

# **CHARLOTTE MECKLENBURG PUBLIC ACCESS CORPORATION**

## **REGULATIONS & PROCEDURES**

**Effective – 08/17/11**

### **A. MISSION STATEMENT**

1. Charlotte Mecklenburg Public Access Corporation (CMPAC) was created to manage and operate ACCESS 21 on the Time Warner Cable system in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

2. Our mission is to provide facilities and education that welcome and accommodate individuals to create and submit programming that expresses diverse opinions, talents, activities, and interests in the Charlotte metropolitan area through non-commercial open access television.

3. The facilities and services of ACCESS 21 are available for use by residents of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, on a first-come, first-considered, non-discriminatory basis upon the filing of an appropriate request.

4. CMPAC will not exercise control over content of a program except as described in the regulations. However, CMPAC reserves the right to preview any program prior to cablecast to ensure that ACCESS 21 transmits a reasonable level of technical quality and permitted content.

5. All CMPAC programs must be produced and/or submitted by a Mecklenburg County resident.

### **B. REGULATIONS GOVERNING USE OF ACCESS 21**

1. These Regulations & Procedures are a guide to participation in the operation and services of ACCESS 21. They are to be read and interpreted in their entirety.

2. The definition and interpretation of the rules on a day-to-day basis will be at the discretion of the Executive Director. If conditions arise that are not specifically covered by the regulations, the decision of the Executive Director will prevail. Any requested appeal of the Executive Director's decision must be made to the CMPAC Board of Directors at the next regularly scheduled board meeting.

### **C. PROCEDURE FOR BECOMING AN ACCREDITED CMPAC PRODUCER**

1. All new producers must attend an orientation session.

2. After completion of the orientation session, a registration Application must be submitted in person at the Access 21 office.

3a. There is a registration fee of \$25 for all residents of the city of Charlotte, which must be submitted with the registration application. Fees must be paid in cash or personal check containing the registrant's legal address. All registrants are required to provide a valid government issued form of identification containing the registrant's current residential address.

3b. There is a registration fee of \$65 for residents outside the City of Charlotte but within Mecklenburg County.

3c. There is a registration fee of \$100 for non-county residents; however, such persons may not produce programming for Access 21, but may volunteer on production crews and attend any training workshops.

4. After submitting the registration application and applicable registration fee, registrants may enroll in the next available producers workshop.

5. Registrants needing to use Access 21 facilities to produce their programs must complete the applicable training courses in addition to the producers workshop.

6. Upon completion of all applicable training courses and workshops, the registrant is certified as a CMPAC producer and may sign up their program during the next available *sign-up week*.

7. Members who wish to cancel or reschedule any class or workshop in which they are enrolled must do so no later than two (2) business days prior to the first day of the class or workshop. Failure to give adequate notice will result in a written warning. A second failure to give adequate notice will result in a six month suspension from all classes and workshops and any subsequent failure to give adequate notice of cancellation or rescheduling will result in a one-year suspension from all classes and workshops.

8. All fees associated with all classes and workshops are non-refundable. Should a member need to reschedule a class or workshop for which a fee has been paid, they must do so no later than two (2) business days prior to the first day of the class or workshop and all associated fees will be applied to the rescheduled class. Failure to give adequate notice of rescheduling will result in the loss of all associated fees for the class or workshop. Members who wish to outright cancel a class or workshop, or fail to attend any class or workshop forfeit all associated fees for that class or workshop.

## **D. PROCEDURE FOR SCHEDULING A NEW PROGRAM**

1. After completion of training, a new producer must complete and submit a Program Information Sheet to the CMPAC office. This provides CMPAC with information about the producer and the proposed program.

2. Active producers will receive a packet of information and forms during each production quarter allowing them to sign up their programs for the following quarter. During the quarterly *sign-up week* CMPAC accepts applications for programs for the following quarter.

3. After signing up the program, a day and time period will be assigned by the CMPAC staff.

## **E. OTHER PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS**

1. Producers may submit single programs, or a weekly, biweekly or monthly series.

2. Once a weekly program is scheduled, the producer is required to turn in thirteen (13) programs per quarter. Of the 13 programs, a minimum of eight (8) must be original programs. This allows for a maximum of five (5) repeat programs. Producers with scheduled monthly programs are required to turn in three (3) programs per quarter. Two (2) programs must be original programs. This allows only one (1) repeat program per quarter. A bi-weekly producer is required to submit six (6) programs per quarter. Four (4) programs must be original programs. An original program is defined as one that has not been cablecast in its current form within the past year. However, any program submitted that is over one year old must conform to current regulations. Producers of single programs must submit a program information sheet for each program at any time during the quarter and are limited to no more than two (2) productions per quarter.

3. If a weekly producer fails to submit four (4) programs, or a bi-weekly producer fails to submit three (3) programs or a monthly producer fails to submit two (2) programs, or any producer who exceeds the number of repeat programs permitted by these rules, or any combination of missed and repeat programs that will prohibit the producer from submitting the required number of new programs, during the quarter, will result in the program being removed from the schedule for the remainder of the current quarter and the producer will be suspended for all of the next programming quarter. Producers who fail to submit the required number of programs for a second time will be suspended for the remainder of the current quarter and for all of the next two programming quarters. All subsequent failures to submit the required number of programs will result in the producer's suspension for the remainder of the current quarter and all of the next four programming quarters. Producers who have been previously suspended for failure to submit the required number of programs, but have not been suspended in the previous two years, will be considered as having no prior suspensions.

4. All programs submitted for cablecast must be submitted in DVCAM, Mini-DV, DVD or MPEG2 formats and must be recorded at SP speed.

5. All labeling is the sole responsibility of the Producer. CMPAC is not responsible for programs that are labeled incorrectly. Each tape face and tape box shall be labeled with the title of the program (series, not episode), the running time of the program, and the date the program is to be cablecast. Mini-DV and DVCAM tapes or DVD disks must be placed in plastic bags provided by CMPAC. The bag must be properly labeled and the cablecast form folded so the form can be read through the plastic bag. Each videotape or disk must be submitted with a videotape or disk case.

6. A completed Cablecast Agreement Form must accompany each video cassette or DVD submitted for cablecast, or the program will not be aired.

7. Technical standards must be maintained throughout the program . Luminance levels shall not exceed 100 IRE units. Black levels shall not drop below 7.5 IRE units.

8. Audio recording must be on both Channel 1 and 2. Stereo audio is permissible (Channel 1 is the left channel and Channel 2 is the right channel). Audio cannot be over modulated at any frequency and cannot be distorted. Peak audio level shall be 0 VU referenced to +4dB across 600 ohms.

9. Control track (or timecode) must be continuous throughout the entire program. Thirty (30) seconds of video at black level and no audio must precede and follow each program submitted on videotape, with no interruption of the control track. Countdowns, color bars, slates and other identification, if used, must be before the required 30 seconds of black on the tape.

10. All programs must be received at the CMPAC administrative office by 5:00 P.M. two (2) business days prior to the scheduled cablecast. Programs to run Saturday, Sunday or Monday must be received by CMPAC not later than 5:00 P.M. on the preceding Thursday. Programs will be accepted Monday through Friday during normal CMPAC office hours (8:30AM to 5:00PM). Programs may also be placed through the slot in the front door of the administrative building after hours, provided there are two business days preceding the cablecast date. Programs deposited through the slot after 5:00PM on Friday, or the day before a holiday, will not be processed until the next business day. Programs may be left with the Studio Coordinator, but if programs are left after 5:00PM the programs will not be filed until the following business day.

11. No program will be cablecast on ACCESS 21 that contains advertising for the sale of commercial products or services, promotion of candidates for public office, or solicitation for contributions, donations or offerings. In addition, promotion of talent for hire, products, vendors, or entertainment venues is not permitted. Talent performances on a public access program must be for entertainment purposes only. A telephone number and/or website may be given on the program if the primary purpose is non-commercial.

12. Mention of financial support by commercial sponsors who underwrite public access programs is allowed only at the end of the program. The name of the sponsor may be displayed as a graphic (with or without a voice-over) stating, "This program has been made possible through the support of (sponsor name)." No slogans, addresses, telephone numbers, websites, travel directions or other representations of sponsors or products of the sponsors will be permitted. Use of the public access channel, or facility, for financial gain will result in the permanent loss of public access privileges.

13. No program will be cablecast on ACCESS 21, which directly or indirectly concerns a lottery or contest.

14. No program will be cablecast on ACCESS 21 that contains material that is libelous, slanderous or incites riot.

15. No program will be cablecast on ACCESS 21 that contains obscene material, as defined by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). Programs identified by the Producer to contain material for mature audiences will be cablecast no earlier than 11:00PM.

16. Each program must show the program title graphically within the first three (3) minutes.

17. Each program must end with credits that show:

a. The legal name of the producer and an actual method of contact, ie: phone number, fax number, e-mail address or website. This must remain on the screen for a minimum of five seconds.

b. The statement, "The producer assumes full and sole responsibility for the entire content of this program" must follow the Producer's name.

c. If CMPAC facilities are used in the production of the program the following statement must appear in the credits, "Produced using the facilities of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Public Access Corporation Access 21." An additional voice-over is acceptable, but the graphic must appear.

## **F. REGULATIONS FOR PRODUCERS**

1. The producer of each program is responsible for the content of each program submitted for cablecast. Any program containing material with copyright to anyone other than the producer must be accompanied by a written authorization for use. The producer is responsible for any copyright infringement liability and/or any resultant expenses.

2. All programs submitted to ACCESS 21 for cablecast are the sole property of the producer and cannot be used for any purpose other than cablecast without the written consent of the producer, except when programs may be reviewed and/or reproduced by CMPAC staff for technical quality and/or content analysis.

3. The producer of each program using CMPAC facilities is responsible for the use of those facilities and equipment and must be present at all times when their program is in production or post-production. It is the producer's responsibility to provide an authorized crew for any production in the CMPAC studio facilities. Every person using CMPAC equipment is required to complete the applicable CMPAC training courses prior to working in the facility.

4. The producer is responsible for their guests in the facility and must ensure that all regulations are properly observed. Any damage to the facility, or equipment in the facility, or loss of equipment from the facility, is the sole responsibility of the producer.

5. Use of ACCESS 21 by any one Producer is limited to not more than one (1) regularly scheduled program per week during the times normally scheduled for cablecast by CMPAC. Programs for cablecast must be twenty-nine (29) minutes in length for a half-hour program, and fifty-nine (59) minutes in length for a one-hour program. Only one person may be listed as the Producer for each program cablecast on ACCESS 21. Time slots will be determined by CMPAC

staff. Producer requests for changes in scheduled cablecast times, in frequency or duration of programs can be made to the Executive Director.

6. Each calendar year is divided into four (4) thirteen week quarters. Producers wishing to utilize ACCESS 21 studio and/or edit facilities for their production must complete a Program Information Sheet. Six (6) weeks prior to beginning each production quarter, CMPAC will mail Production Agreement Forms and a cover letter of specific instructions to all Producers who have a current Program Information Sheet on file. Each Producer is responsible for returning completed Production Agreement Forms to CMPAC within the dates and times specified in the cover letter.

7. The Production Agreement Forms will be numbered and dated by CMPAC in the order that they are received within the specified times. CMPAC will allocate the use of studio and edit facilities on a first-come first-considered basis, and will make every effort to achieve an equitable distribution of available facilities. CMPAC will provide scheduling of production studio time on a first-come first-considered basis beginning on the first day of the week designated for Agreements to be turned in to CMPAC.

8. No Producer is authorized to designate, trade, or substitute facility usage time in any area with any other producer without the direct authorization of the CMPAC Production Coordinator on duty.

9. Weekly producers may schedule no more than four (4) production studio sessions per quarter. Only two of those sessions may be scheduled in the evening or on a Saturday. Monthly producers may schedule no more than two (2) production studio sessions per quarter. One of those sessions may be scheduled in the evening or on a Saturday. Producers of bi-weekly programming may schedule no more than three (3) production studio sessions per quarter. Two (2) of these sessions may be in the evening or on a Saturday. Producers of single programs may schedule one studio session per quarter.

10. Producers of new programs may schedule no more than two (2) production sessions in the period between *sign-up week* and the beginning of the new quarter, depending on availability, in order to have programs for the beginning of the quarter.

11. Producers who wish to use additional studio time other than that which they are entitled to under Section F(9) and Section F(10), may reserve additional time for a fee of \$50 per studio session. These fees must be paid at the time of the studio reservation and are non-refundable. Producers who need to change dates for any pre-paid additional studio time must do so in accordance with all such rules specified in Section G. Failure to use pre-paid studio time will result in the loss of the studio fee.

12. Producers may schedule no more than four (4) Editing sessions per calendar month. Two of these sessions may be scheduled for an evening or on a Saturday.

## **G. REGULATIONS FOR STUDIO USAGE**

1. It is the responsibility of Studio Coordinators to insure that the studio facilities are utilized in a safe and efficient manner. The producer must be on site no later than forty-five (45)

minutes after the scheduled beginning of the assigned studio session. After that time, the studio session will be cancelled. Failure to utilize scheduled studio time on two (2) occasions in the same quarter will result in the loss of studio privileges to that producer for the following quarter. If the session must be cancelled, notification must be made to the CMPAC office at least two (2) business days in advance of the scheduled session. CMPAC will make an effort to reschedule sessions that are properly cancelled, but cannot guarantee that the facility will be available. If a studio session is cancelled without proper notification, that producer's next scheduled session will be cancelled.

2. Producers are required to provide sufficient certified crew personnel for their own productions.

3. The producer is responsible to ensure that all equipment and props are returned to their proper place after the production; that the studio and control room are left clean and neat; and that any personal property is removed by the end of the studio session. In order to ensure sufficient time to clear the studio, recording sessions will end at least fifteen (15) minutes before the end of the scheduled session. Large or complex settings will require more time to remove. The Studio Coordinator will determine the required strike time.

4. Producers are responsible for the quality of the programs produced at CMPAC facilities. The role of the Studio Coordinator is supervisory and educational. Studio Coordinators are not to be considered part of the production crew.

5. Guests of the producer, children and other visitors are welcome, but are requested to remain in the front lobby or Green Rooms. Visitors and children are the responsibility of the producer. Each two children under 16 years of age must be accompanied by a responsible adult at all times.

6. The total number of crew and guests is not to exceed twenty (20) for any production at CMPAC. Productions requiring more than 20 people should schedule the arrivals of their guests to prevent crowding in the facility.

7. Food and drink are prohibited in all edit suites, control rooms and studios. Food and drink for crew and guests may be served in the Green Rooms only.

## **H. REGULATIONS FOR EDITING**

1. Studio Coordinators are responsible for the efficient utilization of the editing facilities. The producer must be on site no later than forty-five (45) minutes after the scheduled use of the edit suite or the session will be cancelled. Two (2) such cancellations within a quarter will result in the loss of facility usage for the following quarter.

2. Producers wishing to use an edit suite must complete the appropriate advanced workshop, or utilize the services of an editor who has completed that workshop. The producer is responsible to see that the edit suite is left in a clean and neat condition, and that all personal property is removed at the end of the session.

3. The maximum number of people allowed in each edit suite is three (3). Food and drink is prohibited anywhere in the post-production area of the facility.

4. Dubbing of videotape will be performed by the Studio Coordinator. A Producer is required to bring the required media. A Producer is entitled to one (1) dub of each program. Additional dubs will be made on a time available basis for a fee of \$10.00 per hour.

## **I. SCHEDULING OF CABLECASTS**

1. Cablecast schedules are at the discretion of the Executive Director.
2. All programs that contain adult or indecent material must air after 11PM.
3. Determining suitability of program content is the sole discretion of the Executive Director of CMPAC.
4. Determining technical quality is the sole discretion of the Operations Manager of CMPAC.
5. Series producers may produce a maximum of one (1) "Special" program per quarter. A program information sheet for these specials must be submitted to the Operations Manager for approval prior to production and producers will be given one additional studio session to produce the program. Such programs will be cablecast as the Access 21 schedule permits.

## **J. CODE OF CONDUCT**

1. CMPAC producers and users are expected to conduct themselves in a civil manner while using or representing the organization.
2. CMPAC has an obligation to the City of Charlotte to maintain a Drug-Free Workplace. It is unlawful to manufacture, distribute, dispense, possess or use a controlled substance on CMPAC property. Violators of this rule will immediately be expelled from the premises and will be subject to existing legal penalties that apply. Local law enforcement authorities will be given the right to enter the property to enforce the law.

## **K. CHANGES IN REGULATIONS & PROCEDURES**

The Regulations & Procedures were written and instituted to offer guidelines for the usage of CMPAC services by accredited producers and users. CMPAC reserves the right to change the rules and regulations at any time and at our discretion.