

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC ACCESS TELEVISION
RULES AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

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STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The purpose of **New Bedford Public Access Television** is to provide New Bedford residents and organizations a means to produce a wide variety of cable television programs about their experiences, concerns, and interests.

New Bedford Public Access Television, with studios and offices at 918 South Rodney French Boulevard, provides access to video equipment, training and channel time to individuals and organizations in New Bedford on a first-come, first-served, non-discriminatory basis.

It is hoped that residents and organizations in New Bedford will take full advantage of this public electronic medium for free expression.

New Bedford Public Access Television strives to provide outreach to all segments of our multi-cultural and multi-lingual community, ascertaining areas of programming needs, and assessing community response to public access programming.

New Bedford Public Access Television is funded through an annual grant from MediaOne. **New Bedford Public Access Television** is one of three cable access channels operated by the City of New Bedford. **New Bedford Public Access Television** is managed by the Public Access Director for the City of New Bedford.

ELIGIBILITY

1. Any New Bedford resident or organization is eligible to become a Public Access user.
2. All residents must first show proof of residence. All New Bedford-based organizations wishing to become Public Access users must have New Bedford representation. Organizations include, but are not limited to, educational, health care, social services, arts, environmental, religious, neighborhood, or any other advocacy group located in New Bedford.
3. All eligible users must fill-out a registration form and sign a form in agreement with these rules and regulations. Access users under the age of 18 must have the registration form signed by a parent or guardian.
4. All individuals, be they a New Bedford resident or a member of a New Bedford-based organization, must take part in an orientation session to review these rules and regulations and the philosophy of **New Bedford Public Access Television**. Those wishing to utilize video equipment and facilities must complete the required equipment training and become certified. Those who do not wish to utilize equipment and facilities do not need to complete any further training.
5. All eligible users should only identify themselves as public access community producers, not as employees or staff of **New Bedford Public Access Television**, the City of New Bedford, or MediaOne.
6. Non-New Bedford residents and organizations **WILL NOT** be allowed to use **New Bedford Public Access Television** equipment or facilities.

ACCESS CENTER RULES

- 1.** Studios and equipment are available to eligible users on a first-come, first-served basis, through reservation as time permits. Requests for use of the equipment shall be made at least *a day* in advance, during hours of operation. Facility and equipment can only be used to produce programs for cablecast on **New Bedford Public Access Television**. **THE EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES MAY NOT BE USED FOR ANY OTHER PURPOSE!** Users may be asked to show proof of certification before making reservations.
- 2.** Cancellation of equipment and/or facility use must be made at least 24 hours in advance of the reservation date, except in cases of emergency. Repeated last minute cancellations may result in loss of privilege.
- 3.** Any materials for productions, beyond those provided by **New Bedford Public Access Television**, must be supplied by the user and must be removed after production. Such materials include special sets or props for productions. This also includes videotape.
- 4.** All users must sign-in and sign-out whenever they enter or leave the facility. The sign-in/out sheet will be located at the reception desk.
- 5.** Users may use the telephone located in the waiting room **FOR LOCAL CALLS ONLY!** Users may not use any material or phones from the offices of **New Bedford Public Access Television**. All offices are for **New Bedford Public Access Television** only.!!
- 6.** Eligible users utilizing **New Bedford Public Access Television** equipment, studio, or post-production facilities WILL NOT change wiring or components of said materials. **NO ATTEMPT SHOULD BE MADE TO WORK ON OR REPAIR EQUIPMENT!! ANY DAMAGE CAUSED IN THIS MANNER WILL BE CHARGED TO THE USER!** A loss of privilege will result from such equipment abuse. Any user utilizing **New Bedford Public Access Television** equipment should report any defects or problems to the staff.
- 7.** Any users found to be misusing or abusing the equipment or facilities may be asked to repeat training, testing, and/or be subject to loss of privilege.
- 8.** Users must receive a key to enter the rest room area. Since we share this "common area" with the Coast Guard, there is a need to keep the entrance locked for security reasons. The key can be obtained from any staff member.
- 9.** No smoking, food or drinks are allowed in the Cable Access Studios. **NO exceptions WILL BE GRANTED.**
- 10.** No possession or use of illegal substances and/or weapons will be allowed.

11. No one will be allowed to operate equipment or spend time in the facility while using or appearing to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

12. Abusive language and/or actions will not be permitted in the facility.

13. Violation of these rules will result in the immediate expulsion from the facility and may result in a loss of privilege. All decisions regarding discipline will be made by **New Bedford Public Access Television** and WILL BE FINAL.

ROLE OF THE ACCESS STAFF

Public Access programming depends on the active participation of the users of the facility to partake in all aspects of television production. Because of this and limited staff time, **New Bedford Public Access Television** cannot provide full video production services for users. **New Bedford Public Access Television** *is not a video taping service.*

Staff will assist and provide training in video production to all eligible users. Staff will also assist in assembling production crews from among other eligible users and volunteers. Community organizations planning to produce programs on a regular basis are encouraged to form their own television production crew, which **New Bedford Public Access Television** staff will train. Any questions regarding this policy should be directed to any staff member.

This policy does not preclude **New Bedford Public Access Television** from producing programming of community importance on its own.

VOLUNTEERS

Since **New Bedford Public Access Television's** goal is to encourage residents and non-profit organizations to partake in the production of cable television programming, the need for video production volunteers is essential. Therefore **New Bedford Public Access Television** seeks those who have completed training to become an active volunteer in aiding others complete their video productions.

TRAINING

1. Eligible Public Access users are entitled to video production training. All users must be certified before gaining access to video equipment and facilities.
2. Training is scheduled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Space for classes is limited.
3. All access users must complete the specific video production training course to be certified to use video equipment and facilities.
4. Every user must complete an orientation which will present an overview of **New Bedford Public Access Television**, its policies and these rules and regulations.
5. **New Bedford Public Access Television** has a variety of video production training programs to suit the needs of its users. **New Bedford Public Access Television** will match the user with the appropriate class offering. Check with staff on the availability and schedule of classes.
6. Sessions within a course must be followed in the order they are presented to allow users a coherent understanding of all aspects of the course.
7. After the successful completion of the training course, all users will become certified. Certification is valid as long as the user takes advantage of the equipment and facilities.
8. Any user who does not utilize the equipment or facilities for a consecutive period of one (1) year will have to repeat training before being allowed to use the equipment and facility. **New Bedford Public Access Television** staff has the right to determine the level of certification of all users.

USE OF STUDIO

1. All eligible users must be certified in studio production before reserving the studio.
2. Requests for use of the studios shall be made at least *a day* in advance, during normal business hours. All users may be asked to show ID and proof of certification.
3. All users must complete a studio request form which must be approved by staff before the studio will be scheduled.
4. No studio production may take place without staff supervision.
5. Studio sessions will be set for a maximum of four hours a day. Eligible users will be allowed a maximum of 8 hours per week in the studio. Schedules may change depending on requests for use. Use of the sound booth is included in studio reservations. Scheduled studio time includes time needed to set-up, break-down, and clean-up the studio.
6. Eligible users must show up on time for scheduled studio time and must have the studio and control room equipment and sets put away before the end of the scheduled time period. It's generally good practice to allow at least one-half hour before and after the time needed for the actual production for set-up and clean-up of the studio. No alterations will be made in the schedule for delays or tardiness of users.
7. Any discrepancies or problems with scheduling will be handled by **New Bedford Public Access Television** staff and all decisions **WILL BE FINAL**.

USE OF EDITING AND POST-PRODUCTION FACILITIES

1. All eligible users must be certified in the use of editing equipment before reserving the post-production facility.
2. Requests for use of the post-production facility shall be made at least *a day* in advance during normal business hours. All users may be asked to show ID and proof of certification.
3. All eligible users must complete an edit suite request form before schedule use of the post-production facility.
4. Eligible users are entitled to a maximum of 2 hours per day in the post-production facility. A maximum of 10 hours will be allowed to each eligible user per week. Schedules may vary depending on usage requests.
5. Any discrepancies or problems with scheduling will be handled by **New Bedford Public Access Television** staff and all decisions WILL BE FINAL.

USE OF PORTABLE VIDEO EQUIPMENT

1. All eligible users must be certified in the set-up and use of portable video equipment before reserving equipment.
2. Reservations for portable video equipment shall be made at least *a day* in advance during normal business hours. All users may be asked to show ID and proof of certification.
3. All eligible users must complete a portable equipment request form approved by staff before equipment can be reserved.
4. Equipment must be picked up and returned between the hours posted by staff. Failure to return equipment when due may result in loss of privilege.
5. Portable equipment may be checked out by any eligible user up to three (3) times per month. Only one of these times may be a weekend. Equipment may be checked out for up to a 48 hour period. Schedules may change depending on usage requests. **Only those users who reserve the portable video equipment may pick-up and return the equipment at the specified pickup/return times.**
6. Eligible users holding equipment reservations must follow these check out and check-in procedures:
 - CHECK-OUT - 1. Provide proof of certification to **New Bedford Public Access Television** staff.
 2. Complete equipment check list with staff member
 3. Assemble and test requested equipment before departure
 - CHECK-IN - 1. Equipment must be returned on time.
 2. Assemble and test equipment to ensure all is in working order.
 3. Any problems with equipment or damage should be noted on the equipment checklist and brought to the attention of the staff.
7. Any discrepancies or problems with scheduling will be handled by **New Bedford Public Access Television** staff and all decisions WILL BE FINAL.

INSURANCE AND INDEMNIFICATION OF ACCESS STAFF

1. All **New Bedford Public Access Television** equipment is insured. However, all eligible users of equipment and facilities are responsible for the equipment under their care. After certification all eligible users will agree to hold **New Bedford Public Access Television**, (including its employees and agents), the City of New Bedford, and MediaOne harmless from liability and/or legal fees incurred as a result of damage to equipment or injuries sustained by users while in the access facility and using access equipment. No equipment will be used without such agreement.

2. Users of equipment may be required to pay the deductible for any equipment covered under the insurance policy and damaged or lost while under the use of said user. If the equipment is damaged and not covered by the insurance, the user may be responsible to reimburse **New Bedford Public Access Television** for the full replacement value of the damaged or lost equipment.

3. All programs are the sole property and copyright of the producer. As part of the CABLECAST REQUEST FORM, each producer must proclaim that they are solely responsible for program content and agree to hold **New Bedford Public Access Television** (including its employees and agents), the City of New Bedford, and MediaOne harmless from liability and/or legal fees and expenses incurred as a result of cablecasting. No show will be aired without such agreement. **New Bedford Public Access Television** reserves the right to add appropriate disclaimers before and after each program for any material which may be sensitive to some viewers.

IMPORT PROGRAMMING

1. Any New Bedford resident or organization may produce programming without the use of **New Bedford Public Access Television** and request air time. Import programming consists of programs not produced with **New Bedford Public Access Television** equipment.

2. Non-resident individuals and organizations may have programs aired on **New Bedford Public Access Television**. These individuals or groups will need approval for air time from the Public Access Director. They also need a New Bedford individual or organization to serve as a sponsor. For more information on import programming, consult any staff member.

3. Programs produced by New Bedford individuals or organizations receive priority in the formulation of the program schedule. **New Bedford Public Access Television** reserves the right to limit the amount of import programming at its discretion.

PROGRAM CONTENT RULES

1. New Bedford Public Access Television allows for a wide range of entertainment and informational programming. The goal is to provide a diversified programming schedule to meet the viewing needs of New Bedford cable subscribers.

2. Presentation of the following material on **New Bedford Public Access Television** is PROHIBITED:

- a. Any program material which is COMMERCIAL in nature.
- b. Any material which is intended to defraud the viewer or is designed to obtain money by false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises.
- c. Any advertisement of (or information concerning) any lottery, gift enterprise or similar scheme offering prizes dependent, in whole or in part, upon lot or chance; or any list of prizes drawn or awarded by means of such a lottery, gift enterprise or scheme, whether said list contains any part or all of such prizes.
- d. Libelous or slanderous material
- e. Any unauthorized use of copyrighted material or publicity rights, and invasion of property
- f. Any material in violation of FCC regulations or which violates local, state, or federal law.
- g. Material that is obscene or incites violence.

3. Any programming from organizations must pertain to that organization's or purpose.

4. All programs are the sole property and copyright of the producer. As part of the CABLECAST REQUEST FORM, each producer must proclaim that they are solely responsible for program content and agree to hold **New Bedford Public Access Television** (including its employees and agents), the City of New Bedford, and Media One harmless from liability and/or legal fees and expenses incurred as a result of cablecasting. No show will be aired without such agreement.

5. **New Bedford Public Access Television** reserves the right to deny cablecasting a program if these rules are violated.

POLITICAL PROGRAMMING

New Bedford Public Access Television supports the airing of programs from individuals running for public office and spokespersons from political parties or ballot/warrant issues. Since FCC regulations concerning equal time do not apply to public access programming, **New Bedford Public Access Television** places no restrictions on the use of the Public Access channel and facility by political candidates or spokespersons from political parties or ballot/warrant issues, other than those applying to normal and equitable use of the Public Access equipment, facility, and channel scheduling as outlined in these rules and regulations. In that vein,

1. Regarding political programs, the following material is ENCOURAGED:

- Political presentations which are informative in nature, such that they state who a candidate or ballot/warrant issue is and what it represents in terms of specific ideas, issues, and policies.

- Candidate and ballot/warrant issue forums and debates.

- Presentations which describe a person's or organizations' point of view on a given issue. **2.**

Regarding political programs, the following material is PROHIBITED:

- Any advertising by, or on behalf of, candidates for public office, political parties or ballot issues; or advertising promoting (or opposing) candidates or ballot issues by supporting groups or lobbying organizations. Announcements of political fund raisers will not be allowed on the Community Bulletin Board.

3. All political programming will be aired on **New Bedford Public Access Television** up to 24 hours before the opening of polls in New Bedford. For example, if polls open Tuesday at 10am, political programming will cease effective 10am Monday. The scheduling of political programs fall under the same guidelines as other Public Access programs as outlined in these rules and regulations.

4. Candidates for office and those involved in political parties and ballot/warrant issues will follow these guidelines effective the day a candidate officially declares his or her candidacy or the day a ballot/warrant issue meets the requirements for being placed on the ballot. These guidelines also include any individual who is declared a write-in candidate whose name may not appear on the official New Bedford election ballot.

5. For more information regarding political programs, seek out any staff member.

CHANNEL TIME REQUESTS/CABLECASTING PROCEDURE

1. All request for channel time will be processed by **New Bedford Public Access Television** staff. A CABLECAST REQUEST FORM must be completed to schedule a cablecast. NO PROGRAM WILL BE AIRED WITHOUT THIS COMPLETED FORM.

2. All programs will be aired at least ONCE A WEEK.

Priority in the formulation of the cablecast schedule will be determined based on the following criteria:

- a. The anticipated audience for the program.
- b. New Bedford residents or organizations producing programs using **New Bedford Public Access Television** equipment and facilities.
- c. New Bedford residents or organizations who produce programs with their own video equipment.
- d. Programs not produced by New Bedford residents.

3. All eligible users may produce individual programs or a series. A series is a number of programs focusing on a central theme. A weekly series is updated each week. Bi-weekly series are updated every two weeks. Monthly series are updated every four weeks. Commitment to a series means the delivery of a *new* program when it is due. When a new program is not available, old programs may be re-run on a limited basis not to exceed five (5) times a year for a weekly series, three (3) times a year for a bi-weekly series, and once (1) a year for a monthly series.

Individual programs will be aired for four weeks.

4. All series (weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly) will be allocated regular time slots. Failure of a user to submit new programming or to have a program ready for its scheduled cablecast may result in the time slot being allocated to other users.

5. All programs must be in possession of **New Bedford Public Access Television** at least ONE DAY before the scheduled cablecast date. Programs delivered the same day as its broadcast will not be aired.

6. ALL DECISIONS ON CABLECAST TIMES ARE SET BY **New Bedford Public Access Television** AND ARE FINAL. **New Bedford Public Access Television** reserves the right to change cablecast times for any reason and will notify producers of such a change. **New Bedford Public Access Television** also has the right to deny cablecasting a program if it does not meet any of the criteria outlined in these rules and regulations.

CABLECAST STANDARDS

1. All tapes must conform to 1/2" VHS , Super-VHS or 3/4" format.
2. Each videotape must contain only one (1) program.
3. The program should begin near the beginning of the tape. All tapes must be recorded in the SP mode.
4. There should be no extra video or audio material on the tape before or after the program.
5. All tapes must be labeled properly. Clearly labeled videotapes must contain the following information:
 - Title of program
 - Exact length of program (i.e. 55 min. 23 sec.) -
 - The scheduled air date of the program

Labels should be legible and be located on the front/top of the tape and the tape spine.

6. Programs should run either 30 minutes or 1 hour. Approval will be needed by staff for programs longer than 1 hour. Tape lengths should actually be shorter than the program, including credits to ensure the show is aired to its completion. Since we use an automated playback system, programs which run long may be cut-off.
7. Programs produced with **New Bedford Public Access Television** equipment must contain the following:
 - 30 second color bars
 - 10 second standard black
 - 10 second countdown (visual or oral) ending 2 seconds from the beginning of the program
 - Appropriate program credits of production staff.
 - New Bedford Public Access Television** credit: "Produced at **New Bedford Public Access Television**, New Bedford, Massachusetts"
 - 60 seconds of standard black

8. Import programs must follow similar standards to be aired. No exceptions will be made on this policy.

9. All video tapes scheduled for cablecasting must meet certain minimum requirements. Videotapes must be of such quality that a standard time base corrector (TBC) will accept the signal. If the TBC will not accept the signal and sync instability results, the video tape will be rejected

10. **New Bedford Public Access Television** staff has the right to refuse to cablecast any program if any of these standards are not met.

PROGRAM CREDIT AND UNDERWRITING AND GRANTS

Underwriting for programs must be for goods, services, in-kind contributions and/or donations that aid in developing and improving programs. Credit for underwriting should be noted at the beginning and end of all programs as follows: "This program was made possible through a grant by...: or "Goods and services used in this program were contributed by..." **New Bedford Public Access Television** credit must still be included. Staff must be informed, in advance, of any such underwriting credits and consulted about the proper format for underwriting credit.

COMMUNITY BULLETIN BOARD

New Bedford Public Access Television operates a community bulletin board to broadcast announcements of interest to New Bedford residents. No commercial announcements, political fund raisers, advertising, direct appeals for funds, or personal messages will be accepted. However, fund raising events may be announced. Messages announcing fund raisers should not contain ticket or admission prices. A "call for more info" phone number is permitted.

Messages for the bulletin board must be received two weeks in advance of any event. Messages announcing an event will run until the day after the event. Messages announcing ongoing services or activities will show for **two months** from the time the message is submitted.

New Bedford Public Access Television reserves the right to schedule announcements at its discretion. **New Bedford Public Access Television** reserves the right to reject or edit any message.

A BULLETIN BOARD ANNOUNCEMENT form can be obtained at the reception area.

COPYING POLICY

Since public access producers own the rights to their programs, all requests for program copies will be made to the individual producer. **New Bedford Public Access Television** will not make copies of producers' shows.

Eligible users who want to make copies can utilize our dubbing equipment. Such equipment must be reserved using the same procedures as our other equipment. The dubbing equipment can only be used to make copies of Public Access programs. It cannot be used for any other purpose.

GRIEVANCES

Any grievances regarding assignment of studio, post-production facilities, portable equipment, or cablecast schedule should be discussed with the staff or the Public Access Director.

AMENDMENTS

New Bedford Public Access Television has the right to amend these rules and policies at any time.

