

PPM™ Encoding Steps

The following steps are necessary to ensure that the Portable People Meter™ equipment is correctly selected, installed and tested before the station is fully encoded and eligible for audience estimates.

1. The station signs and returns an encoding agreement.

This will help clarify the parties' respective responsibilities.

2. The equipment is shipped.

A representative from Arbitron Encoding Operations will contact the station's engineer to assess the station's technical needs. Arbitron then ships the appropriate equipment.

3. The equipment is installed.

Once received, the engineer should install the encoding equipment (main and backup encoder) and in-station encoding monitor as soon as possible.

4. The equipment is tested.

Once the equipment is installed, the station's engineer and Arbitron Encoding Operations need to test each encoder (main and backup) to make sure the equipment is functioning properly. This will require an off-air audio sample from each encoder.

5. Arbitron confirms the station is properly encoded.

Once all components have been tested, Arbitron will provide the station with confirmation that the station is considered encoded and eligible for reporting.

6. The station monitors its encoder status.

Following installation of the encoder, it is the station's responsibility to monitor the encoding status using the provided in-station monitor. Arbitron's engineers recommend connecting the monitor to the station's existing air-fault alarm system.

In the event of an encoder failure:

- The station should switch to the backup or spare encoder immediately!
- The station should contact Arbitron Encoding Operations (which will respond during business hours).

If you have any questions, please feel free to call Dan Hunt, broadcast engineer, Encoding Operations, at (410) 312-8457.