

COX Communications Public Access Guidelines



Handbook For Producers and Sponsors

*You
produce it.....*



.....we air it

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CHESHIRE PUBLIC ACCESS OVERVIEW



The Cheshire Public Access facility is located at 1701 Highland Avenue, Cheshire, CT 06410.

The hours of operation are Monday through Thursday from 9 am to 8 pm & Friday from 9 am to 5 pm. Please ring the doorbell at the front door to enter the building. Tours of the facility are available during normal business hours and reservations can be made using the contact info below.

This Public Access facility provides video production equipment (using a sign-out system) and training, free of charge to all residents or persons associated with a non-profit organization located in the towns of Cheshire, Meriden, and Southington who are at least 18 years of age. Shows can also be viewed "On Demand" at www.PATV15.com in the Cheshire Program Schedule section.

The Cheshire Public Access facility is not equipped to address customer service issues. The Cox Solutions Store located at 687 East Main Street, Meriden can handle all your service needs. 1 (800) - 955 - 9515.

Please read this handbook thoroughly. It contains all the information you need to get started with Public Access as a Producer, Sponsor or Volunteer. Once you are ready to begin you may contact us at the phone numbers below. Additional contact info can be found at www.PATV15.com/Cheshire.

David Smith 203 - 439 - 7066

Al Signore 203 - 439 - 7072

Fax 203 - 439 - 7089

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Public Access!

COX COMMUNICATIONS is committed to providing Public, Educational and Governmental (PEG) Access channels, facilities and resources which will increase opportunities for community expression on issues and topics that affect the lives of the residents of the franchise area. To this end, COX believes that the local community should play an active role in determining and developing local programming.

This handbook outlines the procedures developed by COX, in conjunction with the Advisory Council and the Local User Groups, to encourage and facilitate the production and telecast of Public Access programming. These rules govern the use of the Company's Public Access equipment and the system-wide studio in Cheshire. Please carefully read the following policies and procedures that have been developed to ensure the proper utilization of the Company's Public Access system.

Our handbook is based upon the fundamental purposes of PEG access that include (as described in PURA regulations section 16-333-33c [9]) but are not limited to:

- Enhancing First Amendment rights;
- Providing for the dissemination of diverse views and for a marketplace of ideas and information;
- Capitalizing on the possibilities inherent in "narrowcasting," as contrasted with broadcasting;
- Providing for viable alternatives to commercial programming;
- And, enhancing a sense of community among residents of the franchise area.

COX serves the towns of Cheshire, Meriden and Southington (the "franchise area"). COX operates Channel 15, the system-wide Public Access channel.

In addition, town specific Government Access and Educational programming is available on channels 14 and 16 respectively. Contact information is as follows:

Meriden

Channel 14	Government Access	Meriden Town Hall	142 East Main St.	203-630-4000
Channel 16	Educational Access	Meriden Board of Education	22 Liberty St.	203-630-4173

Cheshire

Channel 14	Government Access	Cheshire Town Hall	84 South Main St.	203-271-6660
Channel 15	Public Access	Cox Communications	1701 Highland Ave.	203-439-7066
				203-432-7072
Channel 16	Educational Access	Cheshire High School	525 South Main St.	203-250-2560

Southington

Channel 14	Government Access	Southington Town Hall	75 Main St.	860-276-6200
Channel 16	Educational Access	Southington High School	720 Pleasant St.	860-628-3229 x440

FACILITY OPERATION AND GUIDELINES

A. Hours of Operation

The COX Communications Public Access department operates a studio and editing facilities at 1701 Highland Avenue, Cheshire, CT and will be open to the community: Monday through Thursday 9 am to 8 pm and Friday 9 am to 5 pm.

You are encouraged to call the facility before visiting : (203) 439 - 7066 or (203) 439 - 7072.

The Public Access facilities and equipment are provided free of charge for the use of persons residing in the franchise area or associated with a non-profit organization located within the three town franchise area to produce and air non-commercial Public Access programs. COX reserves the right to require a valid driver's license to prove residence or contact information for an individual who can confirm association with the non-profit organization. All programs produced using the facilities/equipment must be aired on a Public Access channel.

The scheduling of facilities is provided on a first-come, first-serve, non-discriminatory basis. There are no regular "time slots" for use and Access usage time is non-transferable. Any one Access user cannot have more than two reservations for each of the following: edit suite; equipment; or the studio, at any given time to allow accessibility to all Public Access Volunteers. Access Volunteers are required to give notice of cancellation for editing, equipment or studio reservations at least 24 hours in advance.

B. Training

The Public Access Staff provides training in all aspects of television production. In order to qualify for use of portable equipment and/or the studio facilities users must attend a basic training course(s) relating to the desired equipment and/or facilities requested. Training will cover various aspects of producing a Public Access program, utilizing basic production equipment and techniques. Advanced Public Access production classes, involving training on specific equipment are available to individuals or groups as needed.

All facilities and equipment must be scheduled through the Public Access Coordinator.

C. Field Equipment

Public Access equipment may not be used for personal projects.

The Access Volunteer will sign the Equipment Sign-Out Form before taking equipment and agrees to exercise proper care of the equipment at all times (i.e., DO NOT leave equipment in car during extreme heat/cold conditions, use equipment in poor weather conditions, or leave equipment unattended, etc.). When returning equipment the Access Volunteer must notify the Public Access Staff of any problems with the equipment. The individual checking out the equipment will bear all costs if the equipment must be repaired or replaced due to theft or abuse. Access Volunteers are not allowed to modify or repair any equipment.

Field equipment is available for a 48-hour period. For weekend use, equipment may be picked-up on Friday and returned on Monday. The Public Access staff will handle special requests for use of equipment for more extended periods of time on a case-by-case basis.

Penalties for the late return of equipment are covered in the "Violations" section of this handbook.

D. Edit Suites

The edit suites can be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis, at least 24 in advance, but no earlier than four weeks in advance and is limited to a maximum four-hour reservation.

Cox offers training on a variety of non-linear editing systems from beginner to advanced. The classes cover basic editing techniques using transitions, graphics, voice-overs and music inserts. It is the responsibility of the Producer to back-up any project data. Cox Communications is not responsible for any data loss.

E. Studio Productions

The studio can be reserved on a first-come, first-served basis, at least two weeks in advance, but no earlier than eight weeks in advance of the production date. Studio production time is limited to a four-hour reservation (including studio setup/breakdown).

The Public Access Staff is available for technical assistance and consultation and will at all times make a good faith effort to assist in maximizing the success of the production. It is the Producer's responsibility to work within the technical capabilities of the facilities and equipment and to modify all production requirements prior to the start of the production.

It is the responsibility of the Producer to provide a production crew for all studio programs. The Producer shall supply a minimum of four (4) qualified crew members for a show with one or two people on the set and a minimum of five (5) qualified crew members for a show with three or more people on the set.

Only individuals necessary to the production should be present in the facility.

If any studio equipment is broken or damaged, exclusive of normal wear and tear, the Producer shall be responsible for the full cost of repair and/or replacement as required.

COX provides a basic studio set and some props. Producers may supplement with their own set and props, but COX cannot provide storage. It is recommended to limit the talent to four people on the set at one time.

Productions that create excessive noise (e.g., live bands) or disrupt other activities in the building will be scheduled at the sole discretion of COX.

F. House Rules

Be courteous and polite to others, including employees, other volunteers, and guests of the facility.

Producers and guests should remain in the studio area while on COX premises. Restroom facilities are available. COX's telephone, for personal use, office equipment and employee lounge are off-limits.

No food or drink is allowed in the studio, control room or edit suites with the exception of coffee, water, or other food items being used on the set during a production or when the show features food preparation.

The possession and/or use of alcohol or drugs on COX property or during possession of Public Access equipment is strictly forbidden. Anyone who possesses these items, or appears to be under the influence of alcohol/drugs will be asked to leave the premises.

No obscene material, sexually explicit conduct or profane language is allowed on COX Communication's property.

Penalties for any facilities infractions are covered in the "Violations" section of this handbook.

BECOMING A PUBLIC ACCESS PRODUCER

To produce a show on Public Access you need to be a resident of the Franchise Area. An Individual associated with a non-profit organization in the Franchise Area is eligible to produce a program about that organization.

To air a program on the Public Access channel contact the COX Public Access Department.

A. Producer's Responsibilities

The Producer has a variety of responsibilities (i.e. assembling a trained crew, scheduling the use of COX facilities and equipment, contacting and scheduling guests, conducting research, writing scripts, providing talent). The Producer is responsible for making sure that the program and individuals involved in the production adhere to the rules in this handbook. The Producer is responsible for obtaining all the necessary rights and clearances for copyrighted material and permission to transmit it over the Public Access channel(s).

The Producer should encourage all guests to complete a release form. A Talent Release Form can be obtained by contacting the Public Access Department or by accessing the Public Access website at www.PATV15.com.

Producers of Public Access programming retain all rights to their program content. However, in Educational and Government Access operations, producer's rights shall be subordinate to the rights of the government agency.

B. Producer and Crew Members

A Producer is the person responsible for the program, and a crew member is an individual who assists in the production of a Producer's program. Producer's and crew members must be at least 18 years of age and have completed the basic Public Access Orientation class.

Eligibility for usage of specific equipment or equipment packages by the individual/groups will be determined by their knowledge and expertise as proven to the Public Access Coordinator, based on completion of various training workshops, proven proficiency and hands-on experience. For more information about training workshops please contact the Public Access Coordinator.

C. Program Content

Material aired over the Public Access channel(s), whether produced locally or provided from another source, must comply with the following criteria:

1. NO COMMERCIALISM

- No endorsement or advertising of any products and/or services.
- No mention of seminars, lectures, or consultation for which the viewer will be eventually charged.
- No mention of commercial activities, including, but not limited to, concert and club dates.
- No solicitation of monetary donations or contributions of any kind.
- No use of the channel, facilities or equipment for financial gain.
- No selling or promotion of program time, charging guests or otherwise engaging in profitable use of community access facilities/equipment or programs produced.

2. NO PROMOTION OF LOTTERY MATERIAL, GIFT ENTERPRISES OR SIMILAR SCHEMES *

3. NO LIBELOUS, SLANDEROUS OR ILLEGAL MATERIAL *

4. NO OBSCENE MATERIAL, SEXUALLY EXPLICIT CONDUCT, PROFANE LANGUAGE OR MATERIAL SOLICITING OR PROMOTING UNLAWFUL CONDUCT *

5. NO MATERIAL WHICH INCITES VIOLENT OR HARMFUL ACTS *

* As they refer to state and federal laws

D. Publicity and Promotion

COX will not publicize, promote or act as an agent for individual Public Access programs. COX will only promote the use of the channel at its sole discretion. Every attempt will be made to air programming as scheduled; however, there is no guarantee of compliance with program schedules. The Producer or Local Sponsor must assume the risk of non-compliance. Due to circumstances beyond the control of the channel operator neither the Company, nor any Local User group, may be held responsible for losses sustained as the result of failure to comply with program schedules.

E. Viewer Response

Viewer response may be encouraged by displaying the producer's address, e-mail address, website and/or phone number. The response address, e-mail address, website or phone number may not be that of a commercial business or service, and no business names can be displayed. The only lead announcement allowed is "For more information contact...." COX's address or phone number must not be used for this purpose.

F. Financial Sponsorship

Financial sponsorship by a business, individual or non-profit organization is allowed. Sponsorship contributions are for production expenses exclusive of time (i.e., props, and transportation for guests). All sponsorship must be declared prior to airtime. Producers must return to their sponsors any funds collected which exceed production costs. Commercial advertising is prohibited during Public Access programming.

Sponsorship acknowledgment is allowed utilizing the following guidelines, which allow you to identify your sponsors without creating an advertising or promotional effect.

1. Placement of Credits

Sponsor credit may appear at the beginning and/or end of the program in audio and/or video. Sponsor credits may be 15-30 seconds in length per sponsor. In the case of multiple sponsors, total sponsor credit may not exceed 45 seconds (1 minute and 30 seconds if it appears at the beginning and end).

2. Permissible Audio

Sponsorship credit must contain the following lead announcement followed by the names of the sponsors. No other description of the sponsor is allowed. "The following/preceding Public Access program has been presented through the assistance of...."

General musical background audio is acceptable provided it is not promotional. No jingles are allowed. The producer must obtain permission necessary for the use of copyrighted music.

3. Permissible Video

- Corporate, partnership, proprietorship or other business logos, animated or otherwise.
- Non-promotional slogans or tags.
- The outside view of the business or enterprise as long as it is not promotional.
- Sponsor's name and city. No phone numbers or addresses can be listed.

4. Courtesy Credits

Credits at the end of the program that acknowledge contributors of in-kind services to the production (such as "hair by") are considered courtesy credits. Only the entity's name and the city in which it is located is allowed, no phone numbers or addresses can be listed. Courtesy credits are in addition to sponsorship credits.

AIRTIME

A. Rules for Airtime

Airtime on the public access channel is made available free of charge on a first-come, first-serve, non-discriminatory basis. All new program applications must be submitted at least 7 days prior to the requested air date. The Producer or Local Sponsor will be given prior notification as to the exact airtime of the program. Program time slots shall not exceed two consecutive hours unless prior agreement has been made with the channel operator. Multiple copies of the same program, even if submitted by different applicants or under different names, will NOT be accepted. The process of "looping" (i.e. running a 10 minute segment back-to-back three times to make a 30 minute show) is also not acceptable.

B. Programs Produced Outside the Franchise

Programs produced outside the franchise area may be submitted for airtime on the Public Access channel if they meet the requirements outlined in this handbook and are for the benefit of persons residing in COX's franchise area (see Conn. General Statute 16-333). The applicant or "Local Sponsor" must be a resident of one of the three towns served by COX and will act as the Producer's representative and assume the following responsibilities: Filling out and submitting all paperwork, delivering episodes for broadcast to the Cheshire Public Access facility, and act as a liaison between the Public Access Staff and Producer.

C. Program Scheduling Conflicts

Channel operators shall make every effort to schedule access programming in accordance with the airtime requested. Where a requested airtime is already allocated, the operator shall notify the applicant as soon as reasonably possible and offer alternatives. When simultaneous applications are received for the same airtime, the following order of priorities shall govern:

1. Locally produced live educational or governmental access programming
2. Locally produced live public access programming
3. Locally produced recorded educational or governmental access programming, not previously aired
4. Locally produced recorded public access programming, not previously aired
5. Locally produced recorded educational or governmental access replays
6. All other community access programming

Time slots are non-transferable and the 13-week rule will be applied to resolve unavoidable conflicts involving series programming in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes, Sec. 16-331a(e). Scheduled programming may be pre-empted at the discretion of the channel operator by public service announcements concerning national, state or local emergencies or by unique and unanticipated live programming of a high newsworthy character. The channel operator will make every effort to resolve scheduling conflicts.

D. One Time Programs

A single program will be scheduled for no more than a four-week period and for no more than two air-times per week. A single program is usually a one-time event or subject that is not of a continuous or ongoing nature (i.e. a single concert, sporting event or school play). Following the completion of a four-week airtime a Producer must wait at least six months before resubmitting the same program.

E. Series Programs

Regular weekly time slots for a series will be based upon available airtime and other scheduling considerations. At least one new episode must be provided every four weeks to maintain eligibility for a weekly time slot. For the purpose of this section, a new episode shall be defined as a program that has not been aired in the past six month period. Time slots are non-transferable to other programs or Producers.

F. Technical Standards

Programs may only be submitted on DVD (- R) format or video file.

Only **ONE** episode per DVD or video file will be accepted. Media containing or combining multiple episodes cannot be accepted. Video files can be delivered on a DVD (as a data disc) or emailed after arrangements are made with the Public Access staff.

G. DVD Labeling Policy

Programs should be labeled correctly with all the necessary information below:



H. Video Files

We also accept individual show episodes in various video file formats.

All shows must be in either Mpeg2 or H.264 SD/HD format. (Please see the chart below for format details.)

Supported Codecs	File extension	Profile	Frame Size	Frame Rate	Audio Codec	PCM Audio Bits	Audio
						Per Sample	Sample Rate
MPEG2	.mpg .mpeg	Main (420), 422	720x480 or 11920x1080	29.97	MP2 (MPEG 1 Layer 2), PCM	16, 24, 32	4.1Khz, 48Khz
H.264	.mov .mp4	Main, High, High 10, High 422	720x480 or 1980x1080	29.97	AAC-LC	16, 24, 32	48Khz

Video files can be uploaded to Google Drive or Drop Box and emailed as a downloadable link. Please contact the Public Access Staff to make those arrangements.

I. Program Pick-up and Drop-off

All programs must be delivered to the COX Public Access facility located at 1701 Highland Avenue in Cheshire by the Producer or Local Sponsor who resides in the franchise area. Any programs sent by mail will not be accepted.

An appointment must be made at least 24 hours in advance with the Public Access Staff in order to pick-up or drop-off programs. Programs must be delivered at least 48 hours before their scheduled air time. Programs which air on Saturdays and Sundays must be delivered by Thursday.

Due to storage limitations we can only accept four programs at a time. All programs left after 6 months of the last airing will be recycled.

VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES

In order for these Public Access Guidelines to be effective, a penalty system has been instituted. There are two types of rules which, if violated, can result in restrictions on the Access Crew, Producer, Volunteer or Local Sponsor.

A. Minor Violations

Minor violations will result in the following series of actions within a one-year period:

- First Violation - verbal warning
- Second Violation - written warning
- Third Violation - 30-day suspension

Minor violations include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to cancel a reservation in accordance with set guidelines.
- Late pick-up or return of equipment without notification and approval.
- Mishandling of equipment.
- Eating, drinking or smoking in prohibited areas.
- Failure to clean up after using the facilities.
- Failure to meet program content guidelines.

B. Major Violations

Major violations will result in an immediate 90-day suspension. COX will conduct a review of the individual or group responsible for the violation. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Commercial or profit-making use of facilities without prior written agreement with COX.
- Material misrepresentation of affiliation with COX beyond that of a public access user.
- Falsifying forms.
- Taking or reserving equipment without staff permission.
- Modification or abuse of equipment, including attempted repair.
- Entering areas posted as off-limits.
- Use of alcohol and/or drugs while on COX property or using COX facilities/equipment.
- Possession of alcohol and/or drugs while on Cox property or using COX facilities/equipment.
- Abuse or harassment of staff, other access users or volunteers.

The individual or group will be subject to a review by COX prior to any potential reinstatement.

COX reserves the right to permanently ban privileges for repeated major violations or for an infraction so egregious that the penalty is warranted.

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

- 1) I have read and am thoroughly familiar with the contents of the Cox Communications Public Access Guidelines and agree to abide by the operating rules, policies and procedures stated therein.
- 2) I am thoroughly familiar with the contents of the program material to be shown and state:
 - *Neither lottery nor lottery information will be cablecast.
 - *No advertising material nor material involving the solicitation of funds (including advertising by or on behalf of candidates for public office) will be cablecast.
 - *No obscene or indecent material will be cablecast.
 - *Releases and clearances have been obtained from broadcast stations, networks, sponsors, music licensing organizations, performers' representatives and any other persons necessary to authorize transmission of program material on this access channel.
- 3) I understand that I assume full legal and financial responsibility for any disputes arising from the unauthorized use of copyrighted material and agree to hold Cox Communications and its employees blameless in any such disputes.
- 4) I understand that I may be criminally or civilly liable for program material which contains advertising, solicitation of funds, lottery or lottery information, obscene or indecent material, or libelous or slanderous material.
- 5) I agree to pay the cost of repairs or replacement of, access equipment made necessary by abuse, or by careless handling while such equipment is in my possession (outside of normal wear and tear).
- 6) I understand that I cannot publicize the cablecasting of my program on radio, television, newspapers, flyers or pamphlets without prior review by Cox Communications. Upon approval, I agree to identify the system (s) which will transmit my programming, the channel on which it will appear, the time of the transmission, and any party sponsoring the program.
- 7) False or misleading statements made in the access user's proposals or applications are grounds for forfeiture of Cox Communications Public Access equipment and facilities privileges.

COX Communications

Public Access Facility



1701 Highland Avenue Cheshire, CT 06410

(203) 439 - 7066

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FAX: (203) 439 - 7089

WEBSITE:

www.PATV15.com

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