

OPERATING RULES AND PROCEDURES: OVERVIEW

- The Operating Rules and Procedures should be written clearly and understandably, and should be available to all users, preferably in the form of a manual.
- The rules may be devised by a group that includes the director of the access center, the members of the access corporation board, and perhaps representative(s) of the franchising authority, the cable company, and community producers.
- The rules should spell out in detail the responsibilities of the people who will be using the facilities. The facilities typically include portable location equipment (camcorders), studio and control room, editing suite(s), the access channel(s), and in some cases a mobile production van. Training requirements, equipment reservation, check-in and check-out procedures, and restrictions on use of tapes and equipment must be clearly described.
- The rules should delineate a system of penalties - whether monetary or in the form of restrictions on the use of facilities - to be imposed for infractions of the rules.
- The rules and procedures document must be kept a *living* document. Changes, additions, and deletions should be possible from time to time as the access center and its users mature.
- Guidelines for program production should be included, along with procedures for submitting a program for cablecast, and examples of all of the forms to be completed by users to request access center services.
- The rules should describe procedures for enrolling in training courses, outlines of those courses, and locations where they are taught.
- The rights of users concerning program content should be clearly spelled out.
- Fees, if any, that are charged for use of the studio or editing facilities, training, or the use of portable equipment or tape should be clearly stated.

OPERATING RULES AND PROCEDURES (OUTLINE)

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The access management organization, its Board of Directors, and staff.
- B. The access philosophy.
- C. Table of contents.
- D. Location of the access facilities and hours of operation.
- E. General description of available equipment.
- F. Eligibility requirements.

II. USE OF ACCESS EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

- A. Training and certification procedures and requirements.
- B. Equipment user responsibilities.
- C. Available equipment.
 - 1. Camcorders
 - 2. Editing systems
 - 3. Studio
 - 4. Mobile production van
 - 5. Other
- D. Equipment reservation and cancellation procedures.
- E. Check-in and check-out procedures.
- F. Equipment/facilities use by minors.

III. PROGRAM OWNERSHIP AND DISTRIBUTION

- A. Content rights and responsibilities.
- B. Acknowledgment of access management organization.
- C. First presentation requirement.
- D. Subsequent distribution.
- E. Dubbing

IV. PLAYBACK ON ACCESS CHANNELS

- A. Description of available channels.
- B. Playback request procedures.
 - 1. Scheduling priorities
 - 2. Series programs
 - 3. Live programming
 - 4. Deadline to submit videotape
 - 5. Program content for mature audience
- C. Prohibition of commercial content.
- D. Prohibition of obscene and other unprotected speech/material.
- E. Technical requirements.
- F. Program underwriting.
- G. "Community Bulletin Board" Messages.

V. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT WHILE IN ACCESS CENTER

- A. Eating, drinking and smoking restrictions.
- B. Interaction with staff and community producers.

VI. RULE VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES

- A. "Major" violations and resulting penalties.
- B. "Minor" violations and resulting penalties.
- C. Equipment damage and loss.
- D. Appeal procedures.

VII. FEE SCHEDULE

VIII. AMENDMENT OF THE OPERATING RULES AND PROCEDURES

IX. SAMPLES OF RESERVATION, CHECK-OUT, AND OTHER FORMS