



“The Parental Advisory is a notice to consumers that recordings identified by this logo may contain strong language or depictions of violence, sex or substance abuse. Parental discretion is advised.”

RIAA Parental Advisory Logo Standards

The following guidelines and requirements (“Standards”) apply to all participants in the voluntary, RIAA-administered, Parental Advisory Label (“PAL”) program. Any such entity is referred to herein as a “Participant.”

This version of the Standards in its entirety is effective as of August 6, 2025, and supersedes all prior versions. The RIAA reserves the right to modify these Standards at any time with or without notice, and encourages Participants to review the Standards, currently located at <https://www.riaa.com/resources-learning/pal-standards/>, frequently to ensure that Participants are aware of any modifications.

The Standards include the following guidelines and requirements:

- 1. Uniform Guidelines for Determining Whether a Sound Recording Should Use a PAL Notice.**
- 2. Guidelines and Requirements Regarding Use of a Logo on Physical Products.**
- 3. Guidelines and Requirements Regarding PAL Notices in Consumer Advertisements.**
- 4. Guidelines and Requirements Regarding PAL Notices in Digital Distribution.**

Uniform Guidelines for Determining Whether a Sound Recording Should Use a PAL Notice

Participant record labels and/or artists should use the following guidelines to determine whether any particular sound recording contains strong language or depictions of violence, sex, or substance abuse to such an extent as to merit parental notification, as described in more detail in these Standards. Strong language or depictions of violence, sex, or substance abuse to such an extent is referred to herein as “PAL Content.” Only the record label or artist that owns and/or distributes the particular sound recording may determine whether the sound recording contains PAL Content and warrants the use of a PAL Notice.

A determination that a sound recording contains PAL Content is not a statement as to whether the sound recording is or is not suitable for particular listeners. Nor is the absence of any notification that a sound recording contains PAL Content a statement that the sound recording is completely devoid of all references to strong language or depictions of violence, sex, or substance abuse. Rather, it is utilized to (i) provide parents, consumers, and companies within the sales or distribution chain notice that parental discretion is advised when purchasing the particular sound recording for children or when listening to the sound recording with children present; (ii) guide the labeling, marketing, and distribution of the sound recording; and (iii) provide notice whether an Edited Version (defined below) of a sound recording exists. A record label or artist determination that a sound recording contains PAL Content shall result in the use of PAL Content indicators, as more fully described in these Standards, to provide notice of the PAL Content. Such indicators are referred to herein as “PAL Notices.”

It is obviously not possible to define each individual situation in which a record label or artist should determine that a sound recording contains PAL Content. In making such a determination, however, record labels and artists should consider:

1. that contemporary cultural morals and standards should be used in determining whether parents or guardians would find the sound recording suitable for children;
2. the context in which the material is used, as some words, phrases, sounds, or descriptions might be offensive to parents if spotlighted or emphasized, but might not offend if merely part of the background or a minimal part of the lyrics;
3. the context of the artist performing the material, as well as the expectations of the artist’s audience;
4. that lyrics are often susceptible to varying interpretations, and that words can have different meanings and should not be viewed in isolation from the music that accompanies them (*i.e.*, lyrics when accompanied by loud and raucous

music can be perceived differently than the same lyrics when accompanied by soft and soothing music);

5. that such a determination requires sensitivity and common sense, and that context, frequency, and emphasis are obviously important; isolated or unintelligible references to certain material might be insufficient to warrant labeling a particular sound recording as containing PAL Content;
6. that these Standards apply to the case of a single track commercially released as well as to full albums (whether released in the form of a CD, vinyl record, or any other configuration); and
7. that a sound recording may contain strong language or depictions of violence, sex, or substance abuse, yet, due to other factors involved, may not merit a designation as containing PAL Content.

The record label or artist determination that a sound recording contains PAL Content shall affect the marketing, sale, and distribution of such sound recording, as described in greater detail throughout these Standards. For purposes of clarification, only the applicable record label or artist shall determine whether any particular sound recording contains PAL Content, and all other Participants shall abide by the applicable record label or artist's determination.

Edited Versions

It is recommended, although not required, that when practicable the applicable record label or artist create an edited version of a PAL Content sound recording that does not include all of the same content contained in the original, and that no longer merits a PAL Notice. Such version is referred to herein as the "Edited Version." An Edited Version need not remove all potentially objectionable content from the sound recording. For example, some such content might be retained in order not to compromise artistic expression.

Audio-Visual Products

The applicable record label or artist shall review all audio-visual products that incorporate a sound recording as a predominant feature (e.g., DVD music videos, concert performances, music videos, etc.) separate and independent of any review solely related to the sound recording component. Such review shall utilize the standards listed herein and shall take into account the audio and visual components as a whole. In situations where a third-party Participant other than a record label or artist owns the audio-visual product containing the sound recording, such third party may utilize the guidelines listed herein to determine whether the audio-visual product contains PAL Content. For purposes of clarification, (i) any audio-visual product that contains a PAL Content sound recording shall also be deemed to contain PAL Content and (ii) the use of a sound recording that does not

contain PAL Content shall not preclude a determination that the audio-visual product contains PAL Content.

Guidelines and Requirements Regarding Use of a Logo on Physical Products

Participants shall apply the following guidelines and requirements to the labeling of physical products that contain PAL Content sound recordings.

Any physical product that contains a PAL Content sound recording as a predominant feature of the product shall include the PAL Notice listed below (the “Logo”). All such physical products are referred to herein as “Covered Physical Products,” and shall include CDs, DVDs, vinyl records, and such other current or future physical media in which a sound recording may be embodied. The RIAA owns all right, title, and interest in and to the Logo, and a Participant shall not use, reproduce, display, or distribute the Logo in any manner absent the execution of a separate written agreement between the RIAA and a Participant authorizing such use, reproduction, display, or distribution.

A Covered Physical Product shall not include any designation to indicate that a sound recording does or does not contain PAL Content other than as specifically described herein. For example, a Participant shall not label an Edited Version of a Covered Physical Product as “Clean” or “Non-explicit.”

A Covered Physical Product shall not contain a PAL Notice that is inconsistent with a record label or artist’s original designation as to whether a sound recording contains PAL Content. For example, a Participant shall not label a sound recording as containing PAL Content if the applicable record label or artist determines that the sound recording does not contain PAL Content. Similarly, a Participant shall not fail to label a sound recording as containing PAL Content if the applicable record label or artist determines the sound recording contains PAL Content.

Covered Physical Products that contain PAL Content sound recordings shall include the following Logo:



The use of the Logo on a Covered Physical Product is not a determination of whether the Covered Physical Product is or is not appropriate for particular

listeners. Nor is the absence of a Logo a statement that the Covered Physical Product is completely devoid of all references to strong language or depictions of violence, sex, or substance abuse. Rather, it is utilized to (i) provide parents, consumers, and companies within the sales or distribution chain notice that parental discretion is advised when purchasing the Covered Physical Product for children or when listening to the sound recording embodied in the Covered Physical Product with children present; (ii) guide the marketing and distribution of the Covered Physical Product; and (iii) provide notice whether an Edited Version of the Covered Physical Product exists.

Participants shall follow the following guidelines and requirements when using the Logo on a Covered Physical Product:

- Participants shall clearly and conspicuously display the Logo in a legible, non-removable form on the Covered Physical Product cover artwork (as opposed to on any wrapper, jewel-case, removable sticker, or cellophane covering).
- It is recommended, although not required, that Participants place the Logo on the bottom left or right corner of the Covered Physical Product front cover, although a Participant may determine the precise positioning on a case-by-case basis dependant upon such factors as the Covered Physical Product's particular artwork design and color.
- Participants shall display the Logo in black and white. It is recommended, although not required, that the Logo measure no less than 1" by 5/8".
- Any Edited Version shall include a label that indicates such edited designation by stating "Edited Version" ("Edited Version Label"). Participants shall clearly and conspicuously display the Edited Version Label in a legible manner on the cover artwork itself, or on any wrapper, sticker, jewel-case, or cellophane covering. Participants shall locate the Edited Version Label either on the front cover or on the top spine of the cover. The Edited Version Label provides notice that the sound recording is a modified version of the PAL Content original, does not include all of the same content contained in the original, and no longer merits a PAL Notice. The use of the Edited Version Label does not necessarily mean, however, that the record label or artist removed all potentially objectionable content from the sound recording. For example, some such content might be retained in order not to compromise artistic expression.
- It is recommended, although not required, that any Participant that distributes Covered Physical Products via an online or mobile distribution platform adopt a parental control mechanism designed to aid parents in controlling the distribution of PAL Content sound recordings via the distribution platform.

Guidelines and Requirements Regarding PAL Notices in Consumer Advertisements

Participants shall follow the following guidelines and requirements in relation to any consumer advertising, marketing, and promotions (“Advertisement(s)”) for sound recordings that contain PAL Content. These Advertisement guidelines and requirements are designed to (i) provide parents, consumers, and companies within the sales or distribution chain notice that parental discretion is advised when purchasing the PAL Content sound recording for children or when listening to the sound recording with children present; (ii) guide the marketing and distribution of the sound recording; and (iii) provide notice whether an Edited Version of the sound recording exists.

Advertisements related to sound recordings that contain PAL Content shall clearly and conspicuously communicate the presence of PAL Content in the sound recording, and may also communicate the availability of a corresponding Edited Version, if such an Edited Version exists.

- For any audio-only Advertisement, the Advertisement may state during or immediately after the Advertisement that the advertised sound recording contains PAL Content and whether an Edited Version exists. If such a statement is made, the audio only Advertisement shall only use the words “**Explicit Content – Parental Advisory**,” and may also include “**Edited Version Also Available**” in providing such disclosures.
- For any print, television, mobile, or online Advertisement, the Advertisement may include (i) the Logo for the sound recording or (ii) the words “**Explicit Content – Parental Advisory**,” “**Explicit Content**,” “**Explicit**,” or “**Parental Advisory**,” in legible form and in close proximity to the title or artwork for the applicable sound recording. If an Edited Version of the sound recording exists, the Advertisement may include the words “**Edited Version Also Available**” in legible form and in close proximity to the applicable sound recording.
- For any print, television, mobile, or online Advertisement that contains a miniature depiction of a Covered Physical Product, or merely the title of the Covered Physical Product, the Advertisement may include the words “**Explicit Content – Parental Advisory**,” “**Explicit Content**,” “**Explicit**,” or “**Parental Advisory**,” in legible form and in close proximity to the title or artwork for the applicable sound recording. If an Edited Version of the Covered Physical Product exists, the Advertisement may include the words “**Edited Version Also Available**” in legible form and in close proximity to the applicable sound recording or title.

- An Advertisement shall not include any designation to indicate that a sound recording does or does not contain PAL Content other than as specifically described herein. For example, a Participant shall not label an Edited Version of a Covered Physical Product as “Clean” or “Non-explicit” in an Advertisement.
- An Advertisement shall not contain a PAL Notice that is inconsistent with a record label or artist’s original designation as to whether a sound recording contains PAL Content. For example, a Participant shall not label a sound recording as containing PAL Content if the applicable record label or artist determines that the sound recording does not contain PAL Content. Similarly, a Participant shall not fail to label a sound recording as containing PAL Content if the applicable record label or artist determines the sound recording contains PAL Content.
- Displaying a Covered Physical Product in a manner that renders the Logo on such Covered Physical Product illegible shall not satisfy the requirement that an Advertisement clearly and conspicuously communicate the presence of PAL Content in the sound recording.
- It is recommended, although not required, that an Advertisement that contains a miniature depiction of a Covered Physical Product contain a PAL Notice in addition to the Logo as embedded within the miniature Covered Physical Product cover artwork.

Guidelines and Requirements Regarding PAL Notices in Digital Distribution

Participants shall follow the following guidelines and requirements in relation to the digital distribution of sound recordings.

Any digital distribution platform for sound recordings (including as incorporated into an audio-visual product) shall incorporate the Logo (or such other PAL Notice) and Edited Version Label into such delivery platform, as more fully described below. All such digital distribution platforms are referred to herein as “Covered Digital Platforms,” and shall include online and mobile downloads, and streaming sites and services that distribute sound recordings, and such other current or future digital platforms through or on which a sound recording may be distributed to an end user.

A Covered Digital Platform shall not include any designation to indicate that a sound recording does or does not contain PAL Content other than as specifically described herein. For example, Participants shall not label an Edited Version of a sound recording distributed through a Covered Digital Platform as “Clean” or “Non-explicit.”

A Covered Digital Platform shall not contain a PAL Notice that is inconsistent with a record label or artist's original designation as to whether a sound recording contains PAL Content. For example, a Participant shall not label a sound recording as containing PAL Content if the applicable record label or artist determines that the sound recording does not contain PAL Content. Similarly, a Participant shall not fail to label a sound recording as containing PAL Content if the applicable record label or artist determines the sound recording contains PAL Content.

The use of a PAL Notice for a sound recording made available via a Covered Digital Platform is not a determination of whether the sound recording is or is not appropriate for particular listeners. Nor is the absence of any PAL Notice a statement that the sound recording is completely devoid of all references to strong language or depictions of violence, sex, or substance abuse. Rather, it is utilized to (i) provide parents, consumers, and companies within the sales or distribution chain notice that parental discretion is advised when purchasing the particular sound recording for children or when listening to the sound recording with children present; (ii) guide the labeling, marketing, and distribution of the sound recording; and (iii) provide notice whether an Edited Version of a sound recording exists.

To the extent technologically feasible, a Covered Digital Platform shall follow the following guidelines:

- The Covered Digital Platform shall clearly and conspicuously communicate the presence of PAL Content made available via the Covered Digital Platform, and may communicate the availability of a corresponding Edited Version, if such an Edited Version exists. The Covered Digital Platform shall provide any such communication prior to the purchase or distribution of the PAL Content sound recording.
- A Covered Digital Platform shall only use the Logo, or the words “**Explicit Content – Parental Advisory**,” “**Explicit Content**,” “**Explicit**,” or “**Parental Advisory**” to communicate the presence of PAL Content, and the words “Edited Version” or “Edited” to communicate the availability of an Edited Version.
- The Covered Digital Platform shall display the PAL Notice utilized in a clear, conspicuous, and legible manner. It is recommended, although not required, that such notification appear in all stages of the purchasing process – from search results to the shopping cart.
- It is recommended, although not required, that a Covered Digital Platform adopt a parental control mechanism designed to aid parents in controlling the distribution of PAL Content sound recordings via the Covered Digital Platform. It is further recommended that any such parental control

mechanism apply to all stages of the purchasing process – from search results to the shopping cart.