

Acton Community Access Television, Inc.

Policies & Procedures

I. Introduction

Welcome to Acton Community Access Television, Inc.

ACAT, Inc., is a membership organization, devoted to public access television and the citizens who make it possible. Acton Community Access Television, Inc. operates under agreements with the Town of Acton, and relies on financial support derived from the town's license agreements with the cable service providers as well as tax-deductible contributions from donors. ACAT, Inc., administers 3 channels for the community, a public access channel (8), an educational access channel (9), and a government access channel (10). Channels 8/9/10 appear on Verizon FiOS TV on channels 45/40/41.

These Policies & Procedures are designed to make it possible for ACAT members to use the resources of community access television efficiently and contribute in meaningful ways to the community and the organization. They are subject to change as ACAT develops. We will post the most current version at our website, www.actontv.org.

II. Mission Statement

ACAT is dedicated to communication, collaboration and community in Acton, Mass. We are a public television forum for all residents, businesses and organizations. Paving the way for public-educational-governmental access, ACAT provides tools, training and experience for all citizens and institutions to create and broadcast a diverse range of television programs.

III. Non-Discrimination Policy Statement

No individual will be denied ACAT membership or access to any ACAT equipment, facilities, or channel time on the basis of race, sex, sexual orientation, age, physical disability, religious or political belief, ability to pay, or due to the nature of the programming interest.

IV. Membership Requirements

Membership is available to any individual who lives, works, studies, or is affiliated with an organization based in Acton, Mass. Your member status gives you the opportunity to enroll in all training courses and submit your programs for local cablecast.

To become a member of ACAT, an individual, family, or organization / business must:

1. Provide proof of residency or affiliation with a school, organization or business based within Acton.
2. Sign a contract that you will follow the ACAT Policies & Procedures contained herein. If under 18 years of age, a parent or legal guardian must also sign the contract.

There are currently no fees or dues required for membership in ACAT, Inc. Members are asked to consider making a voluntary tax-deductible donation in order to help ACAT to succeed. Board members and employees are encouraged to raise and make tax-deductible donations to the 501(c)(3) corporation.

Relationship Between ACAT and Members:

ACAT is a private non-profit corporation. Members and producers are not agents or employees of ACAT. They are considered to be independent producers and create

programming for themselves or the organization they represent. At no time may any individual or organization identify themselves as an employee or agent of ACAT or any of the funding jurisdictions unless hired by ACAT or the jurisdictions to perform a service.

ACAT exercises no control, beyond these policies, over production activities by members except when trained members have been recruited by ACAT to crew productions that are specifically coordinated by ACAT. Members must not identify their production efforts as being "for ACAT". Rather, members should indicate that their programs "will be seen on ACAT".

Privileges:

ACAT members have the following privileges:

1. Submit non-commercial programming for cablecast (see Section VI, Programming).
2. Become certified to operate various equipment and facilities at ACAT (see Section V, Requirements).
3. Once certified, members may check out production equipment, reserve studio time and book time on the edit stations.
4. Receive ACAT publications.
5. Take an active role in access television.
6. All other privileges as provided in the ACAT Bylaws.

V. Use of Equipment / Facilities

Requirements:

To use ACAT equipment and / or facilities, a member must:

1. Provide proof of current membership.
2. Be certified to operate the specific equipment (see Training / Certification below).
3. Use the equipment / facilities exclusively for the creation of non-commercial programming for cablecast on the access channels.
4. Sign the appropriate Equipment Check-Out/In form for each usage, taking full responsibility for the care of the equipment being used, and the actions of crew and/or guests.

Training / Certification:

ACAT will provide training for member equipment certification on an on-going basis.

Once certified in an area of production, members may reserve and use those respective ACAT resources that apply (see Availability / Usage below).

Enrollment in courses and workshops is on a first-come-first-served basis. To register for an ACAT course / workshop, an advance deposit may be required. Training is offered to familiarize members with production concepts and resources available at ACAT, and to ensure proper technique and care are used when handling ACAT equipment.

Individual instruction may be set up by appointment with staff or authorized volunteers.

Members with previous video production skills may, at the discretion of ACAT staff, bypass certain ACAT training and become certified.

Producers who have not used a piece of equipment or resource for two (2) years or more will need to be recertified before a reservation can be made. Producers may test out of training per the discretion of the ACAT Staff. Proof of competency in any subject may be required to test out.

Availability / Usage

1. Reservations:

All reservations are dependent upon staff's approval of a Program Proposal, to be submitted by the program's producer. No producer may have more than three productions in progress at any one time unless authorized by ACAT staff.

Equipment / Facilities will be available to all certified members on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservation requests should be made at least 48 hours in advance, and longer if possible, especially for equipment that may be in high demand.

Portable equipment may be reserved for 24 hours at a time during the week, 72 hours over the weekend. For weekend use, we ask that equipment be picked up on Friday and returned on Monday. Portable equipment reservations may be extended if another member has not reserved the additional time requested.

Reservation extensions will be granted no sooner than three (3) days prior to the reservation date. Portable equipment reservations will be taken up to two (2) months in advance. Reservations may not be made back-to-back. There must be at least 24 hours between scheduled reservations for an individual or project. All other requests will be honored only at the discretion of ACAT staff.

All equipment and / or facility reservations must be made with ACAT staff by the certified member who will be using it and will be responsible for it. ACAT reserves the right to limit the amount of equipment and / or time which any one individual or group may reserve. Unauthorized or improper handling of ACAT equipment may result in a violation. Only certified members are allowed to operate ACAT equipment.

Equipment MUST be returned to ACAT and checked in before being issued to another person.

Members must give at least 24-hours notice when canceling any reservation at ACAT. If a certified member is more than 30 minutes late for pick-up without notification and approval, the reservation may be canceled.

2. Equipment Check-Out / In:

Equipment must be picked up at, and returned to, ACAT by the certified member who reserved it unless alternative arrangements have been approved, in advance, by ACAT staff. An Equipment Check-Out / In form must be filled out and signed prior to taking the equipment. If the ACAT member is under 18 years of age, a parent, legal guardian, or faculty member must also sign the Equipment Check-Out / In form.

Check-out / in of equipment is to be scheduled with ACAT staff. Please observe ACAT's posted hours and prescheduled reservation times for check-out and check-in of equipment.

ACAT will make every reasonable effort to ensure equipment is in proper working order, but can make no guarantee as to the operating quality of equipment. It is suggested that the certified member set up and test the equipment before leaving the

facility.

Use of ACAT equipment outside the Town of Acton requires prior staff approval.

Equipment must be returned by the time indicated on the Check-Out / In form. When returning equipment, the certified member is responsible for having the equipment officially checked in by ACAT staff. At this time, any damage to equipment or operating irregularities must be reported to the ACAT staff.

Producers are responsible for returning all equipment in working order and are responsible for payment of any repairs or replacements needed.

3. Facility / Studio Use:

Crew position assignments are the responsibility of the producer. ACAT staff may assist producers in assembling crews from among trained and qualified members, but it is ultimately the responsibility of the producer to ensure the eligibility of all crew used.

Producers must arrange an adequate number of crew members and should schedule their production crews to be at the studio at least one hour before and after a shoot to ensure adequate setup and break down time. ACAT staff are only available on a limited basis to serve as crew on member productions and are never available for break down.

Producers are responsible for the actions of guests, assistants, crew, children, etc., in the facilities. It is highly recommended that producers require all talent appearing in their program to complete a Performance / Visual Arts Release Form, to keep for their records.

ACAT office equipment and supplies may not be used for props. Due to the limited space available, props and set pieces cannot be stored at ACAT. Members must begin striking their set at least a ½ hour before closing time and completely clean up after themselves. No animals, except for trained guide dogs and other service animals, are allowed in the facility without the approval of ACAT staff. Eating and drinking is allowed in designated areas only. Smoking is not allowed in the premises occupied by ACAT or anywhere on the ABRHS campus. Access to the ABRHS campus, other than the ACAT studio, requires permission by the ABRHS Principal or designee.

4. Editing

Only current members certified to use the editing equipment may reserve edit time.

Certified members may reserve a maximum of 4 hours per reservation. The amount of editing reservations, in terms of hours, that an individual may hold during a week may be limited based on demand. Edit reservations will be taken up to 2 months in advance.

Editing MUST be completed no later than 7:45PM Tuesday thru Thursday and no later than 4:45 PM on Monday and Friday. ACAT encourages all members to purchase their own hard drives for editing. In order to provide enough storage for members working on projects, the following procedures apply regarding the storage of projects on all ACAT hard-drives.

a) In order to use any ACAT computers, members must be certified in their use by ACAT Staff.

- b) Producers may store one project per person on ACAT hard drives.
- c) All projects must be saved on an external hard-drive. Anything saved on the internal hard-drive of any of the computers will be immediately deleted unless approved by a staff member.
- d) A project may remain in an ACAT hard-drive (external) for no more than three (3) months. The three-month time period begins on the first day / time of reservation of editing for that particular project.
- e) If additional time is needed, a producer may request an extension in writing, to the ACAT Staff. The extension will not exceed 1 month unless there are extenuating circumstances.
- f) Extenuating circumstances will be considered providing the producer contacts ACAT Staff in writing prior to the end of the 1-month extension.
- g) If the project is not completed within the specified time, ACAT Staff is authorized to remove the project and all associated clips.
- h) Producers are encouraged to purchase and use their own hard-drives. A list of recommended drives, purchase locations and approximate cost are available from ACAT Staff.

Should a producer purchase his/her own hard-drive, an appointment with ACAT Staff must be made for usage instruction prior to first use.

5. Videotape / Copies

ACAT provides videotape stock for the production of programming for ACAT for a minimal fee. A DVD copy of the final program is available to all producers free of charge upon completion of the project. ACAT will provide one DVD to the producer for this purpose. Otherwise, when possible, staff will make a copy on an ACAT DVD for a \$15 donation to the Corporation.

VI. Programming

Community Bulletin Board

The Community Bulletin Board (CBB) is a service maintained by ACAT for publicizing non-commercial, non-partisan notices, activities, and events of interest and / or benefit to residents of Acton. The Community Bulletin Board Request form is available on our website, www.actontv.org. It is helpful to submit material for CCB at least 2 weeks in advance of the event or activity.

Requests must be submitted through the website.

Channel Time

You may request to cablecast an independently produced program on the access channels. All programs submitted for cablecast shall be accompanied by a completed Request for Cablecast form that contains a full disclosure of the program's contents. Any presenter / producer wishing to have a program cablecast must submit a completed program and a Request for Cablecast form at least two weeks in advance; this does not apply to live productions. Presenters / producers must submit three new consecutive programs before they receive a regular time slot in the program schedule. In order to maintain a regular time slot, a presenter / producer must submit a new Request for Cablecast form every thirteen

weeks and commit to presenting / producing the set number of programs as determined by the presenter / producer on the Request for Cablecast form. Failure to submit a completed Request for Cablecast form and /or present /produce the requested programming as agreed upon by the presenter /producer, may result in loss of regular time slot. Frequency of new programming submitted by presenters / producers determines frequency of cablecasts on the access channels.

The following considerations will determine the scheduling of channel time:

- Where the program is / was produced.
- Timeliness of program.
- Regularity of programs.
- Repeat, live or first run program.
- Date of receipt of Request for Cablecast form.
- Availability of channel time.

ACAT staff schedules channel time. ACAT will try to accommodate all reasonable requests. A single program to be aired more than once a week (Monday to Sunday) will generally not be scheduled at the same time on consecutive days. Generally, a single program will not be shown more than once daily or seven times in a week, but this policy is flexible and dependent upon the total volume of available content. It is the responsibility of the presenter / producer to alert staff of any questionable content in the requested program, particularly if it may not be appropriate for younger viewers.

ACAT reserves the right to require an appropriate disclaimer on any program.

ACAT reserves the right to run potentially offensive programming after 10:00 PM and before 6:00 AM. Failure to notify ACAT of potentially offensive material prior to a program or episode airing may result in loss of privileges.

If ACAT makes a good-faith determination that the subject material in a program may offend some viewer and/or may not be appropriate for children, ACAT may require that the following announcement be added to the beginning of the program: "The following program may contain sensitive material. Viewer discretion is advised" and/or "The views expressed on this program are those of the producer(s),] and do not reflect the views of ACAT, the Town of Acton, or the cable operator. ACAT would like to hear your opinion. Contact us at 978-263-6033 or visit us on the web at www.actontv.org."

Preparation Requirements

Before cablecast, all DVDs must be clearly labeled with the following:

1. Producer and / or presenter's name.
2. Title of program(s).
3. Exact running time (hours, minutes, seconds).

The beginning of all programs to be cablecast should, when applicable, begin with ten (10) seconds of black only. ACAT requests that each program finish leaving at least 1 minute and 30 seconds to the next half hour, i.e., a half hour show runs for 28 minutes, 30 seconds (or less) not 30 minutes; an hour program would be no longer than 58:30.

The end of all programs to be cablecast should, when applicable, have the following:

1. Appropriate credits.
2. Producer and / or presenter's name.
3. "Produced with facilities provided by ACAT, Inc."

Technical Requirements

1. ACAT requests that all programs be submitted on high quality DVD or Mini DV.
2. Programs submitted as mpeg2 files must meet the standards of the ACAT playback server. (Specifications available upon request)
3. All tapes must be recorded in Standard Play Mode (SP).
4. Video and audio quality of all programs to be cablecast must be consistent and of sufficient level to permit adequate reproduction by transmission equipment.

ACAT staff reserves the right to withhold the cablecast of any program which does not meet preparation or technical requirements.

Ownership

The producer retains the copyright for his/her program content produced using ACAT equipment. ACAT retains the right of unlimited cablecasts and videocasts over the Internet.

No individual may receive any financial benefit / remuneration from programs produced using ACAT equipment, as required by ACAT's 501(c)(3) non-profit status and consistent with Town of Acton practices, unless through an awarded grant (see Section VIII, Underwriting and Grants).

Prohibitions and Clearances

Users of ACAT and program producers are fully responsible for the content of their program material. The following material is forbidden for presentation on the Public, Educational, and Governmental Access Channels:

1. Obscene and indecent material. This type of programming is not permitted on cable television by federal law.
2. Any material which constitutes libel, slander, invasion of privacy or publicity rights, or which might violate any other local, state, or federal law.
3. Programs containing material that violates copyright or trademarks. Use of such material generally requires obtaining appropriate rights from music licensing organizations, publishers, representatives, copyright holders, broadcast stations networks and any other persons as may be necessary for cablecast. Access users may be asked to furnish written authorization for use of such materials.
4. Program material that creates the immediate danger of damage to property or injury to persons; the substantial obstruction of law enforcement or functions or services; the deprivation of any person by threat, threat of force or physical action through the exercise of a legal right, or the disturbance of any person in the enjoyment of a legal right; or the creation of public nuisance.
5. The direct or indirect presentation of lotteries or lottery information, except for announcements pertaining to state-sponsored lotteries.

Users are responsible for obtaining, in writing, release forms, minor permission forms, and all

necessary approvals, clearances, licenses, etc. for the use of any program material that the user submits for cablecast. These may include, but are not limited to: broadcast stations, networks, music licensing organizations, performer's representatives, and any and all other persons as may be necessary for authorization to cablecast program material.

A responsible adult shall verify, in writing, that authorization has been obtained concerning use of any equipment by a minor; and / or appearance of any minor; and / or that all necessary approvals / licenses have been obtained, for a program to be cablecast. Such adults shall be responsible for liability resulting from the use of equipment by, or any appearance of, a minor.

Sponsorship Credits

Businesses are encouraged to sponsor programs of interest to citizens in the town, but these programs must be informational in nature and not take the form of an infomercial for a product or service sold by the business. For example, a cooking show by a kitchen supplies store or a home improvement show by a hardware store would be allowed, but a show on how to use a specific branded product would not.

Commercial advertising is prohibited from the access channels. Acknowledgment of underwriting by businesses, organizations, or grantors providing monetary or other assistance to the making of a program may be included in the program credits. The acknowledgment should not exceed ten seconds and may include the underwriter's name, business name, address, phone, website/email address, and a brief value neutral statement describing the underwriter's contribution or product.

Political Programming

ACAT will make production and cablecasting facilities available as an open forum, upon request, and encourages political discussion of issues and candidates. ACAT staff will not provide any direct technical support for any political programming. A disclaimer must be inserted at the beginning and end of each political program stating:

"The following program may contain sensitive material. Viewer discretion is advised" and/or "The views expressed on this program are those of the producer(s),] and do not reflect the views of ACAT ,Inc., the Town of Acton, or the cable operator."

1. There are three types of political programming:
 - a) Debate programs, which must be non-partisan. All candidates are invited and all referendum viewpoints may be expressed.
 - b) Advocacy programs, which may partisan. All candidates may or may not be invited and all political or viewpoints may or may not be expressed.
 - c) Election coverage, which must observe news reporting standards and give adequate time to all major candidates and issues.
2. An ACAT member must follow the ACAT Policies & Procedures to use ACAT facilities to present / produce political programming.
3. All programs submitted for cablecast shall be accompanied by a completed Request for Cablecast form.
4. Political programming will cease 48 hours prior to Election Day and will not resume until the polls have officially closed. It is the responsibility of the presenter / producer

to alert staff of any political program content relevant to the upcoming election.

5. The Community Bulletin Board may not be used for political advocacy.

VII. Violations

In order for the ACAT Policies & Procedures to be effective and to keep operations running smoothly, the following penalty system has been instituted. There are two types of violations that may result in restrictions on a member. The ACAT Executive Director and / or staff are authorized to issue violation notices. Violation notices may be issued verbally or in writing.

Minor Violations

Minor violations may result in a verbal or written warning, or membership suspension up to 90 days. These may include, but are not limited to:

1. Failure to cancel a reservation in accordance with ACAT Policies & Procedures.
2. Late pick up or return of equipment without notification and approval.
3. Failure to clean up after using facilities.
4. Eating, drinking, or smoking in non-designated areas.
5. Handling off-limit equipment or being in off-limit areas.
6. Failure to comply with ACAT Policies & Procedures.

Major Violations

Major violations may result in a minimum 90-day suspension of membership. These may include, but are not limited to:

1. Abusive language and / or actions.
2. Commercial, profit-making, or personal use of ACAT facilities and / or equipment.
3. Theft or abuse of equipment, including attempted repair, rewiring, etc.
4. Failure to pay for damage to equipment if a bill has been issued for repair or replacement.
5. Falsifying forms.
6. Misrepresentation to others of member's status or affiliation with ACAT.
7. Use of ACAT equipment without staff permission.
8. Being under the influence of drugs (including alcohol) or bringing such substances into ACAT facilities.
9. Bringing weapons on the premises occupied by ACAT. Historic weapons for special programs require specific authorization and may require notification to the Acton Chief of Police.
10. Failure to comply with ACAT Policies & Procedures.

The staff of ACAT exclusively reserves the right to enforce the ACAT Policies & Procedures. The ACAT Board of Directors and staff both reserve the right to permanently revoke the right of membership of any individual, family, or organization / business whose behavior violates the Policies & Procedures of ACAT.

Grievance Procedure

Members are encouraged to resolve difficulties on the staff level. If a difficulty cannot be resolved at the staff level, a member may request an appeal. To file a formal complaint, the following steps are required:

1. The access user is required to submit any grievance, typewritten and signed, to the ACAT Executive Director within seven working days from the date of the incident.
If the Executive Director is an affected party, the grievance request will be submitted immediately to a Grievance Committee and bypass step two.
2. The ACAT Executive Director will review the grievance and render a decision in a timely fashion.
3. Should the decision of the ACAT Executive Director not satisfy the access user, the user may file a written request for review by a Grievance Committee. The decision made by the Grievance Committee shall be final.

A Grievance Committee will be made up of one ACAT staff member (not involved with the incident), one ACAT board member (not involved with the incident), two ACAT access users (members not involved with the incident), and the President of the ACAT Board of Directors. The ACAT President shall choose the staff member, board member, and two access users.

If the ACAT President is involved with the incident, the following order of command will be followed:

1. ACAT Secretary.
2. ACAT Treasurer.
3. Most senior ACAT Board member in alphabetical order.

VIII. Underwriting and Grants

Access users are encouraged to apply for and receive underwriting or grants to aid in the development and production of programs. Donations can be in the form of goods, services, and contributions. When monetary consideration is received, the producer is encouraged to make a donation to ACAT unless it violates the terms of the grant. Staff must be informed, in advance, about any such underwriting. To give proper credit for underwriting and grants, see Section VI, Programming: Sponsorship Credits.

IX. Bicycled Programs

This refers to programs that are not produced in Acton, rather, it is pre-produced and pre-recorded material that is downloaded, shipped or brought to ACAT.

Bicycled Programs must be strictly noncommercial in nature, and technical and production quality must be high. Locally produced programs will receive priority scheduling.

1. All programs must have an open and closing credits listing the title, producer and producer contact information.
2. A public, non-profit organization, or governmental agency can bicycle programs with only one representative as the sponsor. The non-profit organization does not have to be based in town but the representative must be able to furnish proof of its non-profit status and that it does serve that town, i.e. One representative must be a resident of the town who will sign an Access User Agreement (Membership Form).

X. Responsibility & Indemnification

Users of the access channels shall indemnify ACAT, its Board of Directors, and its employees, against any and all liabilities arising out of use of facilities and/or resources, or out of breach of the ACAT Agreement with Policies and Regulations.

XI. Definition of Terms

Access Channels – Channels set aside by the cable operator for use by the public, educational institutions, municipal government, or for lease on a nondiscriminatory basis.

Access Coordinator – As used in this document, the term refers to an ACAT employee who trains and provides supervision in the use of ACAT studio and equipment.

Access User – Any qualified individual who is a resident, or employee, (or member), of a non-profit organization, or of a municipal agency that serves the town. He must qualify successfully by completing training and sign the Access User Agreement. Then he may schedule equipment, facilities and/or channel time in his own name. (Such an individual may or may not be a producer. See that entry for more information).

Advertising – Calling public attention to one's product, service, need, etc. for profit-making purposes.

Solicitation of money or support for goods, political candidates, or political opinions through bulletin board text pages, 30/:60 second full motion video spots or infomercials. ACAT does not accept commercial or political full motion video advertising on access channels. Except where prohibited by the local franchise agreement, ACAT will accept community bulletin board text advertising.

Bicycled Program – A show that is not produced in town, rather, it is pre-produced and pre-recorded material this is shipped or brought to operators for ACAT use.

Business Access User – Any employee of a business member located the town who has scheduled equipment, facilities, or channel time in the name of the organization. An Business Access User is subject to the same weekly facility and channel limitations as individual Access Users, whether one or several individuals book time in the name of the business. If a member of any such organization is not an inhabitant of the town, he may only produce programming that is sponsored by the organization to which he belongs. Business users must follow the guidelines under Section V, Programming: Sponsorship Credits.

Cable Television System – A broadband communications system, capable of delivering programming and information services from a set of centralized antennas, by coaxial cable, fiber optic technology, or other similar methods, to a community.

Other integration includes satellite and microwave communications.

Candidate – Legally qualified for office. This can be any person who has publicly announced candidacy by formal declaration and meets the legal qualifications for office.

CG (Character Generator) – Device that electronically displays letters and numbers on the television screen.

Channel Capacity – Maximum number of channels that a cable system can carry simultaneously.

Copyright – The exclusive right to the material contained in a program. The right covers reproduction, publishing, and broadcasting of information.

Crew – Access Users working with the producer and/or Access User to assist in the production of programming. ACAT understands it may be difficult for resident producers to find adequate crew from within town. Crewmembers that are non-residents must fulfill all the requirements of ACAT's programming operating Regulations, including signing the Access User Agreement, but excluding the residency requirement, under conditions set forth and approved by ACAT. It is expected that non-resident crewmembers will be an exception and will constitute a very small minority. Non-residents involved in any programs shall be limited to the production crew only. Only residents of communities served by ACAT may be producers.

Dedicated Channel – Any channel reserved for a particular use.

Downstream – The flow of signals from the cable system head end through the distribution network to the subscriber.

Educational Access Programming – Programming produced by volunteers, students, faculty, or employees of educational institutions which is in support of the mission of an educational institution. It includes both academic and extra-curricular programming. In Acton, ACAT operates an Educational Access Channel which provides Educational Access Programming for the Superintendent of the Acton Public Schools and the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools. Programming with educational content not in direct support of an academic institution is categorized as Public Access Programming.

Federal Communications Commission (FCC) – The U.S. Governmental agency established in 1934 to regulate electronic communications. The FCC succeeded the Federal Radio Commission.

First Time Access User – An individual or non-profit organization that has not used either the equipment, facilities, or channel time during the preceding twelve months.

Franchise – Contractual agreement between a cable operator and a governmental body that defines the rights and responsibilities of each in the construction and operation of a cable system within a specified geographical area.

Government Access Programming – Programming produced either by volunteers or by government employees allowing federal, state, and local officials to disseminate information to their constituents.

Hardware – Equipment involved in the production, storage, distribution, or reception of electronic signals. (Examples are head end, coaxial cable network, amplifiers, television receivers, and production equipment like cameras and videotape recorders.)

Head end – Electronic control center where signals are taken from a master feed and transmitted over cable to subscribers.

Independent – Individually owned and operated cable television system; not affiliated with an MSO.

Interconnect – Connection of two or more cable systems by microwave, fiber, coaxial cable, or satellite, so that programming or advertising may be exchanged, shared, or simultaneously viewed.

Issuing Authority – Governmental body responsible for specifying the terms of a franchise, awarding the franchise, and regulating its operation. While the franchising authority is usually a local city or county body, some areas are regulated exclusively on the state level.

Leased Access – Any channels made available by the cable operator for a fee.

Libel – A written or oral statement that conveys unjust characterization.

Local Origination – When a Cable Operator is responsible for access programming or has additional channels it controls, this refers to cable programming entirely planned and produced by the cable operator's staff. It also refers to a pre-produced program that is cablecast on a channel controlled by the cable operator. When an independent Access Corporation, such as ACAT, is responsible for access, the term is avoided for any programming which originates from the access facility. The preferred term for such programming is “Access Programming” (see Public, Educational, or Governmental Access Channels).

Local Signals – Over-the-air broadcast signals available within the Grade B contour of a community; usually carried on a cable system’s basic tier of programming.

MSO (Multiple System Operator) – Company that owns and operates more than one cable television system.

Narrowcasting – Delivery of programming that addresses a specific need or highly focused audience.

Obscene Material – Material that fits the legal definition of obscene or indecent material under local and state laws.

Ordinance – Enabling legislation passed by a local government to establish Policies for the franchising process.

Organizational Access User – Any member of an exempt organization as defined by the IRS that serves the town, or employee of a municipal agency that serves the town, that has scheduled equipment, facilities, or channel time in the name of the organization. An Organizational Access User is subject to the same weekly facility and channel limitations as individual Access Users, whether one or several individuals book time in the name of the organization. If a member of any such organization is not an inhabitant of the town, he may only produce programming that is sponsored by the organization to which he belongs.

PEG – Refers to “public, educational, and governmental” access channels; i.e. PEG channel(s).

Penetration – Ratio of the number of cable subscribers, or pay-TV subscribers, to the total number of households passed by the system.

Producer – An ACAT member or organizational user that is responsible for the production of a PEG Access cable program. The producer is ACAT’s main contact for a program and must be a resident of the town served by the facility. While a program may involve many Access Users working on the same production, the producer agrees to be personally and financially responsible for all liabilities arising from safety and other violations of ACAT’s PEG access programming operating Regulations by themselves or any members of the production crew. (In the case of a minor, his parent or guardian assumes all responsibility for program content and other liability outlined in ACAT’s PEG access programming operating Regulations and Access User Agreement).

Programming – The news, entertainment, information resources, and educational presentations carried on a cable system or broadcast by a radio or television station. Such programming can originate at the local, PEG Access, regional or national level.

Public Access Channel – A channel on which programs are transmitted on a first-come, first-

served, nondiscriminatory basis. A public access channel is specifically for noncommercial public access programming by residents or local non-profit organizations.

Public Access Programming – Programming produced by volunteers using ACAT facilities and equipment. When an access user brings in a prerecorded tape or DVD for cablecast, it is also considered public access. In both these instances, ACAT, by federal law, may not edit or control content. This programming must be noncommercial.

Slander – A false oral statement that is meant to defame a person's character.

Staff – Those employed by ACAT.

Subscriber – Customer paying a monthly fee to cable system operators for the capability of receiving diverse programs and services.

Talent – A person appearing as a program host, performer, or guest who does not participate in the technical aspect of the program's production. A host must be an ACAT member. Regular performers must be ACAT members. Guests need not be residents of Acton or members. Guests who reside in town are encouraged but not required to be members.

Training – Evidence of proper training is the ability to complete a task without staff assistance. The requirements for completing training are defined by the Access Coordinator as applicable to the program under production.

Volunteer – ACAT members who volunteer their services for assisting in the production of programming.

This signed agreement is required to be completed by all members. Permission of ACAT staff is required for various levels of studio use and borrowing privileges.

I have read, am familiar with, and agree to abide by the Policies and Procedures of ACAT, Inc.

1. I understand that the following material is forbidden for presentation on the Public, Educational, and Governmental Access Channels:
 - a. Any obscene and / or other programming prohibited by applicable law(s).
 - b. Any lottery information.
 - c. Any material designed to promote the sale of commercial products or services.
 - d. Any invasion of privacy.
 - e. Any violation of trademark, copyright, or publicity rights prohibited by applicable law(s).
 - f. Any illegal or otherwise prohibited activity.
2. I will be thoroughly familiar with the nature of all program material that I submit for cablecast and take full responsibility for its content.
3. I understand that the material I record will be used for programming on the Public, Educational, or Governmental Access Channels.
4. I agree to obtain, in writing, all necessary clearances and permissions from any and all organizations, individuals, and groups as may be needed to record and / or cablecast material on the Public, Educational, and Governmental Access Channels.
5. I agree to reimburse ACAT, Inc., for any cost to repair or replace equipment which I damage or return damaged, except for normal wear and tear.
6. I understand I am responsible and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Town of Acton, the cable provider(s), ACAT, Inc., its directors and employees, and their successors, from any liability, loss, claim, cost, or damage of any nature whatsoever which may arise by reason of any claim that any material cablecast or disseminated by me infringes and / or violates any rights of any person(s) or organization(s).

Signature _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Email: _____

If the member is under 18 years of age, please enter a parent or guardian's email address:

(If the email address of a parent or guardian is provided, this form will be sent for their signature.)

Parent / Guardian: _____ Signature: _____

Acknowledgment: ACAT, Inc., thanks CCTV, Inc., whose Policies and Procedures served as a primary source in our initial development of these Policies and Procedures.