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Operating Rules and Procedures

The objective of Berkeley Community Media (BCM) is to strengthen our community through increasing and enhancing communication among its residents. BCM exists to provide Berkeley residents and organizations with the tools and training needed to effectively communicate with one another and with our schools and governmental bodies through the use of television and other electronic media. These resources provide community members with a non-commercial forum for ideas, opinions, information and creative expression originating at the grass roots' level.

The a contractual agreement with the City of Berkeley, program production, training, equipment and facilities together with cablecast services are provided to three groups:

1. individuals and organizations (Public Access)
2. educational institutions (Educational Access)
3. local government (Government Access)

Together, service to these groups is known as PEG Access.

BCM does not select nor censor programming. It is the local residents, organizations, schools and government bodies that determine what information is important to share with the community. The rules and procedures outlined below are designed to insure that resources are used only for intended purposes and that all who wish to participate have an equal opportunity

Becoming a member:

Eligibility:

All Berkeley residents are eligible for individual memberships. Any public or private organization, institution or group that is located in or serves Berkeley or has a majority of Berkeley residents as users may apply for organizational membership.

To apply for membership, all individuals interested must attend a Public Orientation. At this point they may complete the usership application, pay the membership fee and provide two proofs of residency. In the case of an organizational membership, the organizational representatives must provide a letter from the organization they represent, which names them as the representatives and briefly describes the project that they will be working on.

Members receive access to training workshops, equipment use and cablecast time, as well as a seasonal issue of BCM's program guide/newsletter.

Without becoming a member Berkeley residents may submit non-commercial announcements to be aired on the Community Bulletin Board, and submit videotapes to be played on B-TV 25.

Once you become a member you will be assigned a mentor from our staff to assist you with you first two projects. This mentorship program will be outlined in greater detail in the Producer's Workshop.

Volunteers:

For those members who cannot afford the yearly membership fee or workshop fees a volunteer program is available. The member may sign up to work a number of hours in exchange for the membership/workshop; however, these hours must be worked off before more volunteer hours can be added.

Programming:

Access to channel time is free to all Berkeley Residents and BCM members. Programs submitted are scheduled on a first-come first-serve, non-discriminatory basis. Once submitted, programs will be scheduled with the goal of presenting a coherent schedule.

Programs must be submitted on a properly labeled SVHS or VHS tape with a completed Cablecast Request form.

All programs must be submitted by a Berkeley resident, although residents may sponsor a program produced by someone outside of Berkeley if they choose.

Programs produced by Berkeley residents will have scheduling priority over imported programming sponsored by Berkeley residents.

Submitting a Program:

At least two weeks before the desired programming time, submit:

A properly labeled videotape of the completed program
A completed Cablecast Request form

If you are not the producer you must also have the rights or permission from the producer or distribution agency to cablecast the program on B-TV 25.

Reruns:

Each program produced by Berkeley residents are entitled to two cablecasts in the year it is produced. Other programs are entitled to one cablecast in the year they are submitted. Additional cablecasts will be scheduled at the discretion of the Programming Director.

Content:

As a producer you are responsible for the content of your program. You must sign an Indemnification Form stating that you take responsibility for your program. By signing this form you indemnify BCM for any defamation, copyright infringement or legal action resulting from cablecasting a program. When you sign the Indemnification Form you state that the program does not contain any of the following:

- any advertising or other material that promotes a commercial product, service or lottery
- any unlawful use of copyrighted material
- any material that violates state or federal law relating to obscenity
- any material that is libelous, slanderous or defamatory in character or material that is an unlawful invasion of privacy.

In addition, BCM suggests that you ask everyone who appears in your program(s) to sign a Release Form. BCM has standard Release Forms that you may use.

Technical Standards:

S-VHS and VHS are the standard videotape formats for playback at BCM.

Videotapes must be clearly labeled with series name (if applicable), individual title, name and phone number of the producer, exact program length and in-point.

Programs must begin with 30 seconds of color bars and 30 seconds of black at the beginning of the

program (for an exact inpoint of 60 seconds) and at least two minutes of black at the end of the program.

Series programs should optimally be 28 minutes, 58 minutes or 1 hour 58 minutes in length. Individual programs of varying lengths can be cablecast.

BCM will not accept tapes that have more then one program on them for cablecast. Please provide a separate tape for each program submitted.

Programs to be cablecast must meet minimum audio and video technical standards, which include consistent control track, consistent picture and consistent sound.

All programs made with BCM equipment must clearly identify the producer and end with acknowledgement of BCM support: "This program was made possible by the use of facilities and services of Berkeley Community Media."

The credits must clearly identify the producer of the program.

Scheduling:

Individual program submissions will be scheduled as they are received. BCM's scheduling will generally be completed two weeks in advance of a new schedule.

BCM series are scheduled for four (4) month terms. These terms begin in January, May, and September and last four months. The programming for active series will be completed at the beginning of the term and last until the next term begins. Series producers may request specific time slots on a first come, first serve basis. If a new series producer requests a time that is filled for that term, they will be put on a waiting list for the next term. If no one has requested a time held by a current series, that series producer may request to keep their time slots no earlier then one month before the beginning of the next term.

If possible, each 30-minute or one hour program scheduled will be played three times during one week, once in the morning, once in the afternoon and once in the evening. Longer programs will only play twice. Special play times can be requested, but are not guaranteed.

Programs that contain adult content will be scheduled to play after 10pm. These programs must be clearly labeled as Adult content on the Cablecast Request form and must have a large red dot affixed (or drawn on) to the actual tape!

Producing a Series

Members producing a series of programs may apply for a series status, which provides a consistent timeslot and production time for the duration of the term. Series status producers must commit to providing one tape on a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly basis (whichever is applicable) for the term of the agreement. Maintaining a consistent timeslot from term to term is not guaranteed.

To be eligible for series status, members must:

Have completed, submitted and successfully cablecast three individual programs, thereby demonstrating ability to produce programming which meets playback standards.

Submit a completed cablecast request form and program guide description at least one month prior to the beginning of the new term and make special arrangement with the Programming Director.

Members wishing to renew their series at the end of the term must complete a new cablecast request.

Community Bulletin Board (CBB)

Non-profit community groups, government departments and educational institutions within the immediate Berkeley/San Francisco Bay Area may submit event announcements.

All messages must be non-commercial in nature. We do not accept classified or personal ads. In the cause of fairness and equal access, any one organization or community producer may submit no more than four postings per calendar month. Each posting must be submitted separately.

Messages must be submitted on a Community Bulletin Board request form (available at BCM) or on a non-returnable floppy disk (either Mac or PC). The floppy disk must contain only the most important information about your event and may be submitted as ASCII, Microsoft Word, WordPerfect or any other popular word processor. When submitting your text via disk you may include a small picture or logo, or you may design your own announcement using PowerPoint, PhotoShop or Illustrator.

New CBB messages must be submitted at least two weeks before the event and will run for a maximum of 30 days. Messages must be submitted at least one week before it.

needs to begin airing. You must include your name and contact information with your request. Please keep your message brief. For other information regarding CBB guidelines please contact BCM.

Access for Political Candidates:

Political Candidates are subject to the same rules as other users of the BCM access channels. Programs endorsing any particular candidate will not be played within twenty-four hours prior to the Election Day. Individual candidates may not use the CBB.

Pre-emption:

BCM reserves the right to pre-empt regularly scheduled programming in order to better serve the public interest. If a program has been pre-empted, it will be rescheduled according to established scheduling procedures.

Tape Library:

All videotapes are the responsibility of the producer. After the initial two cablecasts a program may be re-aired at the discretion of the Executive Director or the Programming Director. BCM will contact producers at least once to pick up their tapes once they have aired. At this point BCM producer may a. pick up their tape, b. ask for the program to be re-aired, or c. ask for the tape to be used as a filler to be aired at the staff's discretion. If the producer does not pick up their tape in a timely manner BCM reserves the right to re-use, recycle or give away these tapes.

Other info:

The BCM weekly schedule can be found in the Berkeley Voice, the West county Times, the TV Guide channel, on our website and on the CBB.

We strongly suggest that you do not submit your master tape for playback.

Tele-Courses:

Any institution charging a fee for a course offered on an access channel may pay a fee to the access corporation based on fees for the course paid by Berkeley residents.

Workshops:

All individuals interested in utilizing BCM's public access services (membership, training, equipment and facility use) must attend an orientation session. Attendance is required prior to joining as a member and registering for training or reserving equipment. Orientation is free and open to the public.

Members must sign up for workshops in person and must be paid for to reserve a place in the class. Cancellation less than three days in advance of the class will result in a loss of the class fee. Repeated cancellations could result in a minor violation.

Basic Workshops:

Basic Workshops are designed to train individual and organizational members the basic skills of video production so that they may begin to produce programming as quickly as possible. A minimal fee may be charged for these classes.

Advanced Workshops:

Advanced workshops are designed to further the producers' video production skills. These classes are available upon successful completion of the basic workshops. A minimal fee may be charged for these classes.

In addition a number of classes on media literacy and other topics may be taught. Some of these classes will be free and open to the public.

Certification:

Access facilities and equipment are available to certified access producers. Certification status can be acquired by the completion of a basic workshop in your area of interest. A certification project may be required.

Production and Equipment Use:

Production equipment is made available for the creation of programming to present on BCM's access channels. Private, commercial or recreational use is not allowed. Programs produced with BCM equipment must have their first time showing on one of BCM's channels. Access producers may only use equipment for which they are certified, and will take full responsibility for any loss or damage.

Program Proposals:

A program proposal form must be submitted and approved before any equipment reservations can be made. When the program proposal is approved, the producer will be assigned a mentor from the BCM staff. This mentor will be available to assist the producer with the various stages of their projects. The program proposal will also help BCM staff in determining the resources needed to accomplish the project's goal and to track and support the producers if they do not meet their stated goals.

Producers may only submit and work on one program proposal at a time. This project must be completed and submitted for playback before a new program proposal may be submitted. An individual program must be completed and submitted for playback within four months from the date that the proposal is submitted. Series program proposals are active for the duration of the producer's membership, though they will be reviewed at the beginning of each term and could be cancelled at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Producers who wish to cancel or withdraw a program proposal must do so in writing. Program proposals not acted upon in three months will be cancelled and constitute

grounds for a written warning and a meeting with BCM staff. Three program proposal withdrawals will come under staff review and could lead to suspension of access privileges.

Mentorship:

The mentorship program will be required for the producers first two programs. At the completion of these projects, the producer may request a mentor if they would like assistance on the next project. BCM reserves the right to assign a mentor if it is deemed necessary.

The producer must meet briefly with their mentor before they are able to reserve any equipment or studio time. The mentor will be available for four 15-minute meetings, which the producer can use to discuss any problems or concerns they are having.

Program ownership:

Producers own copyright to their programs but must purchase their own tape stock. The tape will be available for pick up once the program has played its scheduled cablecasts.

Grants and Sponsorship:

Producers are encouraged to seek grants from outside sources for their productions, but must do so under the strict guidelines of the BCM staff.

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 in part through a grant from..." or "Goods and services used in this program were contributed by..." BCM credit must still be included. Staff must be informed, in advance, of any such underwriting arrangements.

Equipment reservations:

A program proposal must be submitted and approved before any equipment reservations can be made. Requests are scheduled on a first-come first-serve basis within the timelines for use distributed between the Public, Educational and Governmental entities. Equipment will not be considered reserved until a staff member initials the reservation form and enters the request into the records. Improper bookings will be considered cancelled.

Reservations must be signed and dated in order to be processed.

Equipment may be reserved up to four-weeks in advance for single show productions. Series may book equipment up to three months in advance.

Drop-in Policy:

Certified members may 'drop-in' to use various BCM facilities. These drop-in hours will not count towards the maximum number of weekly hours. However, they will be figured into

the maximum amount of hours per program. Drop-in's are available on a first-come first-serve basis. Calling ahead for facility availability will not guarantee that you will be the first to arrive for the drop-in.

Field Equipment:

Field equipment may be reserved for 48 hours. A Friday or Saturday pick-up/Monday return is considered one reservation.

Field equipment must be reserved 24 hours in advance.

Producers are limited to four location equipment uses within any 30-day period and six uses per program, unless otherwise authorized by staff.

Reservations, pick-ups and returns must be made during the hours designated by BCM staff.

Field equipment will be checked for damages when returned. It is the responsibility of the producer for any loss or damage to the equipment. Producers are responsible to be certain that the equipment is in working order before they leave the facility. When returning equipment producers should allow sufficient time for check in. The producer needs to set up the equipment and wait while it is checked in.

Equipment must be picked up and returned by the authorized producer making the request.

Editing Equipment:

Producers are allowed to make up to two edit reservations each week. Use is limited to five hours per session.

Editing equipment must be reserved at least 24-hours in advance.

Access producers may not use more than 30-hours of edit time per program unless otherwise authorized by BCM staff.

Edit facilities are not to be used for viewing, logging or edit planning. The Dub cart will be available for these activities.

Please do not change the wiring or connections of the edit suite. Outside accessories may be used with the knowledge and permission of the BCM Technical Director. Doing so will result in a major violation.

Non Linear editing reservations are available on a first come first serve basis. These reservations will depend on the availability of free space on the BCM hard drives. More information on NLE reservations are available at BCM.

Studio Equipment:

All Studio reservations may be made up to three months in advance and no later than ten days in advance. Studio shows must be cancelled at least ten days in advance.

Reservations for live studio productions must be made at least two-weeks in advance because of on-air scheduling. Live slots may not be available for every studio date.

Studio reservations are not considered complete until the producer has met with the Director of Operations. The certified producer making the reservation is responsible for finding certified crew members for the program. Only current BCM members who are certified in the correct equipment may crew on the program. There must be a complete crew at least ten days before the date of the program or the reservation will be cancelled.

There is a maximum of two studio uses per program and three studio reservations per month.

Studio A reservations are from 5-9pm Monday through Friday and 12-4pm Saturday. Producers may not begin setting up outside these hours without notification and approval from the Director of Operations.

Express studio reservations vary depending on the day of the week. Producers must arrive at least 30 minutes before the program begins or their show will be cancelled.

A no-show or a cancellation of your program within ten days of the date will result in a minor violation.

Portable studio:

To become certified on the Portable Studio a special training is required. Producers interested need to gather a crew of at least five BCM members who have been certified in the following areas: Large studio production and Field and Edit and need to have crewed on at least three large studio productions. Once the producer has this crew lined up, a special portable studio training can be set up through the Educational Director. Producers must give advanced notice when requesting a special class.

Once certified, producers need to make reservations at least three weeks and no more than twelve weeks in advance. A BCM technician will be scheduled by the staff to facilitate the reservation.

Cancellations:

Access Producers must cancel reservations as soon as they know they cannot use the facilities or equipment they have reserved, but not less than 24 hours before the scheduled time.

Staff may relocate equipment and facilities reserved by access producers who arrive more than thirty minutes past their scheduled time.

Abuse of this policy will result in a suspension of access privileges.

Other info:

Use your Mentor! Our staff is here to help.

Responsibility:

Access producers are responsible for the BCM facilities and equipment signed out to them. This includes responsibility for the actions of guest, assistants and others for loss, damage and theft. It is expected that all participating individuals (producers, guests and volunteers) will conduct themselves in a responsible manner at all times.

The following actions would be considered conduct that disturbs the work environment:

Personal attacks or harassment of individuals and/or groups including, but not limited to, sexual, verbal or physical harassment.

Yelling or loud and disruptive discussions.

Loitering on facility premises.

In order for BCM's policies to be effective and to keep operations running smoothly, a penalty system has been instituted. There are two types of rules, which, if violated, can result in restrictions on an

Access producer's membership. The Executive Director or Operations Manager is authorized to issue warnings and suspensions. Warnings will be in effect for one year to date of issue.

Major Violations:

Major violations can result in an immediate, permanent suspension of usership. These include (but are not limited to):

- Commercial or profit making use of facilities
- Misrepresentation of member's affiliation with BCM to others
- Falsifying forms
- Persistent or extreme harassment of staff or other users
- Abuse of equipment, including unauthorized attempted repairs
- Taking or reserving equipment without staff permission
- Changing the wiring, connections or attaching accessories without staff authorization
- Eating, drinking or smoking in non-designated areas
- Tampering with the equipment scheduling forms or computer
- Repeated minor violations

Minor Violations:

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

First Violation:	Written warning
Second Violation:	30-day usership suspension
Third Violation:	90-day usership suspension

Minor violations may include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to cancel an equipment reservation within twenty four hours
- Repeated failure to attend a workshop or to cancel it at least twenty four hours in advance
- Failure to cancel a studio reservation two weeks in advance

- Late pick-up or return of equipment without notification and approval
- Mishandling of equipment
- Failure to clean up after using the facilities

Appeals:

Access Producers are encouraged to resolve difficulties on the staff level. Anybody wishing to appeal a decision of the staff may do so in the following manner:

Within 10 days of an action of the staff, a Producer may request a meeting with the Executive Director in order to resolve the situation.

The Board of Directors may elect to review an action at their regular meeting or have a designated Board Committee to deal with the appeal, upon request by the Executive Director.

Responsibility of Borrowers

Borrowers agree to take full responsibility for equipment in their possession and must take every precaution to protect the equipment in their care, including:

- Never leave equipment or production materials unattended, even for a minute.
- Always keep the equipment with you or directly in your view. If you leave it briefly in a parked vehicle, park the vehicle where you can see it. Never leave equipment visible through car or van windows; cover it up or put it in the trunk. Never leave equipment in a car overnight.

Never allow anyone to operate, handle, or borrow equipment except BCM-certified users of your production crew.

Never attempt to operate equipment in locations or under conditions which appear unsafe or where equipment could be damaged.

If equipment is stolen:

Notify BCM immediately.

File a police report. Provide officers with proof of forcible entry, details of physical assault, and other related specifics.

As soon as possible give BCM a brief written report containing all the relevant details including copies of police reports.

It is the responsibility of the borrowing Access Member to reimburse BCM for full replacement value of lost or stolen equipment.

OTHER CONDITIONS:

Videotape:

BCM sells new videotape as a convenience to all Producers for the purpose of program production.

Dubbing:

Producers are allowed to make one copy of their program for personal use. BCM will not make additional copies of programs for the producer nor will it supply copies of programs shown on the channel to users of the public or participants. Requests for copies will be referred to the producer.

Public File:

There will be a file available to BCM Producers which includes the names and phone numbers of BCM Producers, for the purpose of identifying crew for video productions, provided the individual approves the use of their name in this manner. A public file will be kept which includes program logs and cablecast request forms. Public and BCM files may be inspected during normal business hours by appointment only.

Publicity:

BCM will publicize programs in a variety of ways, but individual producers are encouraged to develop their audience using press releases and other outreach tools. All public relations and publicity materials submitted to newspapers and any other media outlets must be transmitted to BCM staff as well.

Volunteers/Interns:

BCM relies heavily on the services of volunteers. BCM Producers are encouraged to volunteer during and after their training/certification. BCM also has a six-month Community Media Internship program available to anyone in the Bay Area. Interns receive the equipment privileges of an Access Member during their internship. At the successful completion of the Intern's contact, a one-year honorary membership may be granted. Students who are looking for college or high school credit are encouraged to intern at BCM.

Misrepresentation:

Access Producers must not misrepresent themselves as employees of BCM or as authorized to speak for BCM. Such actions may result in a suspension of access privileges.

Facility Upkeep:

All users are expected to clean up each time they use the equipment or facility. Eating and drinking are allowed only in designated areas. Smoking is not allowed in the facility.

Right to Refuse:

BCM staff reserves the right to refuse the use of its facilities to any individual who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs or who interferes with the orderly conduct of business.

Indemnification:

Users of the Access Channels shall indemnify BCM, Inc., AT+T Cablevision and the City of Berkeley and its employees against any and all liabilities arising out of any use of facilities and resources or out of breach of the Operating Procedures.

Interpretation:

The Executive Director or his/her designee is authorized to interpret the Operating Rules and Procedures.

Amendments:

The Board of Directors reserves the right to amend these policies as necessary. Producers will be notified of any changes through the newsletter.