

Rules and Guidelines
North Branford Public Cable Access Group Inc.

Public, Education and Government Access

Channels 18, 19 and 20

(As amended November 10, 2004 and June 12, 2012)

NBPCAG, Inc.
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Rules and Guidelines

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Introduction

North Branford Public Cable Access Group, Inc (NBPCAG Inc) is recognized by the Cable Advisory Council of South Central Connecticut and the State of Connecticut Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA)

Channel 18 – The public access channel is located at 999 Foxon Road, Suite 31, North Branford, CT 06471

Channel 19 – The educational access channel is located at North Branford High School, 49 Caputo Road, North Branford, CT 06471

Channel 20 – The government access channel is located at 909 Foxon Road, North Branford, CT 06471, the North Branford Town Hall

NBPCAG provides the residents of North Branford the opportunity to produce and cablecast programs to air on the access channels. All programs may be submitted for airing to the appropriate coordinator for each channel.

Public, Educational and Government (PEG) access television is different things to different people. It is watching government in action, community issues, church services, school sports and activities, or artistic reflection and the cultural flavor of our community.

These guidelines have been developed by the Board of Directors of NBPCAG to answer your questions about the policies and procedures associated with PEG access in North Branford. They are based upon the fundamental purposes of PEG access as described in PURA regulations which include but are not limited to:

- Enhancing First Amendment rights
- Providing for the dissemination of diverse views
- Providing a forum of ideas and information
- Providing alternatives to commercial programming
- Enhancing a sense of community in town

Section I: Producing

Becoming a PEG access producer

If you have an idea for a program that is non-commercial and is of interest to the residents of your town, you can become a producer. Programs are aired on Comcast Cable and ATT U-Verse channels 18, 19, and 20 seven days a week. For channel broadcast times available, please contact the appropriate channel coordinator.

A- Producer Responsibilities – All Channels

As a new producer you will be expected to attend a basic video production workshop at NBPCAG studio. It will cover pre-production, on-location shooting, studio productions and post production. These workshops are held throughout the year by appointment.

As the producer you have the responsibility of putting a crew together, scheduling the use of the video facility, contacting guests, doing research, writing, providing talent, securing release

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forms and so on. The producer must inform all on-camera talent that he/she is an independent producer and not an employee or representative of NBPCAG. As producer you must secure the necessary release form from on-air guests and/or talent and you must adhere to the rules and guidelines of NBPCAG. NBPCAG reserves the right to request that copies of all releases acquired in connection with the production of the program by the producer, be submitted along with the Application for Cablecasting.

1 - Program Content – All Channels

Material transmitted over the PEG access channels, whether produced locally or provided from another source must comply with the following criteria:

- No Commercialism
- No use of copyrighted materials without prior written consent from its owner. This consists of but is not limited to copyrighted music, video clips, logos, jingles, still photographs, copy, graphics, etc. NBPCAG reserves the right to request that copies of all releases acquired in connection with the production of the program by the producer, be submitted along with the Application for Cablecasting.
- No endorsement of any products or services
- No mention of prices or soliciting of monetary donations including solicitations on behalf of candidates for public office
- No mention of seminars, consultations, lectures, for which the viewer will be charged
- No mention of commercial activities including but not limited to concert and club dates
- No promotion of lottery materials or similar enterprises
- No libelous, slanderous, or illegal material
- No obscene or sexually explicit conduct or material and/or promoting unlawful conduct
- No material which incites violent or harmful acts on other persons
- No programs, which contain any material otherwise, unprotected by the Constitution of the United States
- No programs requiring residual or other payment including but not limited to talent and crew unless those payments have been waived or excused.
- Use of channels, NBPCAG facility, or PEG access equipment, including the sale and production of recorded media for financial gain is strictly prohibited.
- Selling or promotion of program time, charging guests, or otherwise engaging in for-profit use of the studio facility or recorded media produced is strictly prohibited.
- Programs in a foreign language must be accompanied by a written synopsis at time of submission.

2 – Publicity and Promotion - All Channels

If you want to publicize your program, to ensure the non-commercial nature of the program and compliance with these rules, NBPCAG should be consulted beforehand and provided with a copy of any and all promotional or advertising material. NBPCAG will not act as an agent to promote or publicize independently produced programs. NBPCAG will promote the use of the channel. Every attempt will be made to air programs as scheduled, however NBPCAG cannot be held liable for any funds expended on publicity in the event of failure to cablecast as scheduled.

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3 – Viewer Response - All Channels

Viewer response may be encouraged by displaying a “respond to” name, address, email and/or phone number as part of the credits or during a break in the program. This “respond to” information may not be for a commercial business or service and no business names can be displayed. NBPCAG’s address and phone number cannot be used unless prior permission is obtained from NBPCAG.

If a complaint is submitted in writing to NBPCAG that the program is being aired in violation of Item 1 (Program Content) above, the program will immediately be taken off the air and out of scheduled programming. It will then be forwarded to the Cable Advisory Board for their review.

Remember by airing your name and telephone number you are allowing residents to contact you. NBPCAG is not responsible for anyone who has written or called you in offensive or illegal manner.

B - Sponsorship - All Channels

Sponsorship by business, individual or non-profit organization is allowed. Sponsorship contributions are limited to production expenses (recording media, props, transportation, guests, etc.) exclusive of time and may not exceed the cost of the production. All sponsorship must be disclosed on the appropriate NBPCAG Sponsorship Disclosure Form and accompany the Application for Cablecasting Form. Sponsorship must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Sponsor credit may appear at the beginning and/or end of the program in audio or video
- Sponsor credit must contain a lead announcement such as “Produced with the assistance of” followed by the names of the sponsors. No other description of the sponsor is allowed.
- No commercial jingles – only general non-promotion musical background.
- No promotional slogans or tags
- The outside view of the business or enterprise is allowed as long as it is not promotional.
- No logos, animated or otherwise.

Remember - Commercial advertising is prohibited on all public access programs.

C- Courtesy Credits - All Channels

Credits at the end of a program that acknowledge contributions to the production such as ‘hair and makeup by’ are considered courtesy credits. In-kind donation of services and products must be evident during the actual production in which the credits appear. Only the entity name and city can be displayed. Courtesy credits are in addition to sponsorships. All programs utilizing NBPCAG facilities and/or equipment should acknowledge that NBPCAG facilities and/or equipment were used in the production of the program.

D - Producer Rights - All Channels

Producers of access programs retain all the rights to the content of their programs. Signature upon an Application for Cablecasting DOES NOT relinquish any rights of ownership by the producer; rather it merely gives the access channel limited rights to cablecast the program.

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NBPCAG will not duplicate any recorded media or any portion thereof without prior consent of the producer.

Section II: Cablecasting

A - Cablecasting Rules

1 - For All Channels

A program may be produced and submitted for airing on any of the access channels; however, a duplication of airing may not occur. If a program is aired on the Public (18), Educational (19) or Government (20) channels it may also be aired on the Regional Access Channel 21, but it should not be submitted for rebroadcast on either of the other two North Branford channels. However, video segments from a previously broadcast program can be submitted to air on any channel at a future date. Requests for repeat cablecast may be made after a two-week period from last broadcast date (this may be subject to change based upon programming demands).

2 - Cablecasting Rules for the Public Channel (18)

Cablecasting time on the Public Channel is made available on a first come, first serve non-discriminatory basis to all residents of North Branford. Every effort is made to insure that programs are cablecast at the requested time but is dependent on the availability of requisite equipment and the volume of requests as well as other factors. NBPCAG cannot be held responsible for any failure to cablecast programs as scheduled for any reason. When scheduling conflicts arise, NBPCAG will give preference to the first applicant. When applications are received simultaneously, preference will be given in the following order:

- Programs produced by access users within the town
- Access users who have not previously used the channel
- All others

Cablecasting time is not transferable. The NBPCAG Board of Directors reserves the right to waive these rules when necessary. All programs will be cablecast for two cycles of four days each with a minimum of three airings per day.

All recorded media submitted for cablecasting must be accompanied by a completed Application for Cablecasting form provided by NBPCAG.

3 - Cablecasting Rules For the Education Channel (19)

Cablecasting on the Education Channel is made available to students, educators, and education department personnel in the Town of North Branford on a first come, first serve, and non-discriminatory basis. Every effort is made to insure that all programs are cablecast at the requested time but this is dependent upon availability of requisite equipment and cablecasting time. All programs will be cablecast for a minimum of 24 airings. All recorded media submitted for cablecast must be accompanied by a completed Application for Cablecasting Form available from the Education Channel 19 coordinator.

If questions are raised regarding content or suitability of a program to air on the Educational channel, the channel coordinator shall submit said tape to the NBPCAG Board of Directors for further review prior to airing or non-airing of same.

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Because the Education Channel (19) is located in a Town building, this channel cannot be used for self promotion by political candidates, campaigns or organizations or for the solicitation of funds for political purposes.

4 - Cablecasting Rules for the Government Channel (20)

Cablecasting time on the Government Channel is made available to all local, state and federally elected and appointed officials, as well as any government departments or agencies on the local, state, and federal level.

Every effort is made to insure that programs are cablecast at the requested time but that is dependent upon available decks and the volume of requests. Programs will be cablecast a minimum of two times.

If questions are raised regarding content or suitability of a tape to air on the Government channel, the channel coordinator shall submit the tape to the NBPCAG Board of Directors for further review prior to airing or non-airing of same.

Because the Government Channel is located in a town building this channel cannot be used for self promotion by political candidates, campaigns, or organizations, or for the solicitation of funds for political purposes.

B – Programming Produced Outside of North Branford

Programming produced outside of North Branford may be submitted for cablecast on the Public (18), Education (19) or Government (20) Channels if they are non-commercial and for the benefit of the persons residing in the Town of North Branford. All programs should be forwarded to NBPCAG with a completed Application for Cablecasting Form and a cover letter detailing the content and purpose of the tape and the requested airing channel (i.e., Public (18), Education (19) or Government (20) Channel).

C – Standards for All Channels

The appropriate application form must accompany all recorded media submitted for cablecast. Appointments may be made to drop off recorded media with the Station Manager. If Recorded media are sent by mail, NBPCAG is not responsible for the recorded media or their return unless prior arrangement is made.

All recorded media must meet NBPCAG Technical Standards as noted below.

- a) DVD format is preferred, but we accept VHS or mini-dv tapes. If a submission is made with VHS or mini-DV, then the submission could take up to two weeks to appear on our channel.
- b) One show per recorded medium.
- c) Recorded media must be labeled with title, date, total length of program, producer's name and if there is any "in" time (example: 10 seconds of black before the program would be an "in" time of 10 seconds)
- d) Recorded media that do not carry a stable signal will not be cablecast.

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D – Procedures for Cablecasting – All Channels

An Application for Cablecasting Form can be obtained from appropriate channel coordinator. It must be completed and identify the proposed access channel, the user name, address and contain the following:

- Proposed date
- Proposed time
- Duration of the program
- Name, address, phone number and email of contact person or organization

Please remember that producers are responsible for acquiring all necessary releases from an individual or all individuals appearing in their productions and for use of copyrighted material. NBPCAG reserves the right to request that copies of all releases acquired in connection with the production of the program by the producer, be submitted along with the Application for Cablecasting.

D - Designating Time Slots – Public Channel (18) and Education Channel (19)

All programs will have a minimum of 24 airings. Of the 24 slots granted for each program, a minimum of eight must be in the prime time slots of 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM. Time slots may be requested and are granted on a first come, first served basis.

All programs will be aired according to the intended viewing audience. Requests for continuous weekly time slots for a program series can be made within one week of the program's airing. This time slot can only be held for a maximum of 12 weeks.

E - Public Opinion Programming – Public Channel (18)

Public opinion programming may be submitted to NBPCAG for cablecasting on the Public Channel (18) with the following requirements:

- Producer/creator of the programming must give his or her name and address at the opening and ending of the programming.
- The following disclaimer must be displayed and spoken in video and audio format at the opening of the programming: "The opinion I/we will be expressing is/are my/our own personal opinion and does not reflect the opinion of NBPCAG, or any other person or entity."
- All recorded media must contain factual information. False, illegal, slanderous or misleading information is prohibited.
- NBPCAG reserves the right to add disclaimers.

F - Returning Recorded Media - All Channels

After a program had been aired, the producer will be notified and asked to pick up the program medium. If no response is received within two weeks, a letter will be forwarded indicating that recorded media will be disposed of if not picked up after six weeks from the original notification.

G – Community Bulletin Board – All Channels

Bulletin board announcements are aired on all three access channels. To air an announcement, please contact the appropriate channel coordinator for the necessary submission form.

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1. Specific Community Bulletin Board Rules for Individual Channels

- Public Channel 18 will air messages on a first come, first serve basis from national and regional non-profit entities at the program coordinator's discretion based upon space availability. Messages must be non-commercial in nature. Messages may be edited when deemed necessary.
- Education Channel 19 will air messages related to the education system in the Town of North Branford or deemed of educational interest. Messages must be non-commercial in nature and may be edited when deemed necessary.
- Government Channel 20 will air messages from government/town agencies, non-profit organizations and residents of the Town of North Branford. Messages must be received two weeks prior to requested air date. Messages may be edited when necessary. Messages must be non-commercial in nature. In the event of an emergency or weather-related event, the regularly scheduled bulletin board announcements will be interrupted to disseminate pertinent information to the public regarding the situation. Individuals may submit announcements by mail, fax, or email.

Section III: Production Facility

A – Reserving the NBPCAG Production Facility and/or Equipment

NBPCAG facilities and equipment are provided free of charge for the use of persons residing in North Branford to produce and cablecast non-commercial local access programs on channels 18, 19, and 20. All programs produced using the NBPCAG facilities and/or equipment must be cablecast in North Branford. NBPCAG reserves the right to ask for proof of residency.

The facility is scheduled on a first come, first served, non-discriminatory basis. Users are limited to two blocks of scheduled time per week within the current month. Users are required to give 24-hour notice in the event of cancellation for reserved equipment or studio/editing time. This may be waived in emergency situations. Reserved time is non-transferable. An Equipment and Studio Use Form must be completed and on file for each use.

Use of the NBPCAG production facility and/or equipment must be scheduled in advance by calling the NBPCAG Station Manager. No food or drink is allowed in the studio or control room.

B – Crew Members

Crew members must attend a basic video production workshop. This requirement will be waived if the individual shows proficiency in the use of the equipment as judged by the NBPCAG Station Manager.

C – Editing

No one may operate the equipment unless trained and certified by the NBPCAG staff. A staff person or Board member must be present during all such use. Editors can be trained on an individual basis. Please contact the NBPCAG Station Manager.

D - Equipment

NBPCAG equipment and or facilities may not be used for personal use other than for the production of programming to air on the any of the NBPCAG channels, and may not be used for

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profit making or commercial purposes by a group, individual or sponsor. Users must consult NBPCAG staff prior to making changes to any settings, wiring, connections or adding accessories.

E- Portable Equipment

Individuals that demonstrate satisfactory knowledge to the NBPCAG Station Manager of portable equipment usage will be allowed to take equipment off the premises provided that they comply with the guidelines as set forth. Only select portable equipment is available for use outside NBPCAG facilities. Please consult with the appropriate channel coordinator. Proof of residency and identification is required prior to portable equipment use. NBPCAG reserves the right to refuse use of equipment to any individual that does not provide sufficient personal identification. Equipment may not be taken out of the state of Connecticut unless approved by NBPCAG.

Section IV: Violation and Penalties

In order for these Policies and Procedures to be effective, a penalty system has been instituted. Violations can result in restrictions on a user. NBPCAG may issue warnings and suspensions.

A – Major Violations – All Channels

Major violations will result in a maximum 90-day suspension except theft which will result in permanent barring from NBPCAG - all at the NBPCAG Board of Directors discretion. These may include but are not limited to:

- Commercial and/or profit-making use of the facilities and equipment
- Misrepresentation of users affiliation with NBPCAG
- Falsifying forms
- Taking equipment without permission
- Abuse of equipment
- Use of equipment or facility while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Possession of a firearm or concealed weapon on NBPCAG facility grounds
- Abuse of staff or other user
- Nudity or improper attire

B – Minor Violations – All Channels

Minor violations may include but are not limited to:

- Failure to properly cancel use of facility and/or equipment
- Late pick up or return of equipment without proper notification or approval
- Mishandling equipment
- Failure to clean up after using the facility
- Changing wiring connections, or attaching accessories without permission

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

- First violation - written warning
- Second violation – 30 day suspension
- Third violation – 60 day suspension

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The NBPCAG Board of Directors will review all violations at a scheduled review meeting. Major violations will result in an immediate temporary 40 day suspension.

The Board will give violators written notification at least 10 days prior to any scheduled review meeting.

Users are encouraged to resolve difficulties with NBPCAG. Anyone wishing to appeal a decision may do so by requesting a meeting with the Board in writing within 10 days of any action.

Section V: Miscellaneous

- Cooperation and courtesy of the producer and crew are necessary in ensuring a successful production. Producers, talent, crew and guests may arrive 15 minutes prior to their scheduled studio time. Only individuals necessary to the production are allowed in the facility. Anyone caught stealing will be subject to prosecution and immediate barring from the facility.
- No smoking is allowed.
- There are no charges for the use of the facility or equipment. However, if the the facility is damaged or equipment is lost or damaged exclusive of normal wear and tear, the producer shall be responsible for the cost of repair or replacement as required.
- NBPCAG provides some basic props. You may supplement these with your own set and props, but NBPCAG cannot provide storage or be responsible for the same, nor for any lost or discarded articles.
- Cablecast equipment and facility use logs are maintained for the all channels by the appropriate channel coordinator and are available for public viewing at the Connecticut PURA.