



**Policies and Procedures
Manual for
Freeport Cable Television**

The Town of Freeport, Maine

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1.0 The History of Public Access Television

The concept of Public Access television first began to take shape in the early 1970's when the cable television industry began "wiring" cities across the country with large capacity cable systems providing a multitude of both used and unused channels for their subscribers. The portable video equipment industry also was experiencing a boom in sales of their new porta-pac video systems, particularly to the independent and local educational users, creating a vacuum of producers who were looking for ways of distributing their video material. Out of this high tech environment grew a grassroots organization of people who felt that cable was the natural vehicle for their distribution problems on a local level. These so-called public access advocates began organizing on a local, state and even national level under the title National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (N.F.L.C.P.). The basic philosophy of this organization was that everyone must have access to the television medium under the 1st amendment (the right of free speech). As the word spread, concerned citizens and independent producers began petitioning their local governments to negotiate for dedicated access channels and the facilities needed to produce programs for these channels. The result has been a rapid growth in the number of community or public access centers around the country.

In the early stages of cable the F.C.C. (Federal Communications Commission) regulated the industry. By law, the cable companies were

required to provide a certain number of access channels including: educational, government and public access. As the cable industry grew and the competition increased, the F.C.C. began to loosen the reins of regulation. Eventually the cable and broadcast television industries were largely deregulated giving cable operators more leverage in negotiating programs like public access.

Fortunately, in most cases, the need for community television has already been established and a large number of communities across the country saw public access as an important communication tool for residents.

The future of community television now rests in the hands of the people, the users, and it is within this framework that the Community Access Television Center and its public access channel, FCTV-7, must operate. A public access program, like any organization, is only as strong as the people who use it. The important thing is that you use the facilities and the channel to communicate with others. In this age of increased consumer and industrial video use, Marshall McLuhan's popular statement concerning the television medium may be more significant than ever. "The Medium is The Message."

2.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES

2.1 Any individual who is a resident of the Town of Freeport (verification may be required) may use, on his or her behalf, Freeport Community

Television, its equipment, its training programs and its access channel.

Any not-for-profit organization residing in Freeport and providing services in the town may use the Freeport Community Television, its equipment, its training programs, and its access channel to produce programs for the organization. Any user of the facility must be at least 18 years of age or if a minor have the Legal Responsibility section on the Equipment Material Reservation form signed by his or her parent or guardian and permission of the FCTV Cable Director before he or she may use the facility and equipment.

2.2 Primary purposes of the Freeport Community Television, its equipment and training programs is to provide programming for the access channel, FCTV-7. Accordingly, any program produced using the Center must be aired on FCTV-7 and becomes the property of the Access Center. All tapes provided by FCTV-7 are the property of Freeport Community Television.

2.3 FCTV-7 is equipped to air programs recorded on 3/4 inch U-Matic videotape, S-VHS and standard VHS videotapes. An individual program may be submitted for airing by bringing the completed videotape to the access center, and filing a channel time application.

2.4 Air times for individual programs are available on a first-come, first-serve

basis with scheduling blocks. Freeport Community Television staff will make every effort to fit your needs for a specific play date and time with the access center's needs for a complete program schedule. Refer to section 8 of this manual for further information on scheduling.

2.5 Since eighty percent of the public access material cablecast on FCTV-7 should be locally produced, preference will be given to locally produced programming. One hundred percent of the public access material shown on FCTV-7 must be of local interest.

2.6 Before you will be allowed to use any equipment you must be knowledgeable in its use.

2.7 Refer to Section 16 Ñ FORMS Ñ of a listing of all available equipment.

2.8 To maintain all FCTV equipment in good working order, we request that you complete an Equipment Problem Report and file this report with the Cable Director any time you experience any difficulties with FCTV equipment. A copy of this report can be obtained at the station.

2.9 Sufficient videotape will be provided free for "access" use and the tapes must be returned. A copy of the tapes can be purchased by the user.

See section 5 for a list of current charges.

2.10 Because of the high estimated traffic through Freeport Community Television only those people who are scheduled to use the facility or who are on-air guests will be allowed in the studio and/or control rooms. All other persons are asked to wait in the reception area.

2.11 There is no smoking allowed anywhere in the Freeport Community Television facilities.

2.12 Food and beverages in Freeport Community Television are limited to the reception area.

2.13 The Cable Director may waive the Policies and Procedures contained in this manual subject to subsequent review by the Cable TV Regulatory Board.

3.0 IN THE STUDIO

3.1 Use of the Freeport Community Television studio is free of charge and available to individuals who have been determined to be proficient in its use by the Cable Director.

3.2 Normally, studio production time must be scheduled at least ten (10) working days in advance of the requested use date. Exceptions to this time limit must be obtained from the Cable Director.

3.3 Normally, pre/post production equipment must be scheduled at least five (5) working days in advance of the requested use date. Exceptions to this time limit must be obtained from the Cable Director. An Equipment Problem Report should be completed and filed with the Cable Director for any and all equipment difficulties.

3.4 We recommend that you try to do a studio taping straight through as though it were being broadcast live. Thirty minute shows are easiest for us to schedule for play back and they are easiest for the audience to absorb.

3.5 You may provide your own crew to tape your program(s). A list of studio certified volunteers, who may assist you with your production, is available from the Cable Director.

3.6 It is possible to originate a live program from the FCTV-7 studio. Those wishing to produce a live program must follow all appropriate guidelines listed in this handbook. The prospective producer must have permission

from the Cable Director in the form of an approved Channel Time application. Any use of additional town facilities must be coordinated with the Town Manager.

4.0 ON LOCATION PRODUCTION

4.1 To use FCTV equipment, you need to complete an Equipment Material Reservation form. Each reservation form needs to be signed by the Cable Director.

4.2 Portable production equipment must be scheduled at least five (5) working days in advance of the requested date. All equipment checked out over a weekend is due back by noon on Monday.

4.3 Normally, post production editing equipment must be scheduled five (5) working days in advance of the requested use date. Exceptions to this time limit must be obtained from the Cable Director.

4.4 1/2 inch VHS tapes not produced on Freeport Community TV equipment may be played provided they meet the quality standards specified in section 10.

4.5 An Equipment Problem Report should be completed and filed with the Cable Director any time you experience difficulties with FCTV equipment.

A copy of this report can be obtained at the station.

5.0 CHARGES

5.1 Use of the Freeport Community Television studio, portable equipment, materials, editing equipment and cablecast time is free to eligible Freeport residents.

5.2 There will be a charge if you intend to keep your video tape. A list of current charges is found on page 5b.

5.3 Failure to use the studio or portable equipment as scheduled may result in cancellation of your privileges unless you have cancelled your reservation in advance of the start time.

5.4 Individuals returning equipment late may face forfeiture of privileges.

5.5 All charges must be paid prior to receiving goods or services.

5.6 Although equipment and materials are loaned free of charge, the borrower is responsible for all damages, loss, or cost of repair involved while the equipment is signed out.

5b.0 CURRENT CHARGES SCHEDULE

5b.1 Tape Copies

(a) Video Tapes \$20.00/each*

(b) Audio Tapes \$12.00/each*

5b.2 Unbudgeted Programming

(Programming not allocated for in fiscal year budgeting by FCTV or any other Town department)

(a) Programming at FCTV Station, which includes time with FCTV Cable Director

(Refer to Section 3.6) \$25.00/per hr.**

(b) Remote programming with camcorder and microphones, which includes time with FCTV

Cable Director \$15.00/per hr. **

- (c) Remote programming with mobile van,
which includes time with FCTV Cable

Director \$22.00/per hr**

* Non-edited tapes only. Other charges may apply for edited tapes.

** There is a one hour time use minimum.

6.0 TRAINING

6.1 The Cable Director will determine what training might be needed by individuals wishing to volunteer for work at the station and/or individuals requesting to use the facilities and equipment of FCTV.

7.0 THE FINISHED PROGRAM

7.1 When your program is ready to be cablecast, you'll need to fill out and sign a Channel Time Application (CTA). Your videotape will be checked for adherence to technical and content standards. The CTA and your finished program must be submitted no less than ten (10) working days prior to your first desired cablecast date. Within five (5) working days of receipt of your CTA, a Freeport Community Television staff member will contact you by mail to confirm the date(s) and time(s) for airing.

7.2 Copyright for programs produced with public access equipment reside with FCTV-7 and the Town of Freeport.

8.0 PROGRAM SCHEDULING

8.1 All programming produced using the Freeport Community Television studio and/or equipment and materials shall be first shown on the access channel, FCTV-7.

8.2 Unless other written arrangements have been made with the Cable

Director, all programs produced using the access center equipment or facilities must be scheduled for cablecasting within sixty (60) calendar days after the completion of the program.

8.3 Every effort will be made to air your program on the date(s) and time(s) you request on the Channel Time Application form for your program. Replay of a tape at the producer's request is limited to no more than twice a week and for no more than four weeks total. Remember, air time is on a first-come, first-serve basis within scheduling blocks. FCTV-7 reserves the right to additional airing of your program above and beyond those requested by you without notification being given to you.

8.4 Individuals may request series scheduling for their live or videotaped programs. A series may not be scheduled for more than one year in duration. This requires considerable commitment from the program's producer, the access center staff and the facility. Programs for a taped series must be completed and in the access center's hands, along with the Channel Time Application form, at least five (5) working days prior to the scheduled air date. If more than two (2) programs are not ready on time or have technical or content problems, series scheduling will be cancelled.

8.5 Individuals requesting live series programming must submit program formats and CTA's ten (10) working days before the scheduled air date of

each program. A "no-show" for a live program is immediate grounds for series cancellation. Violation of any of the rules stated in this handbook during a live cablecast may result in the immediate termination of the cablecasting of that program and suspension of privileges for the program producer(s). Decision to terminate a live program will be made only by the Cable Director and/or the designated representative of the Cable Director on duty at FCTV at the time the program is being produced.

8.6 Programs scheduled as part of an on-going series shall have priority. Other scheduling conflicts will be resolved in favor of the individual whose application was filed earlier. In the event applications bear the same filing date, the individual who programmed the least shall have priority.

8.7 Policy Regarding Programming of Political Nature Ñ The local public access channel shall be considered an appropriate vehicle for distributing information intended to assist the citizens of Freeport in making their decisions regarding important public issues. However, some guidelines are hereby set forth to govern the use of the channel in this manner.

Individual candidates seeking elected positions in Government shall be permitted to produce individual programming promoting their candidacy. Each year, following the certification of candidates for local elective office,

the Cable Director shall declare a schedule of time periods and guidelines when he/she will be available for taping sessions. Time during the three weeks immediately prior to election day will be blocked out for the airing of political opinions. Each candidate shall be allowed one 15-minute segment to be played once a day, time permitting, in order that all candidates may be given an opportunity to air their views. FCTV will be available to tape one segment for each candidate. Any candidate who is featured prominently in a program produced by the candidate or by others, and intended to promote the views of the candidate shall be considered within this policy.

Programs produced by or for Town organizations, including branches of Town Government, intended to inform citizens of issues they will face in an election or to provide such information as the Cable Director and board shall hold to be appropriate, shall be permitted. All such programing shall only be cablecast with the specific permission of the Cable Director. Although there is no State or Federal requirement to provide it, FCTV will provide equal time to any group, except persons covered by the above paragraph, to air opposing points of view. Individual candidates will not be granted time in addition to that described in the above paragraph.

9.0 THE PRODUCER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

9.1 In brief, you are the program's producer and you are solely, entirely, and completely responsible for the content. Programs cannot contain advertising, solicitation for funds, lotteries, or any statements, pictures or sound which violate city, state or federal laws, including those relating to obscenity, defamation, slander or libel.

9.2 Freeport Community Television is NOT responsible for any videotapes left in our possession. We will check each videotape for technical and content problems. If there is a problem, the program will not be cablecast before we have had the opportunity to review the problem with you.

9.3 If your program contains material which requires appropriate rights from broadcast stations, networks, sponsors, music licensing organizations, performers, representatives, copyright holders and any other persons as may be necessary for cablecast, you MUST provide written proof that these rights have been granted. A copy of all forms will be retained at Freeport Community Television.

9.4 Recognizing that some programs with artistic, social or literary merit may contain content or language considered offensive to some viewers, FCTV recognizes its obligation to alert its viewers to potentially controversial or

offensive material. A program's producer has the responsibility to aid FCTV in this regard by informing the Cable Director of program material which may, in the producer's opinion, require a program advisory.

9.5 FCTV reserves the right to employ viewer warnings and schedule programs to reduce viewer problems. At the Cable Director's discretion, programs may be required to:

- a. contain a program disclaimer/warning at the beginning of the program.
- b. have a warning listed in the program schedule.
- c. be cablecast at a time when children are least likely to be viewing.

10.0 TECHNICAL STANDARDS

10.1 Videotapes must accompany CTA's (Channel Time Application).

10.2 If you already have a show recorded, perhaps with your own home video equipment, it can be played back on the access channel if your program meets certain standards. The original program must have been recorded on the highest speed, and it must have a continuous control track. A

complete control track means no picture breakup throughout the entire program. Additionally, the program must meet technical standards listed in this section when they can be applied to 1/2 inch recordings.

NOTE: Freeport Community Television has NO equipment for editing
3/4 inch U-Matic.

10.3 All audio must be recorded on channel 2 and not exceed 0 VU except for brief periods of time.

10.4 All videotapes must have a 60 second color bar and 0 VU tone period, followed by the standard community access countdown, followed by the program material.

10.5 PROGRAM LENGTH Access programs may be of any length up to 58 minutes, but remember that viewers tend to watch programs that won't interfere with their regular network viewing schedules. That is, a person is more apt to watch an access program that will allow the viewing of another channel's program without cutting into it already in progress or having to wait 10 or 15 minutes for it to begin.

A program intended for a 1/2 hour time slot will be no longer than 28 minutes in length. A program for an hour time slot will not exceed 58

minutes in length.

Programs longer than 58 minutes are possible, but must be cleared with the Cable Director BEFORE production begins.

10.6 All programs must have titles and credits recorded from either a character generator or from an acceptable lettered camera card. The minimum title and credit is the name of the program within the first five minutes of the videotape and the name of the program's producer(s) at the end of the program.

10.7 All programs must have a minimum of thirty (30) seconds of black burst recorded after last program video.

10.8 There must be no broken control tracks, tracking error, or video breakup within your program.

10.9 All videotapes must be properly labeled on both the cassette and the cassette's carrying case with standard labels provided by the access center. The labels will contain the following information: The program title, producer, date of completion and length.

11.0 UNDERWRITING

Local businesses have a unique opportunity to help FCTV-7 and the Town of Freeport. Underwriting can also help with rising taxes, by returning monies back to the budget. Underwriting is a means of acknowledging a local business or agency for their support. Listed below are some policies for underwriting to assure proper use of the "public access" channel and its non-commercial status.

11.1 All underwriting monies received under this policy shall be allocated by the Town Manager or the Town Council.

11.2 There will be a maximum of four (4) underwriters per program. Audio acknowledgments will be limited to a maximum of ten (10) seconds per

underwriter.

11.3 Each acknowledgment shall have a standard open, followed by the name of the business or agency, its location and finally a short statement of service.

11.4 The standard open will be : "The following (or preceding) program has been brought to you in part by . . . "

11.5 The accompanying video portion of the underwriting statement shall be the name of the business or agency, which will be character generated on the screen.

11.6 Each underwriting will have an Underwriting Agreement completed and filed with the Cable Director.

12.0 BULLETIN BOARD SERVICE

12.1 A Freeport resident or Freeport not-for-profit organization may display information on the access channel via the Bulletin Board.

12.2 All Bulletin Board information must conform to programming standards listed throughout this guidebook.

12.3 Requests for display of information must be submitted at least four (4) calendar days but not more than seven (7) calendar days in advance of the first air date. Information must be submitted in writing to the Cable Director.

13.0 THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

13.1 The purpose of the volunteer program is to provide local people with an opportunity to gain experience in television production and to see the result of their efforts cablecast on Freeport Community Television.

13.2 A prospective volunteer must fill out a Statement of Compliance form and then be scheduled with the Cable Director for an interview. The volunteer will be placed in an appropriate training program.

14.0 SUSPENSION OF PRIVILEGES

14.1 The Freeport Community Television staff may refuse the use of the facilities and services of the access center to individuals who interfere with the orderly conduct of community or public access programming as outlined in this document.

14.2 Anyone who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs will be refused service.

14.3 Failure to abide by rules and regulations stated in this handbook may

cause an individual to have his or her access privileges suspended.

14.4 Making false or misleading statements in the various application forms will be grounds for suspension of privileges.

14.5 Any individual falsely representing him or herself as a Freeport Community Television employee or an employee of United Video Cablevision will have his or her privileges suspended.

14.6 The staff of FCTV-7 may refuse to lend equipment or to schedule editing time and equipment to anyone who has, in the past, misused the equipment, failed to return it on time, or in any other way abused the privileges of using community access equipment and facilities.

14.7 Any individual leaving the premises of FCTV-7 with equipment not properly checked out will have his or her privileges suspended.

14.8 Any individual who produces material on equipment provided by FCTV-7 and subsequently sells any part or all of the production shall have his or her privileges suspended.

14.9 Services of FCTV-7 will not be available to anyone who refuses to identify him or herself, or who refuses to have his or her identity

maintained in records available for public inspection.

14.10 If disputes or disagreements occur between a potential or actual community access user, and the staff of FCTV-7 or United Video Cablevision, the following steps will be followed in resolving such disputes or disagreements

a. The access user will request, in writing, an appointment with the Cable Director to discuss the matter. Such discussions must be scheduled and held within ten (10) working days of the dispute. A decision will be communicated in writing within one week of the meeting.

14.10

b. If the decision made by the Cable Director is unacceptable to the access user, the matter will be brought before the Cable TV Regulatory Board at the time mutually convenient, and the Board for final resolution of the dispute.

15.0 PUBLIC RECORDS

15.1 The staff of the Freeport Community Television will maintain a record of all persons, agencies, groups, or community organizations making written requests for time on the Community Access Channel, or use of its equipment or facilities.

15.2 Such records will be maintained in the FCTV public information file and will be available for public inspection. Under no circumstances may the public records be removed from FCTV.

15.3 Persons requesting such inspection as outlined in item 15.2 shall identify themselves by name and address in order to assure control of such records.

15.4 All records mentioned in item 15.2 shall be kept for a minimum of two (2) years.

16.0 FORMS

The pages in this section contain the forms you will use at Freeport Community Television. The forms contained herein are for reference only.

Channel Time Application Form here

Equipment Availability Form here

Equipment Material Reservation Form here

Equipment Problem Report Form here

Purchase Form here

Statement of Compliance here

Underwriting Agreement here

17.0 GLOSSARY

CABLECAST To send television (video) and sound (audio) through a coaxial cable system instead of through the air.

FREEPORT COMMUNITY TELEVISION Includes staff, equipment (studio, control room, editing facilities, and portable equipment) services, program material, and related facilities. Located at the FCTV-7 Access Center will be at least two studios: one shall be primarily for General Community Programming Users.

FCTV-7 The designated public access and community programming channel for Freeport, including modulator, and related technical equipment used to cablecast a video and audio signal over the cable system of Freeport from Freeport Community Television. Also known as the access channel.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMMING is programming of the demonstrated Freeport community interest which is intended to be shown on FCTV-7. Such programming must be of a non-commercial and non-profit nature. Eighty percent (80%) of all material shown on FCTV-7 must be locally produced.

CTA Channel Time Application form

MASTER CONTROL The switching center where all public access programs are cablecast on FCTV-7.

UVC, UNITED VIDEO CABLEVISION The cable company holding the franchise with the Town of Freeport.

PUBLIC ACCESS USER An individual whose address falls within the designated limits of the Town of Freeport, Maine, and who wishes to use the services, equipment or facilities of Freeport Community Television for the purpose of delivering a brief message on a non-recurring basis.

18.0 APPENDIX

18.1

LIST OF FORMS SAMPLE ON FOUND IN PAGE SECTIONS

Channel Time Application form	23	2.3, 3.6, 7.1, 8.3,
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8.4, 8.5, 10.1, 11.9

Equipment Available List 24 2.7, 16

Equipment Material Reservation 25 4.1
form

Equipment Problem Report 26 2.8, 3.3, 4.5

Purchase Video and/or Audio 27 16
Tape form

Statement of Compliance 28 13.2

Underwriting Agreement 29 11.6