

**VERMONT COMMUNITY ACCESS MEDIA  
Policies and Procedures (Amended 3/28/12)**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

***A. VCAM Mission Statement***

VCAM seeks to foster free speech and public dialog by providing to all citizens of the VCAM service area easy access to the electronic media on a nondiscriminatory basis for nonprofit and noncommercial purposes.

***B. The Basics***

VCAM is a nonprofit community media and technology center located in the south end of Burlington, Vermont. VCAM's mission is to provide local citizens with access to and training with state-of-the-art digital video tools as a means of personal, political and artistic self expression. VCAM operates a public access cable channel (channel 15 on Comcast and Burlington Telecom in the greater Burlington, Vermont, region), and provides equipment and facility rentals and channel time to any VCAM user, for any noncommercial purpose, free of charge.

VCAM members can sign out digital video cameras, microphones, monitors, video lights and many other field production tools and can reserve time in our fully-equipped 3-camera studio and/or our digital editing suites, featuring the latest video/audio editing, graphics and compositing software. VCAM also offers a series of introductory workshops focusing on specific video tools and techniques as well as hands-on, one-on-one training.

This document details the policies and procedures by which VCAM operates. Below are a few basic concepts to keep in mind.

- Eligibility for VCAM membership is based on local residency (see section II.A).
- VCAM's production and post-production facilities are to be used for the production of noncommercial content, exclusively (see section V.A.1).
- All content created using VCAM equipment and/or facilities must be intended for (and submitted for) playout on VCAM channel 15 (see section III.B) and must include an approved VCAM credit (see section V.C).
- VCAM does not pre-screen, censor or edit content submitted for playout on VCAM channel 15, though some content restrictions apply (see section V.A for details).

***C. VCAM User Code of Conduct***

As a VCAM user, you agree to each item on the following list of user responsibilities.

- Take full responsibility for the content of any programming that you distribute on VCAM channels.
- Take full responsibility for your production, including the behavior of your crew and guests.
- Comply with these Policies and Procedures.
- Treat VCAM equipment and facilities with respect and care, both inside and outside of the VCAM facility.
- Use VCAM equipment and facilities only in support of productions you intend to distribute on VCAM channels.

- Respect the rights of others to use VCAM resources.
- Make and cancel reservations in a timely manner.
- Treat VCAM staff with courtesy.
- Maintain up-to-date contact information.

Failure to comply with any of the above identified responsibilities, or any other responsibility identified in the VCAM Policies and Procedures may result in sanctions, termination of membership or any and all such other action as permitted by law against the VCAM user.

## **II. ELIGIBILITY**

### ***A. Training, Equipment and Facilities***

Public access training, equipment and facilities will be made available on a nondiscriminatory basis to any person who is a resident or who works/volunteers in the areas served by VCAM, including the towns of Burlington, South Burlington, Essex Junction, Essex Center, Winooski, Williston, St. George, Shelburne, Hinesburg, Charlotte, Ferrisburgh and Vergennes. (Residents of other cities and towns in a different service territory may be served by another community media center that provides similar services.) Eligible individuals must provide a valid photo ID as well as a current residential/business address (within one of the towns listed above — P.O. boxes are not acceptable validating addresses) and a working phone number. If the person is a minor (under 18 years of age), then his/her parent/guardian's ID and signed authorization is required.

VCAM provides a wide variety of digital video production and post-production equipment to eligible users. Use of some of VCAM's equipment and facilities may require additional certification beyond the VCAM orientation and membership process (see section IV.C).

Basic, intermediate and advanced training in digital video production and post production tools and techniques is available to any certified VCAM user. Training at VCAM is done through a combination of workshops, tutorials, one-on-one sessions with VCAM staff, and individual hands-on work. VCAM strives to customize training efforts to best meet the needs and goals of individual users.

### ***B. Channel Time***

Public access cable channel time shall be made available free of charge to any eligible VCAM member. The procedures for submitting a program for play-out on a VCAM cable channel and scheduling priorities are presented in Section V.

### ***C. Nondiscrimination***

No person will be denied training, equipment, facilities or channel time on the basis of race, sex, age, physical or mental disability, national origin, citizenship status, religious or political belief or affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, status as a disabled veteran and/or veteran of the Vietnam Era or any other characteristic protected by federal, state or local law, or the nature of a user's programming interest. (Note: some programming restrictions may apply. See section V.A, Restricted Content, for programming guidelines.)

#### ***D. Right to Refuse Service***

VCAM reserves the right to refuse access to VCAM facilities to any person whose actions do not adhere to these policies and procedures. VCAM staff reserves the right to ask anyone to leave the facility if he/she is behaving in a way that adversely affects facility operation or unreasonably interferes with another access user's ability to use the facilities. Proof of eligibility and/or basic equipment competency may be required at any time. VCAM may refuse to air any program or provide any service if proof of eligibility, satisfactory to VCAM, cannot be provided.

### **III. CONTENT CREATION/DISTRIBUTION**

#### ***A. Ownership/Copyright***

VCAM producers retain ownership of all video content that they produce with VCAM equipment and facilities. Anyone who uses VCAM equipment and facilities in the production of video content agrees to grant VCAM the non-exclusive right to cablecast the content on VCAM channels and to use the content for noncommercial, promotional purposes (see section III.B).

VCAM producers agree to include a VCAM credit in any content that is produced using VCAM facilities or equipment (see section V.C).

VCAM producers will indemnify and hold VCAM harmless for all content produced.

VCAM producers are required to sign an agreement related to each of these items (VCAM Statement of Compliance) before production begins.

##### **1. nontraditional copyright licenses**

VCAM encourages producers to amend the rights to their property under traditional copyright laws in a manner that is consistent with VCAM's mission of public or universal access to content. VCAM encourages producers to use organizations such as Creative Commons, which provides, at no cost to the producer, public copyright licenses for content produced with VCAM resources. These licenses permit some rights to be reserved by the producer while allowing greater public access to the content. With a Creative Commons or such similar license, VCAM producers retain copyright but allow people to copy and distribute their work according to a set of conditions determined by the producer of the work. Since VCAM resources are reserved specifically for noncommercial purposes and primarily for sharing content with the surrounding community, we believe licenses similar to the model created by Creative Commons help promote access to important information through expanded distribution of locally created content. Please search the Internet for more information on public access to intellectual property. A good starting point is the Creative Commons website found at [creativecommons.org](http://creativecommons.org).

#### ***B. Intention/First Use***

Use of VCAM equipment and facilities is contingent on the content's being intended for cablecast on a VCAM cable channel. In general, such programs may not be used for commercial purposes or the solicitation of funds (See section V.A.1-2). Completed video

content produced with VCAM equipment or facilities must be cablecast at least once on a VCAM channel. After submitting content for playout on VCAM channels, producers are free to distribute their own content as they see fit, as long as the content is submitted to VCAM for playout prior to other noncommercial distribution methods (e.g., other PEG channels, the Web, film festivals, etc.). VCAM may choose to not run, or to delay, programming that has run within the last three months on another PEG channel in the VCAM service territory.

### ***C. Payment for Labor/Production Costs***

A VCAM user may be contracted by a third party individual or organization for labor and/or production costs associated with VCAM content, provided that the VCAM user submits a Third Party Agreement to VCAM prior to receiving any payment for labor and/or production costs. The agreement must be signed by the third party and warrant that the third party understands that:

- 1) Content produced with VCAM equipment and/or facilities will be cablecast on VCAM channel 15 and may not be used by the third party, or any other person or entity, for commercial purposes, and may not be used for fundraising purposes without prior written approval of the VCAM Board of Directors.
- 2) VCAM equipment and facilities are available to all eligible people, at no cost, for use in the production of programming for the public access channel.
- 3) VCAM channel time is allocated at no charge.

To the extent any term or condition incorporated in the Third Party Agreement is inconsistent with VCAM's Policies and Procedures, VCAM's Policies and Procedures will control the user's use of VCAM equipment and/or facilities.

A copy of the Third Party Agreement is available upon request.

### ***D. Waiving of Rental Fees***

VCAM waives all rental fees for equipment/facility use with the expectation that all content produced with VCAM facilities is noncommercial in nature and intended for noncommercial and nonprofit distribution channels. Using VCAM equipment/facilities for the creation of commercial content is prohibited. Commercialized distribution of content produced with VCAM equipment/facilities (e.g. commercial TV, DVD sales, etc.) is likewise prohibited and may result in a post hoc reinstatement of a fee structure for equipment/facility rentals and/or staff services or other sanctions set out in section VI.

Failure to submit programming to VCAM for playout on VCAM channels and/or failure to include a proper VCAM credit may also result in a post hoc reinstatement of a rental fee structure for equipment/facility rentals and/or staff services or other sanctions set out in section VI.

## **IV. USE OF VCAM EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES**

### ***A. Orientation Workshops***

To make newcomers aware of VCAM's mission and to acquaint them with these policies and procedures and what production equipment, facilities and training opportunities are available to them, VCAM conducts orientation workshops. The VCAM orientation

workshop is a prerequisite for any use of VCAM facilities, without exception. Regular access orientations are held at VCAM multiple times per month.

### ***B. Training Seminars/Workshops***

VCAM provides additional training seminars and workshops on a regular basis (see VCAM's website for a list of available workshops and seminars). Some of these workshops and seminars are offered more frequently than others, based upon member requests. VCAM members may request specific training at any time. All requests will be considered in light of staff availability/expertise and facility availability. VCAM strives to make its training programs available to all skill levels, but additional non-VCAM training may be required in some cases.

### ***C. Certification***

Use of all VCAM equipment and facilities requires certification. The most basic level of certification is established upon completion of the VCAM orientation workshop (with completed paperwork and all eligibility requirements acknowledged). This basic certification acts as a prerequisite for any use of VCAM equipment, facilities and/or further training. Further levels of certification may be required for use of particular facilities and equipment. Certification expires after one year of non-use or when a user relocates outside the VCAM service area.

### ***D. Scheduling Equipment and Facilities***

Upon completion of the VCAM orientation process, users may begin using VCAM equipment and facilities for which they are certified (see section IV.C). Reservations may be made with a VCAM staff member either by phone or in person. For logistical reasons, VCAM prohibits making reservations by leaving messages via email or any other method. No reservation (or change to a reservation) will be considered official until confirmed by a VCAM staff person. A VCAM user arriving more than 30 minutes late for a reservation, without notifying VCAM staff of tardiness, automatically forfeits the reservation. Equipment and facilities reservations are available to certified users on a nondiscriminatory, first-come, first-served basis.

VCAM operates by appointment. Same-day walk-in reservations may be possible, depending on staff/facility availability, but VCAM cannot guarantee that walk-in reservations can or will be accommodated. Making reservations at least 24 hours in advance is recommended. Reservations for VCAM equipment and facilities may be made up to three months in advance.

Access users who wish to cancel an equipment or facilities reservation are asked to notify staff as soon as possible so that those resources may be made available to other access users. Notification of any cancellation is required prior to the start of the reservation time. Note that VCAM users who cancel more than three reservations (of any kind) within a 30-day period without providing at least three days' notice (prior to the reservation start-time) may be subject to sanction (see section VI).

Equipment and facilities in common VCAM areas (i.e. not behind a closed door) may not be used for the production of content of an adult nature or hate speech (for definitions of "adult content" and "hate speech" see section V.A).

## **1. Available Equipment/Facilities**

VCAM maintains a production studio facility and an equipment inventory that is available to certified access users. Different levels of certification may be required for certain types of facility/gear reservations. VCAM reserves the right to adjust reservation limitations according to inventory availability and user demand.

### **a. Remote Equipment**

Remote equipment (cameras, microphones, lights, etc.) may be reserved for a period not to exceed 72 hours. A user is limited to three remote equipment reservations within any 30-day period. (See section IV.D.3 for more information about remote equipment sign-out procedures.)

### **b. Studio**

VCAM maintains a three-camera production/sound studio and control room. One studio session may be scheduled per week, with each session not to exceed four hours. A VCAM production technician will be available during all studio productions for a minimal level of basic production support. Staff may also need to attend to other duties and may not be at the user's complete disposal during studio productions. It is the user's responsibility to contact the appropriate staff member in a timely manner to schedule any particular production needs that may require additional staff resources. VCAM encourages content producers to provide a crew for studio shoots. VCAM staff can provide training for production crew members. The producer must be present for all studio productions.

### **1. Live Call-in Productions**

A certified VCAM user\* may request a time slot for a "live" program no less than two weeks and no more than three months in advance of the date of the live broadcast. Live shows will be approved only if, in VCAM's sole opinion, it is absolutely necessary for the program to be live (i.e. synchronous interactivity with the community via phone calls, Web chats, etc.). Producers must reserve the studio and arrive a minimum of 30 minutes before a live show goes on the channel or the live channel time will be reassigned.

The live program's producer must provide personnel for call/chat screening.

*\*VCAM users must first produce at least three "live-to-tape" studio productions (i.e. productions that are "live" in every respect except for the synchronous playout time) in order to be certified for a live time-slot.*

### **c. Editing Facilities**

Editing stations may be reserved a maximum of twice a week and shall not exceed eight hours per session unless otherwise authorized by staff. There is a limit of three people at each editing station unless prior permission is obtained from staff. The authorization or permission required under this

subsection is solely at the discretion of VCAM staff. Access to editing stations requires some additional certification.

VCAM maintains networked storage media with space available for editors, but VCAM users should be prepared to provide their own storage capacity for particularly large projects and/or for projects that will take many months to complete. VCAM is not responsible for lost or damaged content that is stored on VCAM storage media. VCAM recommends regular and thorough backups of all important data on personally owned storage devices.

VCAM users who edit projects using VCAM's networked storage capacity are advised that any files left untouched for more than three months are subject to deletion without notification.

#### ***d. Dubbing/Format Conversion***

VCAM's dubbing/format conversion station allows users to make copies of programs and other content in a variety of digital and analog formats. Sessions at this station may be scheduled a maximum of twice a week and shall not exceed four hours per session unless otherwise authorized by VCAM staff. The authorization or permission required under this subsection is solely at the discretion of VCAM staff. Note that copies of VCAM programming may not be made without permission of the producer of that content.

Please be aware that VCAM is not a dubbing house capable of producing large runs of tapes and DVDs. VCAM staff reserves the right to limit this station's use to small quantities of copies (i.e. one or two per program/episode). Larger runs of program copies must be made elsewhere or preapproved by VCAM staff.

#### ***e. Public Computing***

Computer workstations are available for public use in VCAM's common area. VCAM Users may sign up for time on these machines for simple computing needs related to the production of their VCAM content (email, Web searches, etc.). More sophisticated multimedia computing (video editing, DVD burning, design work, video tutorials, etc.) is available at other work stations (ask VCAM staff which station is appropriate for which task). Public computing sessions may be scheduled a maximum of twice a week and shall not exceed two hours unless otherwise authorized by staff. The authorization or permission required under this subsection is solely at the discretion of VCAM staff.

## **2. Eating/Drinking/Smoking in Facilities**

Smoking, alcoholic beverages and controlled substances are absolutely not allowed within any of the access facilities. Food and beverages are not allowed in the control room or at editing stations. Food and nonalcoholic beverages may be allowed in the production studio with prior approval of staff (generally, only when the food/beverages in question relate to the content being produced, e.g. cooking shows, etc.). VCAM users who spend many hours at a time in the facility may wish to bring a meal. Eating and drinking in the general common area are permitted, but users must clean up after themselves.

### **3. Remote Equipment Sign-Out Procedures**

VCAM users who have reserved video/audio gear for sign-out are required to arrive at the appointed checkout time. Because pick-up and return times for remote equipment are often critical, it is imperative that VCAM users precisely honor their reservation times regarding remote equipment. Equipment return times are indicated on the Remote Equipment Sign Out Form (see below). The VCAM user is responsible for determining that remote equipment is in good working order at the time of checkout. It is strongly advised that users set up and test all equipment before leaving the VCAM facility. Users must inform VCAM staff of any malfunctioning or damaged equipment upon the equipment's return.

The access user is required to complete a Remote Equipment Sign Out Form before using VCAM equipment for remote shoots. In signing the form, the user agrees to indemnify and reimburse VCAM for all damage to or loss of any access equipment caused by neglect, abuse, theft or other causes that occur while the equipment is assigned to the user. Exceptions may be made for normal wear and tear or regular maintenance issues. Determination regarding liability is at the sole discretion of VCAM.

All certified access users must have a valid photo ID on file with VCAM in order to sign out VCAM's remote equipment.

#### **a. Equipment Check-In**

VCAM users are required to return all equipment at the check-in time specified on the Remote Equipment Sign Out Form. VCAM users must also report to staff any equipment malfunction or damage upon returning the gear to VCAM. A member of the VCAM staff must sign the Remote Equipment Sign Out Form to complete the equipment check-in.

Occasionally equipment pick-ups and returns happen during hours when only one VCAM staff member is present and engaged in something that requires her/his attention (e.g. a studio production). VCAM users should be aware that they may have to wait until the staff member can take the time to properly check-in all of the equipment. It is not acceptable to leave the gear unattended at VCAM without going through the check-in procedure.

#### **b. Equipment Malfunctions/Unavailability**

If equipment malfunctions or becomes unavailable for any reason, access users with active reservations for that equipment will be notified as soon as possible. VCAM users should be aware that despite the best efforts of VCAM staff, sometimes equipment becomes unavailable suddenly. In these instances, VCAM will strive to meet VCAM users' needs in the most efficient and non-discriminatory way possible.

### **V. PROGRAMMING CONTENT ON VCAM CABLE CHANNELS**

VCAM's public access cable channel (channel 15 on Comcast and Burlington Telecom in the greater Burlington, Vermont, region) is open to any local resident to present any legal,



noncommercial video content. This section outlines VCAM's procedures for submitting programming for play-out on channel 15. Here are some basics to keep in mind:

- The programming on channel 15 directly reflects the views, tastes and standards of the community who submits programming to the channel.
- As a general rule, VCAM does not pre-screen programming or make editorial, content-based programming decisions regarding programming that is submitted. All legal, noncommercial programming submitted by eligible VCAM users will be accepted and cablecast, without exception. However, certain legal and noncommercial programming will be subject to "safe harbor" or other restrictions.
- VCAM users who submit programming content for channel 15 bear all legal responsibility for the content they submit and shall indemnify VCAM from any and all liability that may attach to such content.
- VCAM will accept programming content from local residents whether that content was produced using VCAM facilities or not (though locally produced content will get scheduling priority on the channel).

VCAM producers' contact information will be made available to the public upon request.

Anyone residing or working within VCAM's service area may submit programming for channel 15. All programming on channel 15 must be accompanied by a signed Program Information form (minors must have a parent or legal guardian sign) and a completed Episode Submission form. The party signing the Program Information Form assumes liability for the programming content. The party submitting the content must also have a VCAM Access User Information form and a signed VCAM Statement of Compliance form on file with VCAM.

VCAM requires that all producers of content provide contact information that can be distributed to the public upon request. This contact information can be a telephone number, email address and/or a physical address, and need not be the same contact information required on VCAM's other internal documents.

#### ***A. Restricted Content***

Programs submitted for playout on channel 15 may be subject to the following restrictions.

***IMPORTANT: VCAM does not prescreen programs. It is the responsibility of the individual submitting programming content to notify VCAM in the event that content submitted for playout is restricted by any or all of the sections listed below.***

##### **1. Commercial Content**

Due to the fact that access to VCAM facilities and channels is free of charge and is supported by quasi-public funds (see section I.C), commercial content is not allowed. Commercial content is defined as material directly promoting the sale of products or services that are offered by any participating member of the given program (including guests). Federally recognized nonprofit, 501(c)(3) corporations are exempt from this policy. This policy does not prevent producers from recouping production costs through underwriting partnerships (see Section V.F, Underwriting Partnerships).

##### **2. Solicitation of Funds**

VCAM does not permit its access channels to be used for the solicitation of funds. However, permission may be granted to certified VCAM users on a case-by-case basis. Any certified VCAM user may submit a request in writing to the VCAM Board of Directors (c/o VCAM staff), asking for permission to use VCAM channel time for fund-soliciting purposes. Whether to grant such permission rests solely with the discretion of the VCAM Board of Directors.

### **3. Adult Content**

"Adult content" is defined as any legal content (see section V.A.5 below) of a sexually explicit or graphically violent nature. Programming that contains adult content will be scheduled for playout between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. (when children are less likely to see it). If there is a question about whether a program includes adult content, a determination will be made by VCAM. Any program that contains adult content must include a viewer advisory immediately prior to the beginning of the program, stating:

*The following program contains material that some viewers may find objectionable or inappropriate for viewing, particularly by children. The community producer/sponsor who submitted this program for broadcast is solely responsible for its content. The views, opinions and content of this program do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of VCAM's staff or board of directors. For more information about this program or VCAM content policies, call (802) 651-9692.*

The viewer advisory must be read aloud and/or displayed on-screen for a minimum of 20 seconds. Responsibility for including the viewer advisory rests with the program's producer.

### **4. Hate Speech**

Programs that contain *hate speech* will be scheduled for playout between 11 p.m. and 5 a.m. VCAM defines hate speech as content that encourages hatred and violence against a particular class of people because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, ancestry, citizenship, age, service in the armed forces, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, marital status, gender identity or status with regard to receipt of public assistance. If there is a question about whether a program includes hate speech, a determination will be made by VCAM. Any program that contains hate speech must include a viewer advisory immediately prior to the beginning of the program stating:

*The following program contains material that some viewers may find objectionable or inappropriate for viewing, particularly by children. The community producer/sponsor who submitted this program for broadcast is solely responsible for its content. The views, opinions and content of this program do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of VCAM's staff or board of directors. For more information about this program or VCAM content policies, call (802) 651-9692.*

The viewer advisory must be read aloud and/or displayed on screen for a minimum of 20 seconds. Responsibility for including the viewer advisory rests with the program's producer.

## **5) Illegal Content**

VCAM will not knowingly cablecast illegal content. Illegal content is any content that is not protected by the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States. Unprotected content may include (but may not be limited to) slander, sedition, copyright infringement and obscenity, as defined by applicable laws. VCAM reserves the right to refuse to cablecast any program that it reasonably determines may contain obscene or otherwise unprotected content. VCAM and cable operators (including but not limited to Comcast and Burlington Telecom) are prohibited by statute from cablecasting obscene or otherwise unprotected programming. Consequently, VCAM may consult with the cable operators, law enforcement or other entities as needed when there is reason to believe a program may contain obscenity or otherwise unprotected content.

VCAM will not knowingly cablecast "indecent" speech (as defined By the State of Vermont in 13 V.S.A. § 2801) unless safe harbor time restrictions, parental advisories, and/or other methods adequate to protect such programming from being viewed by minors are applied.

VCAM expects it's users to be aware of applicable laws and also be aware that producers are legally responsible for the content of their own programming. VCAM strongly suggests that producers who think their programming might contain illegal content consult with legal counsel before submitting their programs for payout.

### ***B. Technical Requirements***

Programs submitted to VCAM for payout must meet VCAM's minimum technical requirements. If you are unsure whether your program meets our technical requirements, you may ask VCAM staff for assistance.

VCAM can accept a wide variety of digital and analog video formats. Any content submitted must be playable on VCAM's various video playback devices or multimedia workstations. Here are some standard guidelines:

- Playable DVDs (as opposed to data DVDs) must be scratch-free and playable without glitches, and encoded for region 0 or 1.
- Data DVDs, USB sticks and hard drives must have easy-to-navigate file structures and be free from malware that could damage VCAM workstations.
- Standard definition video content must be in the National Television System Committee (NTSC) broadcast standard.
- Digital videotapes must have clean, uninterrupted timecode.
- Analog videotapes must have clean control tracks and be free of dropouts and glitches.

The first frame of the content intended for cablecast must be obvious (or clearly noted with the content). VCAM recommends (but does not require) including an academy leader countdown and 2-pop to clearly indicate the beginning of the content to be cablecasted. VCAM further recommends (but does not require) at least 30 seconds of clean, black video following all programming content.

All programming submitted to VCAM must include a VCAM Episode Submission form that includes the following, legible information (at a minimum):

- Program Title
- Episode Name/Number (if applicable)
- Producer's Name
- Total Running Time (accurate to the nearest second)
- Description of program's content

### **C. VCAM Credit**

All programming produced using VCAM equipment and/or facilities must include the following credit:

***This (film/content/program) was produced (in part) with facilities provided by Vermont Community Access Media (VCAM) in Burlington, Vermont.  
vermontcam.org***

"In part" is optional text. This text must be displayed following each program (or included in the end credits of each program) for at least 10 seconds. It is the responsibility of the producers to ensure the title is included at the end of each of their programs. Note that VCAM may be able to provide pre-produced graphics containing this language in a variety of video formats upon request.

### **D. Scheduling**

VCAM will schedule the public access channel in a fair and equitable manner. Channel time will be divided equally among all requests for playout, subject to the priorities listed below. It can take up to two weeks from the time new programming content is submitted (accompanied by a signed Program Information Form) before that content is assigned a time slot (this delay is in part to allow time to update our program listings). VCAM producers who have a regular, repeating time slot, must submit new content for that time-slot (accompanied by a VCAM Episode Submission form) a minimum of 24 hours in advance of the scheduled cablecast time. Providers of content for channel 15 may request particular time slots, and a reasonable effort will be made to accommodate these requests. Not all requests can be accommodated. All time slots are subject to change without notification.

When scheduling programs, VCAM will make every effort to use the following priority list as a guide. The list is from highest to lowest priority. The particulars of how time slots are distributed may change as demand for time slots increases or decreases.

1. Live Call-In Programs
2. Original, Locally Produced Content
3. Sponsored, Non-Local Content
4. Older, Repeated Content

Producers should be aware that this list is only a guide, and that situations may occur when the VCAM staff must make a judgment call regarding scheduling. Any producer who

feels that he/she has been treated unfairly may bring a grievance to the VCAM Executive Director.

### ***E. Live Programs***

See section IV.D.1.b.1 for VCAM's policies concerning live call-in programming.

### ***F. Underwriting Partnerships***

A VCAM user may give on-screen credit to an individual or organization that underwrites any of the production costs and/or materials associated with the content's creation so long as said individual or organization consents in writing, a copy of which is provided to VCAM in advance of the cablecast. Credit may be given through the use of a title at the beginning and/or end of the program that identifies the contributor and includes the language:

"This program is underwritten in part by ...."

Each display shall be no longer than 15 seconds, and may include the contributor's name, address, telephone number and website address (url). A corporate logo or photo/video of a business may be used as well.

### ***G. Repeating Old Programming***

Active producers who maintain a timeslot for a currently running program may submit "repeat" episodes of that program to run in the program's existing time slot. For a limited time, such repeated episodes may be treated the same as new episodes for the purposes of maintaining an active status and time slot, however, producers should be aware that repeated episodes have a lower scheduling priority than current programming (see Section V.D, Scheduling).

Producers who no longer maintain a timeslot or active status may resubmit episodes of an old production that had previously run on channel 15 for play-out. Old episodes that are submitted in this way will be given a new time slot and are subject to all the same scheduling and play-out policies specified elsewhere in this document.

## **H. Videotapes, DVDs and Other Media**

### **1. Producer-Provided Media**

VCAM users must assure VCAM that any video medium provided that is intended for play-out on a VCAM channel is either new or of a quality sufficient to prevent technical issues with media players (see section V.B, Technical Requirements). It is the VCAM user's responsibility to provide thorough content information for all submitted programming (title, producer's name, running time, etc.), regardless of the medium on which the content is submitted. A completed Episode Submission Form (provided by VCAM) must accompany all content submitted to VCAM for play-out.

### **2. VCAM-Provided Media**

VCAM field cameras record on a number of different digital media (digital tape, SD card, CF card, P2 card, etc.). VCAM can provide blank media for production purposes with the expectation that the media will be returned or replaced with

identical media upon return of the production equipment. VCAM users are encouraged to provide their own blank media, whenever possible.

### **3. Removing Media From VCAM's Archival Library**

Some VCAM content is stored in a media library on-site in a variety of analog and digital media formats (DV tape, DVD, etc.). VCAM users may only remove this media from VCAM's premises with staff approval, and only after a broadcast-quality digital copy has been made of the content for VCAM's use.

## **VI. RULE VIOLATIONS/SANCTIONS/LOSS OF PRIVILEGES**

To ensure that VCAM equipment and facilities remain available and in good working order, the following rules have been established. Upon verifying that a rule violation has occurred, a written statement will be issued to the producer describing the rule violation (and subsequent sanctions, if applicable). Infractions are divided into major and minor violations. By far, the most common minor violations involve VCAM users' arriving late for appointments or neglecting to cancel reservations. In general, VCAM users can avoid these minor issues by simply phoning the VCAM studio and speaking to a staff member before the reservation's start time.

### ***A. Rule Violations***

#### **1. Major Violations**

- a.** Failure to submit a program produced with VCAM equipment and/or facilities for initial cablecast on a VCAM channel
- b.** Abuse, vandalism or willful neglect of VCAM equipment and/or facilities
- c.** Return of equipment in damaged or unworkable condition, beyond normal wear and tear
- d.** Failure to return equipment through intent, negligence, loss or theft
- e.** Use of equipment and/or facilities for a purpose not related to the production of content intended for VCAM cablecast
- f.** Removal of equipment from the access center without proper checkout procedures and/or without signing a Remote Equipment Sign Out form
- g.** Reserving or checking out equipment or facilities for use by a non-certified producer or a producer on suspension
- h.** Repeated breach of any of the Statement of Compliance warranties
- i.** Failure to submit a signed Third Party Agreement before receiving payment for labor or production costs associated with a public access production in which VCAM equipment and/or facilities were used
- j.** Attempted equipment maintenance or disassembly
- k.** Rude, abusive or discourteous treatment of VCAM staff

- l.** Production of or attempted production of illegal content or commercial content
- m.** Submitting a program with "adult content" or "hate speech" without a viewer advisory

## **2. Minor Violations**

- a.** Failure to cancel equipment or facilities prior to the reservation time
- b.** Late return of equipment without an extension authorized by a staff member
- c.** Failure to vacate studio or editing facilities when the next scheduled producer has arrived
- d.** Return of dirty equipment
- e.** Leaving trash or debris in studio or editing facilities
- f.** Operation of equipment or use of facilities in an incorrect, unsafe or inappropriate manner that might result in damage
- g.** Improper packaging of equipment for transport
- h.** Tardiness in excess of 30 minutes in claiming reserved equipment or facilities without an extension authorized by a staff member
- i.** Reserving, checking out or returning equipment for another producer, unless specified and approved in advance
- j.** Canceling equipment or facilities reservations three or more times within a 30 day period
- k.** Submitting a program without VCAM's required credit language
- l.** Failure to promptly return or replace recording media provided by VCAM (videotape or other recording media)
- m.** Any behavior at the VCAM facility that staff deems inappropriate or that unreasonably interferes with another VCAM user's ability to use the facilities
- n.** Breach of any of the Statement of Compliance warranties
- o.** Failure to properly complete any form or paperwork required by VCAM
- p.** Committing two (2) or more minor violations
- q.** Any other infraction of these Policies and Procedures

## ***B. Sanctions***

VCAM user sanctions typically involve a suspension of VCAM privileges for a period of time, the length of which will depend on the nature of the violation. While a VCAM user is suspended from equipment/facility use, that user may continue to distribute legal, non commercial content on VCAM channels.

### **1. Major Violations**

A "major" violation of VCAM policy results in an immediate suspension of use of VCAM equipment and facilities for a period of one year. If damage to or loss of equipment and/or facilities has occurred, suspension may remain in effect until a full compensation is made for the lost resources or until an installment payment contract or other arrangement is signed with VCAM. There are no written warnings prior to suspension in the case of a major violation.

Notwithstanding the immediately preceding paragraph, the VCAM Board of Directors reserves the right to evaluate each major violation and determine whether a more severe sanction is reasonably required. Said additional sanctions are at the discretion of the VCAM Board of Directors and may include suspension from using VCAM equipment or facilities for an indefinite term, repayment for any damage to equipment or facilities, and/or the implementation of legal action against the user.

### **2. Minor Violations**

A Minor Violation will result in the following actions:

- Written warning for the first minor violation
- Suspension from equipment and facilities for the second minor violation that occurs within a 90-day period of the first minor violation

An initial suspension from equipment and facilities (resulting from two minor violations within a 90-day period) will be for 90 days. Any subsequent suspensions will be for a period of one year each. Recertification (including VCAM orientation) is required following any suspension of a year or more. Staff will file a written report on any suspension.

## ***C. Equipment Damage and Loss***

If equipment is damaged or lost while under contract to a VCAM user, the user will have equipment privileges suspended until full compensation is made or until an installment payment contract or other arrangement is signed with VCAM. In the event that a producer fails to meet the terms of repayment (or mutually agreed upon arrangement), the producer shall be suspended from all equipment and facilities privileges and the case will be submitted to the Board of Directors for resolution.

## ***D. Appeal Of Sanctions***

A VCAM user may appeal any sanctions by submitting a written statement to the VCAM Executive Director. If suspension from equipment and facilities is imposed, the suspension will remain in effect throughout the appeal process. The Executive Director will investigate the circumstances surrounding the sanction and will return a written report to the VCAM user within two weeks of receiving the appeal. The VCAM user may then continue the appeal process by submitting a written statement to the VCAM Board of Directors within 30



days of the issuance of the Executive Director's report. The Board of Directors will then consider the appeal at its next regularly scheduled meeting.

#### **E. Indemnification**

Notwithstanding any prior statement in these VCAM Policies and Procedures, each user agrees to indemnify and hold VCAM harmless from any and all content produced by the user.

### **VII. AMENDMENT OF THE VCAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The VCAM Policies and Procedures may be amended at any meeting of the VCAM Board of Directors where a quorum is present. Interim Policies and Procedures may be implemented at the discretion of VCAM management, subject to the approval of the full board at the next general board meeting.