

# Easthampton Media Rules and Procedures

As part of the franchise agreement between Charter Communications and the City of Easthampton, anyone who lives or works in this community will be provided with access to television production equipment, training, and time on the public/government access channel on a non-discriminatory, first-come/first-served basis. All uses of Easthampton Media ("EM") facilities and equipment shall be expressly for the purpose of producing non-commercial television programs to be cablecast on the EM channel or web.

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Revised June 2014

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The primary goal of Easthampton Media ("EM") is to promote free expression of diverse ideas and facilitate first amendment rights of free speech on the designated access channel, by coordinating the use of the channel, producing production facilities, technical assistance, and training to any individual, group, or organization interested in producing non-commercial, educational, cultural, informational, or other community oriented television programs.

To achieve this mission EM will:

- Train EM members in the use of video technology.
- Encourage a wide range of programming that expresses a diversity of perspectives.
- Develop outreach programs to diverse segments of the community.
- Maintain a strong presence in the community.
- Assist community members and organizations in the creation of programs of local interest.
- Strive to encourage technically and aesthetically high quality programming.
- Function as the conduit for first amendment expression on Easthampton's cable system.

For further information call: (413) 203-1360

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Like citizenship itself, community access demands certain standards of conduct and cooperation. These rules and procedures have been created with the hope of keeping restrictions to a minimum while protecting the rights of all access users and ensuring fair allocation of access resources. Please accept and abide by these guidelines in the spirit of cooperation to make Easthampton Media a true community resource. EM's rules are established by the EM, Inc. Board of Directors and administered by the staff. If at any time an access producer believes that a rule should be changed, deleted or added, he/she should bring their suggestions to a staff member who will present them to the EM, Inc. Board of Directors for consideration.

### **Eligibility**

Free access services and facilities provided and/or managed by Easthampton Media are available to:

- Easthampton/Southampton residents or individuals who work in Easthampton/Southampton.
- Organizations and institutions, or their designees, located in Easthampton.
- Organizations and institutions not located in Easthampton but having constituents in Easthampton may use the EM facilities on a case-by-case basis.
- Non-community members may have access to services and facilities by paying a membership fee.
- Individuals under the age of eighteen (18) who wish to use the access services and/or facilities must have a signed parental consent form on file with EM.

### **Use of Equipment and Facilities**

1. All community producers will be required to read these rules and procedures. As one of the qualifications for certification, community producers must sign a document stating that they understand these rules and procedures and will abide by them.
2. The sign-off sheet is the last page in this booklet. Each producer's signed statement will be kept on file in the EM office.
3. Production equipment and facilities are available at no charge to certified community producers for the purpose of:
  1. • Preparing programs for cablecast on the EM, Inc. channels or website.

- Producing programs that are non-profit and intended for non-commercial purposes.
- 2. All persons operating the equipment must have completed the appropriate training classes or obtained equivalent certification.
- 3. Eligible users under the age of (18) who wish to borrow portable equipment must have on-file a parent/guardian responsibility form. The form must have been originally signed in person at EM by the parent/guardian and will be valid for one year only.

### **Certification**

Community producers must be certified by EM in the use of the equipment. This can be done by attending EM workshops, participation in our mentorship program and/or demonstration proficiency with each piece of equipment. Producers will complete a program for cablecast.

### **Role of Staff**

The primary role of EM staff is to outreach to the community, train community producers, maintain equipment and facilities, schedule programming, and bring community members together in an environment that will foster the best use of community access television on Easthampton's access channel.

### **Training and Workshops**

Any person who lives or works in Easthampton can take basic or advanced TV production training covering the use of field, studio, and post-production equipment. Trainings are offered on an ongoing basis under the direction of EM staff, or by an appointed person at the discretion of the Station Manager.

### **Opportunities for Practical Experience**

1. New members are encouraged to sign up for time to practice with particular equipment or facilities.
2. Community producers may crew on other producer's programs or produce their own. A list of productions that need crew will be posted at EM. There will be a list of "ideas looking for producers" -- community members or organizations with ideas for shows but no ability to produce them.

### **Facilities Scheduling**

1. Only designated staff may schedule equipment and studio time. Producers are not allowed to write in the EM scheduling book.
2. While equipment and facilities are available on a first-come/first-serve basis, the staff will use its discretion to ensure that no individual or group monopolizes equipment or facilities.
3. Cancellation of equipment and facility reservations must be made 24 hours in advance, except in cases of emergency.
4. If a producer does not show up within thirty minutes of the time of a reservation for equipment or facilities, the reserved equipment or facilities may be used by any waiting, certified individual.

### **Equipment Check-in Check-out**

1. All equipment must be checked in and out by EM staff.
2. An equipment check-out form must be filled out accurately and signed by the user with date and daytime phone number.
3. Users must report any problems or breakage when returning the equipment. Please be as specific as possible about the nature and condition under which problems have occurred in

order to facilitate repairs. It is suggested that users setup and test equipment before removing it from the EM facility.

4. Users are responsible for loss or damage due to negligence or abuse while the equipment is checked out to them.
5. Equipment should be reserved as early as possible. Reservations are made on a first-come first-served basis.
6. A user who is more than 30 minutes late picking up equipment will be considered a "no show" and the equipment may be released to another person.
7. Equipment must be returned on time.

### **Studio Use**

1. To use the studio and control room, the community producer must be certified for studio production, or arrange for staff assistance.
2. Community producers must have an approved program idea before scheduling studio time.
3. Live studio productions require the supervision of a staff member.
4. Producers are entitled to studio time as needed. Scheduled studio time includes time needed for lighting, set up, taping, break-down and clean-up and must be approved by staff at the time of scheduling. Exceptions to the length of a session may be granted by the EM staff.
5. Community producers are responsible for the behavior and actions of their crew, guests, talent and others in attendance.

### **Editing and Post-production**

1. In order to schedule edit time, a community producer must be certified in Editing.
1. Requests for editing time should be made at least 24 hours in advance, but not more than three weeks in advance.
2. Cancellations must be made 24 hours in advance of scheduled time.
3. Producers may schedule time as needed in a given week - subject to availability.
4. If user requests staff assistance during the edit session, this should also be scheduled when time is booked and is subject to staff availability.
5. Producers are expected to finish their projects within a reasonable time period.

### **Program Ownership**

1. Anyone who produces a program using Easthampton Media equipment and/or facilities holds copyright to their production with the following exceptions:
  - EM reserves the right to air said programs and post said programs to the EM website.
  - In the event that EM has produced or collaborated or financially supported (actual or in kind) any project, joint copyright will be held.
2. Any program produced, whole or in part, with EM equipment must carry an acknowledgment in the credits – "[funding for portions of] This program was made possible by the cable subscribers of the City of Easthampton" with the EM logo.
3. Easthampton Media reserves the right to copy the master of any program produced, whole or in part, with EM equipment, for its archives, and to replay the program from time-to-time on EM's access channel.

### **Program Content**

1. EM shall not exercise control over program content in any manner.
2. Neither EM nor the City of Easthampton shall pre-screen tapes for content.
3. Anyone who produces programming using EM's equipment or facilities is wholly responsible for all program content and legal considerations as described in the "Equipment Use Agreement" and the "Cablecast Request Form".

4. Producers and others presenting taped and/or live programming for cablecast on a public access channel must sign a "Cablecast Request Form" taking full responsibility for the content of the program.
5. The following are prohibited on access channel:
  - Material that is obscene, seditious, libelous, slanderous, invades personal privacy or is otherwise illegal according to Federal, State or local law.
  - Advertising material, of any length or type, designed to promote the sale of specific products or services.
  - Advertisement of or information concerning, any lottery.
  - Material or performances that require Copyright or Trademark authorization unless written authorization for the use of such material has been obtained.

### **Public Records**

1. Easthampton Media will maintain a record of all persons and organizations granted time on the public access channel. The records shall be maintained in a public file and will be made available for inspection during normal business hours.
2. Easthampton Media will post a list of all persons and organizations submitting programs for cablecast on a regular basis in a public place to be designated by the EM Board of Directors.

### **Videotape Formats**

1. EM currently supports the following production formats: DVD & digital files.
2. EM currently supports the following cablecasting formats: DVD, and digital files with a .mpg extension.

### **Channel Time Requests and Cablecasting Procedures**

1. Though DVD's and live programming are preferred, EM can also cablecast other digital formats.
2. Producers may request specific times for cablecasting on the "Cablecast Request Form". However, the time scheduling of the program is entirely at the discretion of EM staff.
3. Pre-recorded programs will not be scheduled until the completed program has been submitted accompanied by a signed Cablecast Request form.
4. Programs produced at other facilities: Programs produced outside EM may be cablecast on the access channel if they meet the standards specified in this document, if they are submitted by a community member, and if they are not subject to copyright violations. Request for Cablecast and Statement of Compliance must be completed.
5. In order to facilitate scheduling, Cablecast Request Forms with the completed program must be submitted at least seven (7) days in advance of the first desired air date unless special arrangements are made with the EM staff responsible for scheduling.
6. No producer or organization may program more than (1) hour or (1) program, whichever is longer, of channel-time per week unless special arrangements are made with EM staff based on special need.
7. No individual producer or series is to be guaranteed a permanent time slot on the EM channel beyond a single run of a series. No series will be guaranteed to run in a particular day and/or time slot more than once per week. After the first run, the series may be continued in that slot or moved to a different day and/or time.
8. Beyond the above time limit, programs, series or single, may be repeated once (1) in the week in a different time from the original showing.

9. Single programs may be shown and repeated a total maximum of six (6) times on the channel in any one year period with no more than two (2) showings in any time block.
10. A series (up to 9 programs) may be shown and the full cycle repeated no more than a total of three (3) times on the channel with no more than one (1) cycle showing in any time block.
11. The repeat policy will be applied at the discretion of the staff based on equitable use of the channel.
12. Programs containing "offensive" content will be scheduled for cablecast in time slots beginning no earlier than 10:30 PM. "Offensive" content is defined as programs containing nudity, profanity and/or graphic violence. Producers must state whether the program submitted contains "offensive" content on the Cablecast Request Form.

### **Acquired Programs**

1. Acquired programming shall be any program where 60% or more of the program has been produced or acquired from outside the City of Easthampton/Town of Southamptton.
2. Easthampton/Southampton residents or organizations may submit commercial-free programs acquired from other sources for cablecasting. The submitter must have obtained any necessary releases and must fill out and sign a "Cablecast Request Form" prior to scheduling of said program.

### **Community Bulletin Board**

1. All messages for the Electronic Community Bulletin Board must be non-commercial in nature and must be submitted on the proper EM form at least five (5) regular business days in advance of when the message is to first appear on the channel.
2. Message requests must be clearly identified with a date when the message is to expire. Unless resubmitted no messages will be run on the system for more than 14 days.
3. Messages should be limited to 40 words or less/or a .jpg file 600 x 800.
4. To have an announcement put on the Community Bulletin Board the completed form must be submitted to the following location:

Mail or hand deliver to: Community Bulletin Board, Easthampton Media, 200 Park Street Easthampton, MA 01027. Email [calender@easthamptonmedia.org](mailto:calender@easthamptonmedia.org) or call 413-203-1360.

### **Program Promotion**

1. All community producers are encouraged to promote their own programs. Effective promotional techniques may include: short news releases that EM can send with the cablecast schedule to area newspapers and radio stations; announcements on the EM Community Calendar; promotional spots for cablecasting during EM's programming; etc.
2. For special promotion of time-sensitive programs or other major projects, please speak with the staff.

### **Underwriting Policy**

Underwriting is a method of acknowledging business or other agencies for support in the production and/or presentation of programming. This support can be, but is not limited to, money to pay for production costs, or set materials (chairs, tables, plants, backgrounds, carpeting). Underwriting is not to be used to pay for individuals producing programs.

1. Any producer who solicits underwriting support of any kind for a public access program must first provide the potential underwriter with a copy of the EM Underwriting Agreement. A signed copy of the EM Underwriting Agreement shall be delivered to the EM staff prior to EM accepting the underwriting support.

1. Proposed use of EM equipment or facilities in grant applications must be approved by EM prior to submission to the funding agency. When grant funding is applied for, the production budget will include overhead of at least 20% for donation to EM.
2. Commercial advertising is prohibited on the EM channel. The only acknowledgment or credit allowed for underwriting support (in dollars, goods or services) of EM access programs is a listing of the underwriter's name and/or logo, their address, telephone number at the beginning and/or end of the program. The credit may use a photograph, logo or video with or without a voice-over to a maximum exposure of 10 seconds. The credit may include a value neutral service description or "tag line", however, value judgment service descriptions (i.e. "providing the best service"), pricing and call to action are not permitted. Please refer to the PBS guideline for underwriting.
  1. All Credits for underwriting shall include language similar to: "This program was made possible by a grant from. . ." or "Goods and services used in this program were contributed by . . ." or "Support for this program provided in part by . . ."
  2. All direct underwriting donations are to be made directly to EM not to the individual producers.
  3. EM credit must still be included. The EM staff must be informed in advance about any underwriting credits and consulted about the proper format for credit.

### **Fees**

1. There is no charge for members and member organizations to produce and distribute programs on the EM channel.
2. EM may charge a minimal fee for special training workshops, media duplication, or videotapes. You may refer to the current fee schedule for prices. If you wish to take training workshops and cannot afford to do so EM has a scholarship program available.

### **Retention and Use of Media Files**

1. The copy of the edit master may be kept in the EM library for cablecasting purposes and the program(s) may be played from time to time by EM on the access channel. No duplicates will be made for distribution, nor will the file be lent out to other cable access stations without the producer's permission.
2. Although programs produced at EM are to be for non-commercial use, if footage produced or edited with EM equipment is sold at a later date or if grant funds are secured for said footage in whole or in part, the producer is responsible for sharing 35% of the gross proceeds with EM to reimburse for the equipment and facilities used.

### **Technical Standards**

1. All media must have a continuous video and/or sync signal with proper audio and video signal levels.
2. All programs produced at EM should adhere to the following standard definition format: DVD's and digital files with the following extensions: .mpg .mov .mp4 with 600 x 800 + 1000kb bitrate.
3. Completed programs should be submitted to the staff for cataloging and scheduling.
4. EM reserves the right to refuse to cablecast programs which do not adhere to these specifications.

### **Care of Equipment**

1. Individuals using EM equipment or facilities will not tamper with, attempt to repair, or change any wiring or components.
2. Users of EM equipment or facilities should report any defects, damage or problems to staff.
3. Any damage caused by unauthorized tampering or maintenance will be charged to the user.

No food, drink, or smoking is allowed near any equipment at any time except as needed when

used as a prop for a production.

4. Portable video equipment should not be kept in a car overnight or for long periods of time.

### **Facilities must be left in a clean and neat condition**

1. Any props, tapes, scripts, or other materials should be removed at the end of a session.
2. The Studio floor should be swept after use.
3. All cables should be coiled appropriately and equipment should be put away properly.

### **Violations of Policy**

In order that these policies are effective and allow operations to run smoothly, a penalty system has been instituted. Easthampton Media or designee is authorized to issue warnings and suspensions.

**Minor Violations** These include but are not limited to:

1. Failure to cancel a reservation for equipment or facilities.
2. Late pick-up or return of equipment without notification and approval.
3. Failure to clean up after using the facilities.
4. Eating or drinking in restricted areas.
5. Smoking in the EM facilities.
6. Mishandling of equipment.
7. Verbal or written abuse of staff or other members.
8. Harassment, verbal, written or electronic.
9. Perpetrating falsehood.

Minor violations will result in the following series of actions. Warnings for minor violations will be in effect for one year from date of issue.

1. First violation: Written warning
2. Second violation: Second written warning
3. Third violation: 30-day suspension of privileges
4. Fourth violation: 90-day suspension of privileges

## **II. Major Violations**

A major violation will result in an immediate 90-day suspension of privileges. Violator may also be held responsible for repair or replacement charges. Major violations include but are not limited to:

1. Intentional commercial or profit-making use of EM equipment or facilities.
2. Misrepresentation to others of user's affiliation with EM.
3. Abuse of equipment, including attempted repair, facility reconfiguration, rewiring and improper transport.
4. Taking or reserving equipment without staff permission.
5. Falsifying forms.
6. Physical or persistent verbal/written abuse of staff or other users.
7. Operating EM equipment under the influence of alcohol or other drugs.
8. Any subsequent major violation will result in the permanent loss of EM equipment and facilities privileges.

### **Appeals**

Appeals of staff decisions can be made to the EM Board of Directors.

Community producers are encouraged to resolve difficulties on the staff level.

Any community producer or member wishing to appeal an action of the staff may request a hearing before the EM Staff or the EM Board of Directors. It should be noted that appeals are not confidential.



**Grievance Procedures**

A grievance is defined to mean a complaint by a producer, member or group based on a dispute involving the meaning, interpretation or application of EM policies and procedures. The grievance must first be presented in writing to EM's staff within three working days of the occurrence of the event upon which the grievance is based. The Coordinator will respond to parties within seven working days in an effort to settle the grievance. In the event that the grievance is not disposed of at this time or in the event that no decision has been rendered, the grievance shall be referred in writing to the EM Board of Directors for a decision at the next regularly scheduled meeting.

**Amendments**

The EM Local Access Board reserves the right to amend these policies from time-to-time.

Acknowledgement Document for Easthampton Media Rules and Procedures

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read and accept the terms and conditions  
(please print your name)

set forth by Easthampton Media’s Rules and Procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_  
signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date