.

#### NOTE:

1. *A renewal fee will be paid annually for the license.*
2. *Typical license processing period is within 135 Days from the date of receipt of application documents at the Licensing department*

#### WHAT CAN LEAD TO THE DISMISSAL /REJECTION OF YOUR APPLICATION?

- 1) Inconsistency in the application documents
- 2) Incorrect organizational details or proven false
- 3) Decline by stated organization official(s)
- 4) Missing statutory organizational documents (Registration cert, KRA, Charter, etc)
- 5) When the organization is a for-profit entity
- 6) If the Organization has obtained or in the acquisition of other conflicting licenses (eg. NFP or ASP License at Tier 1, 2, or 3)
- 7) If the organization has been declared bankrupt or insolvent by the court of law or if the office holders are facing any charges that bar them from managing such entities.

#### WHAT CAN LEAD TO THE WITHDRAWAL / REVOKING OF YOUR LICENSE?

1. When your organization violates the terms, regulations, and standards bound by the license and fails to commit to its SLA and QoS terms.
2. When the organization is dissolved or seized to exist.

3. When key officials request the withdrawal according to the laid down procedures.
4. When the regulator gets a court order to do so!
5. If the license is not serving its purpose anymore
6. If that module/service is no longer providing that service.
7. If the applicant upgrades to higher licensing categories such as NFP and ASP Licenses.
8. If the organization fails to renew the license as stipulated in the terms of reference by the CA.
9. In the scenario that your organization is involved in fraud or other malpractices including stealing people's money and resources, among other illegalities.

## Licensing Categories

LEVEL	LICENSE TYPE	REGION	BUSINESS MODEL	APPLICATION FEES	INITIAL OPERATING FEES	ANNUAL FEES	INITIAL PAYABLE FEES
TIER1	NFP	COUNTRY	COMMERCIAL	5,000	15M	4M	19M
TIER2	NFP	REGION	COMMERCIAL	5,000	15M	800,000	2.3M
TIER3	NFP	COUNTY	COMMERCIAL	5,000	200,000	160,000	360,000
CNSP_L	Community Networks	SUB-COUNTY	NON-COMMERCIAL	1,000	5,000	5,000	10,000

### Important Links:

1. Community Network License application form - CA/F/LCS/TL 8.0  
[-https://www.ca.go.ke/sites/default/files/articles/Telecoms%20Forms/Application%20Form%20For%20Community%20Network%20and%20Service%20Provider%20Licence1-TL-8-0.pdf](https://www.ca.go.ke/sites/default/files/articles/Telecoms%20Forms/Application%20Form%20For%20Community%20Network%20and%20Service%20Provider%20Licence1-TL-8-0.pdf)
2. Commercial NFP License application form (T2,3) - CA/F/LCS/TL 3.7  
[-https://www.ca.go.ke/sites/default/files/articles/Telecoms%20Forms/Application-Form-For-Electronic-Communications-Services1-TL-3.7.pdf](https://www.ca.go.ke/sites/default/files/articles/Telecoms%20Forms/Application-Form-For-Electronic-Communications-Services1-TL-3.7.pdf)
3. Communication Authority Market Structure (Contains fee structure) - CA/LCS/TELECOM MARKET STRUCTURE/2021  
[-https://www.ca.go.ke/sites/default/files/CA/Telecom%20Market%20Structure/Market%20Structure%20Under%20the%20Unified%20Licensing%20Framework%20October%202021.pdf](https://www.ca.go.ke/sites/default/files/CA/Telecom%20Market%20Structure/Market%20Structure%20Under%20the%20Unified%20Licensing%20Framework%20October%202021.pdf)
4. Gonline Africa  
[-www.gonline.africa](http://www.gonline.africa)

## CHECKLIST

Items	Available	Ready	Submitted
Application fees paid - Kshs. 1,000 or 5,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Network Topology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Duly executed Affidavit (copies) -Must not be signed by magistrates from the same Law Firm	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Duly signed cover letter on applicant's letterhead	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CBO / ORG / Company Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Duly completed application form	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Declaration by the applicant with name, designation, signature, and date	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letter from local authority e.g Chief	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Letter for school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Copy of Byways / Constitution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clear copies of the ID of directors, officials, shareholders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
KRA Certificate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minutes allowing the Organization to apply for CNSP License	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
List of members together with their contact and copies of National ID/ Passport	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
List of officials of the organization	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Business Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
SLA / QoS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Network Topology and technology usage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>