



*Membership Policies and  
Procedures Handbook*

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## **Introduction**

Cheshire TV (CTV) policies are designed to make the most effective use of our resources and ensure that all who wish to participate have an opportunity to do so on a fair and non-discriminatory basis. These policies may be amended from time to time to reflect the changing needs of Cheshire TV.

**It is the responsibility of each member to be aware of changes to CTV policies.**

CTV reserves the right to waive or modify any self-imposed regulation at the discretion of the Executive Director when such a waiver is deemed to be in the interest of the community or the organization.

### **a. Statement of Purpose for PEG Channel**

Public, Educational, and Government (PEG) access channels exist to give individuals who otherwise might not have access to the media an opportunity to display and showcase their talent, knowledge, interests, and any other information with the rest of their community and thereby enhance the quality of life in the community.

### **b. What is CTV?**

CTV is a non-profit 501(c) 3 corporation established to operate and manage facilities for **Public, Educational, and Governmental (PEG)** access on the cable television system in the Municipalities of Keene, Marlborough, and Swanzey (the “Community” or “franchise area”).

CTV provides and maintains video production and post-production resources and channel time to individuals that meet qualification criteria (referred to as “Producers” and/or “Members”).

### **c. Funding, Staffing, Management, and Governance**

Our funding comes primarily from Franchise Fees paid to the Municipalities by subscribers of Time Warner Cable. Additional funding is sought in the form of donations from individuals, corporations and organizations. Further operating funds are obtained from nominal fees and charges for some optional services provided by CTV.

Operations are managed by the Executive Director and governed by the CTV Board of Directors. Operations are supported by staff members and/or volunteers.

### **d. Mission Statement and Philosophy**

“CTV exists to encourage citizens to exercise their right to free speech and to foster awareness of their community through democratic use of electronic media by providing access to cable television and for the purpose of non-commercial communication within the community.”

### **e. Location**

CTV is physically located at 76 Winter St. in Keene, NH, next to the Keene Public Library; our mailing address is P.O. Box 903, Keene, NH, 03431.. Entry is through the main entrance only, on the East side of the building, which faces the library. Metered parking is available all around the building.

Telephone: (603) 283-6621  
Fax: (603) 903-1277  
Email: info@CheshireTV.org  
Website: www.CheshireTV.org

### **f. Membership**

Individuals who wish to use our equipment or facilities are required to become members of CTV. Membership is free of charge for persons who live, work, or attend school within the franchise area. Applicants must provide verification of these criteria as well as present a valid photo ID.

Any person who does not meet the free membership criteria has the option of becoming a dues-paying member by paying an annual membership fee of \$50.00.

The minimum age for membership is 14. Members under the age of 18 are required to have a parent or legal guardian *present* at time of application to sign all required forms.

Staff members may request identification from any member wishing to use resources at any time.

Membership must be renewed annually by the member and members are entitled to all the rights and privileges outlined in the booklet and the CTV bylaws.

***Members are independent Producers and are not employees of CTV and should never represent themselves as such, nor speak on behalf of CTV, nor give any indication that they are acting or speaking on behalf of CTV.***

## **II. Standards of Conduct**

### **a. General Standards**

All individuals at our facility agree to conduct themselves in a responsible and appropriate manner and will not interfere with the activities or programs of CTV or its members.

CTV has a zero-tolerance policy towards verbal or physical abuse, threats, or acts of violence towards any person. Any such behavior enacted on site will result in the immediate removal from the facilities of the individuals involved and permanent revocation of membership privileges.

Any action or behavior that adversely affects the safety of others is prohibited.

CTV computers (except those designated for member use), fax machines, and telephones are for use by CTV staff ONLY.

The security of personal property is not the responsibility of CTV.

Members may only access areas of the building leased by CTV. ***All other areas are off-limits.***

### **b. Prohibited Materials**

- Food, Beverages, Gum, and Smoking are prohibited in all CTV areas
- Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs on site or while using CTV resources is prohibited
- Possession of any weapon, legal or otherwise, while on site is prohibited in all CTV areas unless prior approval has been authorized by Cheshire TV management

### **c. Interaction with Staff and Volunteers**

CTV reserves the right to refuse to provide access to any person who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs; interferes with the orderly conduct of business; refuses to cooperate with or in any way abuses or disrespects staff, volunteers, and community members; has misused resources; or otherwise violates any CTV policy.

### **d. Sexual Harassment Policy**

It is the policy of CTV to provide an environment in which all persons may work and learn in an atmosphere of respect for the dignity and worth of all. It must be free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is not only illegal but also unacceptable and impermissible conduct. Harassment on the basis of sex constitutes unlawful sex discrimination. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, non-verbal, and/or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of achievement or related matters; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for achievement or related matters affecting an individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance, ability to achieve, or related matters, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or otherwise offensive environment. Behavior of this nature should be immediately reported to staff, the Executive Director, and/or the Board of Directors.

**e. Statement of Non-Discrimination**

No member shall be denied access to CTV equipment, facilities, or channel time on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual preference or orientation, gender identity, age, veteran status, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, disability, or religious or political affiliation.

**III. Use of Resources**

**a. General Policies**

- CTV resources are available only for the production of programs to be cablecast on the channel. *Use exclusively for private, recreational, or commercial purposes is strictly prohibited.*
- Programming must be submitted within 14 days of the use of resources. Members who do not provide programming within this time may be charged the value of the use of the resources as specified on the reservation form signed at the time the equipment is checked out.
- Resources are available only to members certified in their use and proper operation.
- Members are responsible for any loss or damage to equipment checked out to them. Never: leave equipment unattended; leave equipment in a car; loan the equipment to anyone; attempt to use the equipment in hazardous environments or conditions; or do anything that would place you, other people, equipment, or property in danger.

**b. Reservations and Checking Resources Out and In**

- Members wishing to use resources to produce a program must make a reservation specifying the resources they require, what day *and* time they wish to pick them up, and what day *and* time they will return them.
- Resources are available for members to reserve on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Reservations are non-transferable. The producer making the reservation must be present at check out and cannot send a proxy. This applies to returning equipment; the person checking equipment in must be the same person who checked out the equipment.
- A \$10.00 per item, per day fee may be charged for equipment returned later than the stated return time/date.
- CTV reserves the right to limit the length and number of reservations based on demand.
- Any equipment not returned within thirty (30) days of its scheduled return date and not cleared with CTV management will be considered lost by theft and the incident will be reported to the proper authorities.

**c. Editing Facilities**

- Editing time must be reserved by members certified in the use of the editing equipment.
- No more than two people are permitted in an editing session at any time.
- Members using the editing computers must comply with all posted instructions.
- Cancellations must be made within twenty-four hours.
- CTV editing computers will be periodically “cleaned.” Any media not in a show folder will be deleted.

**d. Studio Facilities**

- Production and post-production facilities are only available to members trained in their use and proper operation.
- Reserved for the length of the program plus one half-hour before and after taping for setup and strike.
- Producers are strongly encouraged to test all equipment prior to starting a show.
- All crew must be certified members of CTV, and check in with staff upon arrival.
- Studio must be clean and ready for next use at the end of reservation.
- A \$10 fee charge will be charged any time the studio is not restored properly
- Members may not connect any USB or other portable hard drives or peripherals to CTV computers.

**e. Cancellations / No Shows**

If a producer does not arrive within fifteen minutes of studio reservation time, the reservation may be cancelled to make the resources available to others. Such cancellations involving Cheshire TV staff services may incur penalties as defined under Section IV. “Production Services.” Recurrent abuse may result in the loss of reservation privileges.

## **f. Training and Certification**

CTV offers opportunities for members to become familiar and comfortable with equipment and facilities. Certification is required for all equipment and facilities use, and training is available by appointment.

## **IV. Production Services**

CTV offers production services to Producers at no charge beyond actual costs incurred by CTV. Services are available on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to availability of resources. The Executive Director will meet with the Producer to review the requirements of the program and determine the appropriate level of staff involvement. In cases where CTV staff provides the production needs for a Producer, cancellations must be made two weeks in advance. Cancellations made within twenty-four (24) hours will result in a \$30 cancellation fee. CTV reserves the right to discontinue production services for any Producer, at any time, for any reason.

## **V. Programming**

### **a. General Policies**

Any person may submit a program for cablecast, whether s/he is a CTV member or not. For CTV purposes, the individual submitting the program is considered the Producer. Producers are solely responsible for and should be familiar with the content of that program. CTV does not review programs or preview programs before they are cablecast, but does require that certain minimum requirements be met.

Pre-recorded programs may be submitted for cablecast as an mpg2 file or as a standard playable DVD. CTV may provide transfer services for a fee and with prior notification. Producers must submit along with their programming media a Request for Cablecast. Producers of weekly or otherwise regularly scheduled and recurring program may submit an Annual Request for Cablecast once per year, calendar year to begin each January 1.

Producers should reclaim all submitted materials within thirty (30) days of original cablecast or such materials may be discarded. CTV assumes no responsibility for materials left by a Producer longer than thirty (30) days.

### **b. Minimum Requirements For Cablecast**

All submitted programs *must* include the following:

#### Opening Disclaimer

- A 10-second opening disclaimer slate of black background with white text in a plain legible font such as Arial or Times New Roman in a point size that fills the screen without affecting the aspect ratio of the text, with no movement, music, or other audio, except of the opening disclaimer text below, that states the following, verbatim:

*“The following program was provided by an independent producer solely responsible for its content. The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of Cheshire TV, its staff, Board of Directors, or underwriters.”*

- A title that is the same as the name of the program on the paperwork submitted
- The program content also must meet technical standards as set forth below, contain no prohibited material, and follow guidelines for commercial content
- The end of the program must have, at minimum, a credit for the Producer and correct sponsor acknowledgement (in cases where sponsorship or underwriting were obtained)

#### Closing Disclaimer

- A 10-second closing disclaimer slate of black background with white text in a plain legible font such as Arial or Times New Roman in a point size that fills the screen without affecting the aspect ratio of the text, with no movement, music, or other audio, except of the opening disclaimer text below, that states the following, verbatim:

*“The preceding program was provided by an independent producer solely responsible for its content. The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of Cheshire TV, its staff, Board of Directors, or underwriters.”*

- The end of the program must have, at minimum, a credit for the Producer and correct sponsor acknowledgement (in cases where sponsorship or underwriting were obtained)

It is acceptable to substitute the term “this Channel” for “Cheshire TV.”

*Any program submitted without these requirements can have them inserted by CTV for a fee.*

### c. Technical Standards

Technical standards are based on the premise that no program should cause a viewer to think that their TV or other home equipment, CTV, or the cable system is having technical difficulties.

- Lack of signal must not appear anywhere within the program
- No rolling, tearing, or jumping
- Colors must accurately reproduce original colors.
- White levels which are too high distort the audio portion of the signal and are unacceptable
- Audio levels that are between -12dB and -6dB during playback are appropriate
- Program media must contain only the program being submitted for cablecast

Technical standards may be waived in cases where the program is of a “one time” event. In such cases, the Producer must provide a written explanation to the Executive Director and programming material must contain the following:

- A 10-second opening disclaimer slate of black background with white text in a plain legible font such as Arial or Times New Roman in a point size that fills the screen without affecting the aspect ratio of the text, with no movement, music, or other audio, except of the opening disclaimer text below, that states the following, verbatim:

*“The following program was provided by an independent producer solely responsible for its content and may contain video and/or audio material some viewers may consider of low, outdated, or otherwise sub-standard technical quality. The broadcast and transmission of this material is not intended to and should not reflect negatively on the technical standards of Cheshire TV.”*

*Any such program submitted without these requirements can have them inserted by CTV for a fee.*

### d. Labeling Requirements

Programs must be labeled on the media in legible lettering with the following information:

- Program Name as listed on the Request For Cablecast, with episode # and air date, if part of a series
- Program length in hours, minutes, and seconds (XX:YY:ZZ)
- Producer’s name and telephone number

### e. Mature Content

“Mature content” is defined as:

- Nudity – depictions of buttocks, genitalia, or female breasts;
- Depictions or descriptions of sexual or excretory material or behavior in a manner so patently offensive as to breach local, state, or federal law;
- Adult language – defined as that which would not normally be heard on an over-the-air network at the same time of day;
- Graphic violence – visual and/or audio depiction of especially vivid, brutal, and/or realistic acts of violence or similarly graphic medical procedures.

The Producer is required to inform CTV of mature content when the Request for Cablecast is submitted. CTV will then schedule the cablecast between the hours of 10:00 pm and 4:00 am, commonly known as “safe harbor” hours.

In addition, a program containing mature content must have a 10-second disclaimer following the standard opening disclaimer consisting of a slate of black background with white text in a plain font such as Arial or Times New

Roman in a point size that fills the screen without affecting the aspect ratio of the text, with no music or movement, that states the following verbatim, both in visual text and a clearly *verbalized voiceover*:

**"The following program contains mature content which may not be suitable for all viewers. Parental and viewer discretion is advised."**

The Producer has the option of CTV placing this disclaimer on the program for a fee.

In the event a program airing on CTV receives a complaint that the mature content policy has been violated, the program will be immediately removed from the schedule and reviewed. If the policy has been violated, the program will be cablecast only in the safe harbor hours and the Executive Director will determine further appropriate action if deemed necessary.

#### **f. Scheduling**

Before any program will be scheduled for cablecast, it must be submitted according to the requirements in Section Vb along with the appropriate paperwork.

The CTV schedule runs from 12:00:00 am Sunday to 11:59:59 pm Saturday. In order to be listed in the schedule, programs must be submitted for air no later than close of business two Fridays prior to the schedule week.

All available time slots are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Specific time slot requests will be honored *when possible* but CTV reserves the right to schedule programs at its discretion to meet the needs of the channel. In some cases, programs of a time-critical nature may pre-empt regularly scheduled programming.

All submitted programs which meet the requirements will be shown at least once. CTV reserves the right to schedule any program, including series programs, as often and in any time slot it deems appropriate. The Producer may request limited playback and can indicate this on the forms.

The following criteria will determine priority of cablecast whenever there is a scheduling conflict:

1. Programs produced by CTV members
2. Programs produced by non-members
3. Imported Programs
4. Repeats of previously cablecast programs

#### **g. Series Programs**

A series is defined as a program that is cablecast at the same time on the same day each week.

To request a series slot, a Producer must submit two complete episodes. CTV will provide a list of available time slots from which to choose. Once that time slot is selected, the Producer must submit a new episode every week to keep that time slot. Series slots will be forfeited if the producer fails to provide new original programming for more than two consecutive weeks.

#### **h. Live Event Programs**

Time slots and staff time for live event broadcasts (any live broadcast occurring outside the CTV studio) must be scheduled at least 30 (thirty) calendar days in advance of the live program, and will be undertaken at the discretion of Cheshire TV management.

#### **i. Live Studio Programs**

Time slots and studio time for live studio programs must be scheduled at least 30 (thirty) calendar days in advance of the live program, unless part of a weekly live series, in which case a reservation must be made two weeks in advance of each airdate.

Due to the technical demands of live programming, a Producer must successfully produce two live-to-tape programs before being certified to schedule a live program, unless Cheshire TV staff are involved in the broadcast.

The live cablecast will be cancelled if any of the following conditions is not met:

- The Producer must be present and check in with staff one hour prior to the start of the live program.
- Crew and talent are required to arrive and check in with staff thirty minutes prior to the start of the live program.
- A live-studio qualified staff member must be present at CTV for live programs.

Live programs with a studio audience require at least one usher or audience wrangler, fire safety regulations must be met, and no admission may be charged without prior arrangements with management.

Live studio program crew must be approved by CTV staff and capable in each of the following positions, if no CTV staff are involved in the production:

- Camera operator for each manned camera
- A Cable Page for each handheld camera
- Floor Director
- Technical Director (Switcher Operator)
- Graphics and Video Playback
- Audio Engineer

## VI. Underwriting & Sponsorship

Producers are encouraged to seek underwriting, sponsorship, grants or other assistance for their production. Because CTV offers its equipment and facilities at no charge to the Producer and the non-profit nature of PEG channels, specific policies are in place regarding crediting underwriters and sponsors of programs:

Credit for underwriting can be shown at the beginning and end of the program and/or during breaks in the program.

Sponsor messages must include verbiage approximating a "PBS" style: "This program is brought to you in part by..." and may include the name, generic location such as street name, website, and general nature of the business. Graphics, text, video, music, and voiceover may all be included as part of this message

***Pricing or sale information, calls to action, comparisons/contrasts, specified numerical street addresses, hours of operation, telephone numbers, and pricing are not acceptable.***

Producers receiving annual sponsorship valued at over \$100.00 (one-hundred dollars) must disclose all details of sponsorship arrangements to CTV in writing and submit this information with their initial annual Request for Cablecast form. For any program produced at or using CTV resources which earns sponsored income exceeding \$100.00 (one hundred dollars), CTV is entitled to 10% of all gross monies received from the sponsor or underwriter. Any Producer violating the Underwriting & Sponsorship policy will be required to terminate the arrangement immediately. *Producers are strongly encouraged to review their sponsor message plans with management to avoid policy violation.*

CTV reserves the right to seek and/or approve sponsorship and collect funds for any programming created or cablecast using CTV facilities or equipment.

## VII. Prohibited Content

The following programming content is prohibited:

- Any material in violation of local, state, or federal law
- Solicitation of funds or material for any and all purposes including the promotion, advertising, and sale of commercial products and services (local community-based licensed non-profits are exempt from this rule). This includes but is not limited to:
  - Any solicitation of funds by and/or for individuals
  - Any lottery/raffle information



**b. Major Violations and Resulting Penalties**

Penalties for major violations will NOT be based on a rolling calendar:

First offense: 90-day suspension of all equipment and facilities privileges.

Second offense: Permanent suspension.

Major violations include, but are not limited to:

- Unauthorized or commercial / profit-making use of equipment or facilities
- Harassment of any individual
- Handling off-limits equipment or being in off-limits areas
- Falsifying forms
- Taking equipment without authorization/theft
- Abuse of equipment, including reconfiguration or attempted repair
- Committing any unlawful act while on the premises or while using CTV equipment
- Vandalism
- Possession or use of any illegal substance while on CTV premises
- Possession of any weapon, legal or otherwise, while on site is prohibited in all CTV areas unless prior approval has been authorized by Cheshire TV management

Additionally, any costs incurred will be paid by the member.

No penalties should be interpreted to deny the user of access to channel time, only the privilege of use of CTV equipment and facilities.

**c. Grievance Procedures**

Members are strongly encouraged to resolve differences at the staff level. Any grievance regarding policies shall first be discussed with the CTV management. If this does not result in a satisfactory resolution, or if the grievance is with the Executive Director, a formal grievance may be filed with the Board of Directors using the following procedure:

Anyone aggrieved by the management, or a decision of the Executive Director, or any interpretation of the policies may file a written appeal to the CTV Board of Directors. The appeal should specifically describe the grievance and cite applicable policies. Supporting documents and statements may be included. The CTV Board of Directors will hold a hearing on the complaint at its next Board meeting. The CTV Executive Director will be provided a copy of the written complaint. No formal rules of evidence or procedure will be required for such a hearing but the CTV Board of Directors will accept and review any and all evidence it deems relevant to the matter and will permit all involved parties to address the issues raised.

Within thirty days of the close of a hearing, the CTV Board of Directors will issue a final written decision to the complainant.



# Membership Form

P.O. Box 93.  
Keene, NH 03431  
603-283-6621  
www.cheshiretv.org

*Please print legibly*

First Name\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Physical Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Phone\*: \_\_\_\_\_ Secondary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address\*\*: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Please add my e-mail to the Volunteer Crew e-mail list.

I have read and understand the Cheshire TV Policies and Procedures Handbook.

I understand that the use of Cheshire TV equipment and/or facilities for video production constitutes agreement to Cheshire TV Policies and Procedures as specified by the Handbook, training, and/or staff instructions.

I understand that when representing myself as a member of Cheshire TV I agree to abide by the established code of conduct and that I am personally responsible for the content contained in programs which I produce and/or submit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian (for minors)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\* CTV requires a contact name and phone number which will be given upon request regarding inquiries about any program you submit.

\*\*E-mail is the official means of communication between Cheshire TV and its members.

PROOF OF ELIGIBILITY: \_\_\_\_\_ MEMBER #: \_\_\_\_\_ STAFF: \_\_\_\_\_

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