

Framingham Public Access Corporation

ACCESS USERS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

As of April 6, 2007

**FRAMINGHAM PUBLIC ACCESS CORPORATION
31FLAGG DR
FRAMINGHAM, MA 01701
508-875-5434**

FPAC-TV ACCESS USERS POLICIES & PROCEDURES

CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP

In order to become a member of FPAC-TV, a person or organization must:

- 1. Provide proof of Framingham residency or corporate address in Framingham,**
- 2. Complete a Membership Application Form,**
- 3. Attend a member orientation session,**
- 4. Sign the Agreement including the Policies and Procedures,**
- 5. Pay the required membership fee.**

(Applicant claiming cable subscribers fee rate must provide FPAC-TV their last month's cable bill)

- 6. Submit to a CORI check if applicable**

1. **Basic Membership – FREE**

Limited to use of studio and editing facilities. No voting privileges, training classes or use of portable equipment. This membership is designed for volunteers whom have already gained experience from prior training / education.

2. **Individual Membership – Cable Subscriber \$20 Non-subscribers \$30**

Voting Privileges, subscription to FPAC Newsletter / Program Guide, open access to training, production equipment and facilities and channel time.

(Note: Membership fees may be waived at the discretion of the Executive Director)

3. **Individual Member under 18 or over 65 --\$15**

(With Parental consent if under 18)

4. **Family Membership – Cable Subscriber \$50 Non-subscriber \$60**

Up to 4 persons within the same household (at the same address) who apply together for membership, except that only one vote can be exercised for each family membership.

(Only two individuals in a family membership may be over the age of 18)

5. **Non-Profit Organization Membership -- \$75**

Available for any firms, corporation, organizations or other entities recognized as non-profit, tax-exempt by the IRS. Groups joining FPAC under non-profit membership shall have all the privileges of Individual Membership, except that only one vote may be exercised per Non-Profit Membership. Non-Profit organizations are eligible to receive training for up to five (5) people per membership year with training for additional people available at \$20 per person. In addition, Non-profit Organization Members may receive specialized group training by contacting the Executive Director.

6. **Business Membership – \$125**

Available for any Framingham based, for profit, corporation, institution or other entity. Businesses joining FPAC under Business Membership shall have all the privileges of Individual Membership, except that only one vote may be exercised per Business Membership. Business Members are eligible to receive training for up to four (4) people per membership year with training for additional people available at \$25 per person.

ACCESS RULES

1. FPAC-TV studio and equipment is available to eligible members on a first-come, first-serve basis.
2. Anyone using FPAC-TV facilities must understand FPAC-TV Access Users Policies and Procedures. Anyone using access equipment must be certified to operate that level of equipment or facility.
3. Anyone who produces programming using FPAC-TV access facilities and equipment retains ownership of the copyright to that program. Programs produced with access equipment and facilities must be cablecast on the access channel.
4. FPAC-TV's Community Bulletin Board is to be used by not-for-profit and community groups to publicize activities and events. Event and activity prices will not be included in Bulletin Board notices.
5. Users should only identify themselves as public access community producers, not as employees or staff of FPAC-TV.
6. Access users under the age of 18 must have a signed "Parental Consent Form" on file with FPAC-TV and be accompanied by a CORI checked adult when on studio property.
7. Access users will use their best efforts to conform all programs to the terms of FPAC-TV's charter documents, by-laws, charitable status requirements, and existing contracts.
8. Violation of these rules may result in immediate termination of any producer and sponsorship agreements and rights.
9. All access users will be required to fill out a CORI Application prior to being approved as a member.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Public Access is a medium for community expression in the Town of Framingham, principally funded by a percentage of cable television provider revenue, and managed by the Framingham Public Access Corporation, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation. It is hoped that the residents of the town will utilize this resource as a means to produce a wide variety of programs about their experiences, concerns and interests.

ROLE OF THE FPAC-TV STAFF

Successful public access programming depends on participation by many active, trained volunteers who use video communication tools in order to independently reflect their ideas. Because of this, as well as limited staff time, FPAC-TV cannot provide video production services for community members or organizations. Staff will assist community members in assembling production crews from among trained and qualified community volunteers. Community organizations planning to do programs on a regular basis are encouraged to form a television production committee, which FPAC-TV will then train according to FPAC rules and policies.

ON SITE BEHAVIOR

- 1) No one shall possess or use any illegal substances and/or weapons.
- 2) No one will be allowed to operate equipment or spend time in FPAC-TV facilities while using or appearing to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- 3) Abusive language and/or actions will not be permitted in the access facility nor will it be tolerated outside of the facility by anyone utilizing FPAC-TV equipment. This shall include emotional, verbal or non-verbal abuse used to punish, belittle or embarrass another person and include, but not be limited to shouting, threatening, harassing, swearing, constant teasing or obscene gesturing.
- 4) The Framingham Public Access Corporation seeks to insure a safe and secure working environment and facility for staff, members, volunteers and guests. Any instance of an actual or perceived safety threat caused by an individual, group or circumstance will be considered a major violation of these rules. Under such circumstances the Executive Director, a staff member or their designee present shall be empowered to act immediately and prudently to assure the safety of persons present and the security of the facility.
- 5) Members will not be allowed to loiter in the access facility. Phones are for staff use only.
- 6) Members are responsible for supervision of guests and children during productions or edit time. Children should not be left unattended in the access center.
- 7) Pets and non-working animals should not be brought into the access center.

GRIEVANCES

Any grievances regarding assignment of workshop space, channel time allocation, equipment, studio and facility use or any other matter regarding FPAC-TV should first be discussed with the Executive Director. If that does not provide an adequate solution, a grievance may be filed in writing to the President of the Board of FPAC-TV, PO Box 2884, Framingham, MA 01703-2884. The Board may invite the person filing the grievance to appear at the next available meeting of the Board to discuss the matter. All decisions of the Board of Directors regarding these matters are final.

VIOLATIONS

Violations of FPAC-TV Rules and Procedures will fall under either a Major violation or a Minor violation.

Major violations shall include, but not be limited to, abuse of staff or members; commercial or profit-making use of FPAC-TV facilities or equipment; misrepresentation to others of member's affiliation with FPAC-TV; falsifying forms; taking or reserving equipment without staff permission; abuse of equipment, including attempted repair, facility reconfiguration or improper transport; tampering with FPAC-TV software or data; conduct detrimental or injurious to FPAC-TV; and Major violations included in items #1, 2, 3 and 4 under On-Site Behavior.

These major violations will result in a written warning with specific violation outlined and a 60 day suspension or termination of membership with no refund of membership fees.

Minor violations shall include, but not be limited to, failure to cancel reservations as required; late return, mishandling or unsafe use of equipment; eating, drinking or smoking in FPAC-TV production area; failure to clean up after use; excessive rowdiness or horseplay in the facility; creating a disturbance to other FPAC-TV members, volunteers or guests; loitering in the facility; excessive personal phone use; and 3 late cancellations within a six month period.

These minor violations will result, depending on the frequency, in 1.) Written warning with specific violation outlined 2.) 30 day suspension 3.) 60 day suspension 4.) and/or termination of membership with no refund of membership fees.

Complaints of violations may originate from members, staff, volunteers or the Executive Director and will be addressed to the Executive Director. The Executive Director may, only for good cause, suspend a member for up to 30 days pending the hearing described below.

HEARING PROCESS

Upon an alleged violation of these rules, the offending member will be notified by the Executive Director, in writing, certified mail return receipt requested, that a violation has been alleged. This notification will inform the member of the violation of which they are accused, the potential penalty for the violation, and that they may request a formal hearing, in writing, within 15 days of notification. A date and time may then be set for a hearing insuring that the offending member be afforded adequate and reasonable time to prepare, opportunity to be represented by counsel, present witnesses on their behalf and speak with opposing witnesses. Evidence pertinent to the charges may be presented at this hearing.

The violation hearing will be presided over by the Chair of the Board of Directors of FPAC-TV or his or her designee. Member shall be notified by mail of the written decision of the President or designee, by mail, within 15 days of the hearing.

APPEAL PROCESS

Any member disagreeing with the hearing decision may request, in writing, within 15 days, an appeal before the Board of Directors of FPAC-TV. The appeal hearing shall be placed on the agenda at the next regularly scheduled meeting providing adequate preparation time is afforded the appellant. The appellant will be notified of the time, date and format requirements of the appeal hearing. The appellant will be notified in writing, within 15 days, of the decision of the board. The decision of the Board of Directors will be final. If the appellant chooses not to participate in the appeal process, the suspension and/or termination will stand.

PROGRAM CREDIT FOR 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 as follows: "This program was made possible through a grant by ..." or "Goods and services used in this program were contributed by...". FPAC-TV 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. Producers should not include telephone numbers, street addresses, email addresses or website addresses of underwriters, but may list business or organization name and town.

GENERAL HOUSE RULES

- Please sign (print, please, so your name is legible) at the reception desk when you arrive for activities at the Access Center. Remember to sign out when you leave.
- The kitchen is self-serve. If you use the kitchen or studio, please clean up after yourself, and wash your mugs and those of your guests. We do not have staff to clean the kitchen.

PROGRAM CONTENT RULES

1. Presentation of the following material on community access channels is prohibited:
 - a) Any program or material that is commercial in nature.
 - b) Any material that is copyrighted or trademarked.
 - c) Any material which is intended to defraud the viewer or is designed to obtain money by false or fraudulent pretenses, representations or promises.
 - d) All 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 the 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.
 - e) Libelous or slanderous material.
 - f) Material that is indecent, obscene or is otherwise illegal.
2. Regarding political programs, the following ARE ENCOURAGED:
 - a) Political presentations which are informative in nature such that they state who a candidate is and what a candidate represents in terms of specific ideas, issues and policies.
 - b) Candidate forums.
 - c) Presentations which describe a person's or organization's point of view on a given issue.
3. In regard to political programs, the following ARE PROHIBITED:
 - a) Any advertising by, or on behalf of, candidates for public office, political parties or ballot/warrant issues; on advertising promoting (or opposing) candidates or ballot/warrant issues by supporting groups or lobbying organizations which are under 10 (ten) minutes in length.
 - b) Any type of "paid political announcement" or "political commercial".
4. Regarding Fundraising Programs, the following is permitted:
 - a) Nonprofit 501 (c)(3) organizations members may produce one (1) fundraising program per year.
 - b) The format of that program may be either a live auction or a live telethon.

USE OF EQUIPMENT

1. General Rules:
 - a) Equipment is available on a first-come, first-served, non-discriminatory basis.
 - b) Cancellation of equipment and facility reservations should be made at least 24 hours in advance, except in cases of emergency. Repeated last minute cancellations may result in loss of privileges.
 - c) Any materials for productions, beyond those supplied by FPAC-TV must be supplied by the user and must be removed after the production. Sets, props and production materials may not be left in the studio.
 - d) Individuals using FPAC-TV equipment, studio or post-production facilities will not change wiring or components without staff permission or supervision. 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 privileges will result from such equipment abuse.
 - e) Individuals using FPAC-TV equipment and facilities should report any defects or problems to the staff. Members should fill out a Facilities/Equipment Incident report when problems are encountered.
 - f) Producers found to be misusing or abusing the equipment may be asked to repeat training, testing and/or be subject to loss of privileges.
 - g) No food or drinks should be brought into the control room, master control room or audio/video edit bays.

2. Use of the Studio

- a) Reservations for The Studio may be made up to two months in advance. Reservations can be made in person, by phone or by email.
- b) In order to schedule the studio and control room, a community user (and all crew members) must be certified for studio production.
- c) No studio production may take place without staff supervision.
- d) Producers are entitled to a maximum of Three (3) hours per session with a maximum of Nine (9) combined hours per week in the studio, post-production or editing facilities. Scheduled studio time includes time needed to set up, break down and clean up in studio.
- e) Users must show up on time for scheduled studio productions 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 (1) hour before and after the time needed to tape the actual production for set up and cleanup of the studio.
- f) Users under the age of 18 who wish to schedule the studio or participate in a studio production must have written permission from their parent or guardian.
- g) A minimum of three (3), certified crew members are required to produce a program in the Studio. If there is not a minimum number, the scheduled production may not be allowed to shoot.
- h) A CORI/SORI certified adult must accompany children under 18

3. Use of Editing and Post-Production Facilities

- a) In order to schedule and use the editing or post-production facilities, a community user must be properly certified for such use.
- d) Users under the age of 18 who wish to schedule the editing and post-production facilities must have written permission from their parent or guardian.
- c) Producers are entitled to a maximum of 3 hours per session with a maximum of 9 combined hours per week in the studio, post-production or editing facilities. Scheduling outside these parameters will be made at staff discretion. These guidelines are designed to allow everyone equal and fair access to the post-production facilities. Grievances concerning scheduling should be brought to staff attention immediately and should be resolved at that time.
- d) A CORI/SORI certified adult must accompany children under 18

4. Use of Portable Video and Audio Equipment

- a) Reservations for equipment may be made up to one month in advance and should be made at least one week in advance. Reservations can be made in person, by phone, or by email to any staff member.
- b) Equipment must be picked up and returned as previously agreed upon. Failure to return equipment when due will result in a written warning and subsequent violations may result in loss of privileges in the future.
- c) Equipment may be checked out for forty-eight (48) hour periods during the week or longer for weekends or holidays. An equipment use will be applied against each group, organization or institution each time its individual members check out equipment for that entity's use.
- d) Producers holding equipment reservations must follow these check-out and check-in procedures.
- e) A CORI/SORI certified adult must accompany children under 18

5. Check-Out of Equipment

- a) Hand in a valid FPAC-TV Access ID card to staff. The card will be kept at the center until equipment is returned.
- b) Fill out equipment check list and sign Equipment Check out form.
- c) A copy of a current credit card may be required to be kept on file for check out of equipment in value over \$500
- d) Assemble and test requested equipment. It is the producer's responsibility to make sure that they have all required cables and connectors to facilitate production.
- e) Users are responsible for loss or damage due to negligence or abuse while the equipment is checked out to them.

** Eligible users under the age of 18 who wish to borrow portable equipment must have a signature of parent or guardian on file prior to reserving equipment. Individual who signs a release stating that the adult accepts responsibility for the equipment and its use by the minor

6. Check-In of Equipment
 - a) Equipment must be returned on scheduled time.
 - b) Any problems with equipment or damage should be noted on Facilities/Equipment Incident form and brought to the attention of staff at the time of return.
 - c) Upon the return of all borrowed equipment, the FPAC-TV Access ID will be returned.

CHANNEL TIME REQUESTS/CABLECASTING PROCEDURE

Scheduling Procedures

1. General Procedures
 - a) All requests for channel time shall be processed on a fair and equitable basis. An Application for Cablecast form must be turned in with completed program. Scheduling and cablecast times will be determined by programming staff. If producers have special time requirements or requests they should be noted on the Application for cablecast form.
 - b) If scheduling and staff time allows, a taped program may be repeated during the weekly period, for a total of six to eight times per month.
 - c) Users may produce a Single Program or Series.
 - d) Each individual program produced and each series produced should have on file at FPAC-TV a Producer Agreement and Indemnification in which the producer is solely responsible for program content and holds FPAC-TV (and its officers, directors, employees and agents) harmless from liability or legal fees and expenses incurred as a result of cablecasting.
2. Series Scheduling
 - a) Regularly scheduled "series" time slots will be allocated at the discretion of staff provided ample time remains available for other community programming requests.
 - b) If a series producer fails to produce new original programming for more than two consecutive weeks or regularly fails to have the program ready for scheduled cablecast, the time slot may be reassigned to other users.
 - c) A series may be weekly, semi-weekly, or monthly.
 - d) Prior to a series being scheduled to air, a total of 4 shows must be produced and ready to air. Program scheduling will be put into a lottery quarterly for fair time slot distribution.
3. Safe Haven/Adult Programming

Producers are expected to alert FPAC staff to programming that may be inappropriate for younger viewers. FPAC reserves the right to cablecast programming with excessively violent material, offensive language, nudity, or sexually explicit material after 11:00pm, and before 6:00am, in order to preserve a safe haven for viewing by "all audience members". FPAC believes that when it comes to controversial content in programming, the response should be to encourage more speech, as opposed to enforcing silence. Furthermore, FPAC is forbidden by law from censorship, or content control. FPAC encourages anyone who disagrees with a program to produce counter-programming presenting an opposing point of view, or otherwise responding to the program in question.
4. Locally produced programming will take precedence in program scheduling. The staff will schedule program playback with the goal of presenting a coherent schedule.

Putting a Program on the channel

Anyone who lives or works in Framingham may request channel time, free of charge, to cablecast a videotape. In order to reserve time for a series of shows, one must become a member and pay the membership fee.

CABLECAST STANDARDS

Cablecasting Requirements

1. Label

Before cablecasting, all videotapes / DVD's must be clearly labeled with the following information:

- a) Title of program only on spine label.
- b) Segment name and exact TRT (total running time) in minutes and seconds on face label.

The beginning of all cablecast programs must have a standard format in the following order:

- a) Minimum of 30 seconds of Black
- b) Graphic slate with series title, segment name, total running time, production date and producer's name.

2. End of tape

- a) Appropriate credits
- b) FPAC-TV credit: "Produced at FPAC-TV Access Center, Framingham"
- c) 60 seconds of standard black

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