Policies & Regulations

Forms:
Community Bulletin Board Request *(Form A)*
Agreement with Policies & Regulations *(Form B)*
Program Proposal *(Form C)*
Equipment Check-Out / In *(Form D)*
Equipment Repair *(Form E)*
Talent Release *(Form F)*
Content Distribution Release *(Form G)*
Facility & Equipment Rental Policies *(Form H)*

I. Introduction

Welcome to Dracut Access Television, Inc. (DATV). DATV is a non-profit, non-commercial access television facility whose purpose is exclusively charitable, scientific and educational within the meaning of Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended from time to time.
This Manual contains DATV's policies and regulations, established to ensure fair and equal access to production resources, training, and time on the access channels Public (8), Educational (22), and Governmental (6). The facilities are provided exclusively for the production and presentation of non-commercial television programming of interest and / or benefit to the residents of Dracut. The DATV Community Bulletin Board is available to publicize non-commercial activities and events.
Residents, employees, and organizations affiliated within the town of Dracut are encouraged to use these resources.

II. Mission Statement

To encourage and enable open extensive communication through DATV while promoting diversity and responsibility.

III. DATV, Inc. Membership

Requirements / Fee Schedule

Membership is available to any individual who lives, works, or is affiliated with an organization based in Dracut. To become a member of DATV, an individual, family, or organization / business must:

1. Provide proof of Dracut residency or affiliation with an organization or business based in Dracut. (See By-Laws for voting criteria) and
2. Pay the current membership fee. There are three types of membership: individual, family, and organization / business.
    a)Individual memberships require a $10.00 per year fee.
    b)Family memberships require a $20.00 per year fee to grant members of the same household membership status.
    c)Organization / business memberships require a $30.00 fee and$10.00 per member (employee) per year.
    d)In lieu of membership fee, an individual may volunteer 8 hours of service as approved by the DATV ED or Board of Directors and
3. Sign a contract (see form B: Agreement with Policies & Regulations) to follow the DATV Policies & Regulations contained herein. If under 18 years of age, a parent or legal guardian must also sign the contract.

Privileges:

All DATV members shall have voting rights at the Annual Meeting (See By-Laws for voting criteria) and may:

1. Submit non-commercial programming for distribution (see Section V, Programming).
2. Become certified to operate various equipment and facilities at DATV (see Section IV, Requirements).
3. Receive DATV publications.
4. Be elected to serve on the DATV Board of Directors, if a Dracut resident and 18 years of age or older.
5. Be appointed to serve on DATV Committees.
6. Take an active role in access television.

IV. Equipment / Facilities

Requirements:

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

1. Provide proof of current membership.
2. Be certified to operate the specific equipment (see Section TV, Training / Certification).
3. Use the equipment / facilities exclusively for the creation of non-commercial programming for distribution.
4. Sign the appropriate Check-Out/In form (Form D) or sign-in sheet for each usage, taking full responsibility for the care of the equipment being used, and the actions of crew and/or guests (Form H).
5. Training/Certification

DATV 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 DATV resources that apply (see Section IV, Availability / Usage).

Signing-up for courses and workshops is on a first-come-first-served basis. To register for a DATV course / workshop, an advance deposit may be required. The deposit will be refunded upon successful completion of the course / workshop.

Training is offered to familiarize members with production concepts and resources available at DATV, and to ensure proper technique and care are used when handling DATV equipment. Individual instruction may be set up by appointment with staff.

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

Availability / Usage

1. **Reservations**:

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

Equipment / Facilities will be available to all certified members on a first-come, first-served basis. Reservations should be made at least 24 hours in advance, with the exception of the mobile production van, which requires a minimum 4-week notice. All other requests will be honored only at the discretion of DATV

staff.

Reservations of equipment and / or facilities should be made with the DATV staff by the certified member who will be using it and will be responsible for it DATV staff reserves the right to limit the amount of equipment and / or time which any one individual or group may reserve.

2. **Unauthorized or improper handling** of DATV equipment may result in a violation.

Members must give a 24-hour notice when canceling any reserved use of DATV equipment or facilities. If a certified member is more than 30 minutes late without notification and approval, the reservation may be cancelled.

3. **Equipment Check-Out / In:**

Equipment must be picked up at and returned to DATV by the certified member who reserved it unless alternative arrangements have been approved in advance by DATV staff. The member's identification card must be presented upon request. Staff will fill out the Equipment Check-Out / In form, which the certified member signs. If the DATV member is under 18 years of age, a parent or legal guardian must also sign the Check-Out / In form.

Time for check-out / in of equipment is to be scheduled with DATV staff. Please observe DATV's posted hours and scheduled time for check-out and check-in of equipment.

DATV will make every reasonable effort to ensure equipment is in 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 DATV equipment outside the town of Dracut 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 DATV staff. At this time, any damage to equipment or operating irregularities must be reported on an Equipment Repair form (see form E).

4. **Facility / Studio Use:**

Each use of DATV facilities (i.e. studio, edit bays, etc.) must be logged by the certified equipment user, or the producer in charge, on the respective sign-in sheet.

Crew position assignments are the responsibility of the producer. DATV staff may assist producers to assembling crews from among trained and qualified members. It is ultimately the responsibility of the producer to ensure the eligibility of all crew used. DATV staff is not available to serve as crew on member productions.

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 (see form F), to keep for their records.

DATV office equipment and supplies may not be used for props. Upon staff approval, members may store props on the premises, at their own risk.

Members must clean up after themselves. Members must begin striking their set 1/2 hour before closing time. No animals, except for trained guide / Seeing Eye / hearing ear, are allowed in the facility without the approval of DATV staff. Eating and drinking is allowed in designated areas only. Smoking is not

allowed in the premises occupied by DATV.

5. **Videotape / DVDs / Copies**

DATV does provide DVDs and videotape stock for the production of programming for DATV. DVDs and tapes that are signed out to members must be returned like any other piece of equipment. There is no guarantee as to the quality of the DVD / tape stock. Any lost or damaged DVD / tape must be replaced or DATV must be reimbursed.

Any producer who wishes to have a copy of the master DVD / tape of his / her program may make one copy with DATV equipment at any time that does not interfere with production. DATV will provide one DVD / VHS tape to the producer for this purpose. Anyone who wants a copy of a program is encouraged to tape it off cable. Requests to DATV staff to repeat a program for this purpose will be honored whenever possible. Otherwise, when possible, staff will make a copy on a DATV VHS tape for a $15.00 donation or on a DATV DVD for a $10.00 donation to the Corporation.

V. Programming and Community Bulletin Board

The Community Bulletin Board (CBB) is a service maintained by DATV for publicizing non-commercial, non-partisan notices, activities, and events of interest and / or benefit to residents of Dracut. The Community Bulletin Board Request forms (see form A) are available to individuals and organizations through DATV

Channel Time

Programs may be requested to be distributed on the PEG access channels. All programs submitted for distribution shall be accompanied by a completed Content Distribution Release form (see form G), full disclosure of contents, and an opportunity to screen.

Any presenter / producer wishing to have a program distributed must submit a completed (except for live productions) and a Content Distribution Release form at least two weeks in advance. 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 Content Distribution Release form every twelve months and commit to presenting / producing the set number of programs as determined by the presenter / producer on the Content Distribution Release form. Failure to submit a completed Content Distribution Release 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 distribution including cablecasts on the PEG 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 Content Distribution Release form.
Availability of channel time.

PEG channel time is scheduled by DATV staff. DATV will try to accommodate all reasonable requests. 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. DATV reserves the right to require an appropriate disclaimer on any program.

Programs should be no longer than 29 minutes in length for a 30-minute program nor longer than 59 minutes in length for a 60-minute program.

Preparation Requirements

Before distribution, all completed program files 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 end of all programs to be distributed should, when applicable, have the following:

1. Appropriate credits.
2. Producer and / or presenter's name.
3. "Produced with facilities provided by Dracut Access Television, Inc.".
4. 05 seconds of black.

Technical Requirements

1. All programs must be submitted as: .mp4, .mov, .mp3, or .wav file format.
2. Video and audio quality of all programs to be distributed must be consistent and of sufficient level to permit adequate reproduction by transmission equipment.
3. All individuals submitting programming to DATV on DVDs must comply with the following guidelines:

a) One program per DVD.
b) DVDs submitted with menus preceding or following actual program will not be accepted.
c) DVDs must be labeled with title of program and producer / presenter's name.
d) DVDs must be submitted in cases.
e) Programming submitted on DVDs must comply with DATV preparation requirements.
f) Only DVD-R, DVD+R, and DVD+RW formats will be accepted. DATV staff reserves the right to withhold the distribution of any program, which does not meet preparation or technical requirements.

Prohibitions and Clearances

Users of DATV and program producers are fully responsible for the content of their program material. The following material is forbidden for distribution on the PEG channel(s), VOD, or other platforms:

1. Any obscene and / or other programming prohibited by applicable law(s).
2. Any lottery information.
3. Any material designed to promote the sale of commercial products or services.
4. Any invasion of privacy.
5. Any violation of trademark, copyright, or publicity rights prohibited by applicable law(s).
6. Any illegal or otherwise prohibited activity.

Users are responsible for obtaining, in writing, release forms, minor permission forms, all necessary approvals, clearances, licenses, etc. for the use of any program material which the user submits for distribution. 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 distribute 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 distributed. Such adults shall be responsible for liability resulting from the use of equipment by, or any appearance of, a minor.

Ownership

The copyright for program content produced using DATV equipment is retained by the producer. DATV retains the master files of all programs produced using DATV equipment and retains the right of unlimited distribution.

No individual may receive any financial benefit / remuneration from programs produced using DATV equipment in accordance with DATV's 501 (c)(3) non-profit status, unless through an awarded grant (see Section VII, Underwriting and Grants).

Sponsorship Credits

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. Acknowledgment may include the underwriter's name, business name and a brief value neutral statement describing the underwriter's contribution or product. No addresses or telephone numbers may appear except for not-for-profit (non-profit) organizations.

(Details available in the "Underwriting Procedures and Guidelines Made Simple" form)

Political Programming

April 29, 2025

DATV makes available its production and content distribution facilities as an open forum and encourages political discussion of issues and candidates.

1. Political programming:
   a) **Debate** programs are non-partisan: All candidates are invited and all referendum viewpoints may be expressed.
   b) **Advocacy** programs are partisan: All candidates may or may not be invited and all referendum viewpoints may or may not be expressed. A program will be considered an Advocacy program if it includes any discussion of candidates in the content of the program.
   c) Election coverage.

2. A DATV member must follow the DATV Policies & Regulations to use DATV facilities to present / produce political programming.
3. All programs submitted for distribution shall be accompanied by a completed Content Distribution Release form (see form G).
4. The Community Bulletin Board may not be used for political advocacy.
5. Each political advocacy program will receive two playback timeslots per week.
6. Requirements for broadcast licensees and cable operators under the Communications Act and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules related to political broadcasting aimed at ensuring fair and reasonable access by political candidates are not applicable to PEG (public, educational and government) access channels. DATV is not bound by any equal-time requirements.

VI. Violations

November 12, 2021

In order for the DATV Policies & Regulations to be effective and to keep operations running smoothly, the following penalty system has been instituted. There are two types of violations which may result in restrictions on a member. The DATV Executive Director and / or staff are authorized to issue violations. Violations 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 DATV's Policies & Regulations.
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 DATV's Policies & Regulations.

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 DATV facilities and / or equipment.
3. Theft or abuse of equipment, including attempted repair, rewiring, etc.
4. Falsifying forms.
5. Misrepresentation to others of member's status or affiliation with DATV.
6. Use of DATV equipment without staff permission.
7. Being under the influence of drugs (including alcohol) or bringing such substances into DATV facilities.
8. Bringing weapons on the premises occupied by DATV.
9. Failure to comply with DATV's Policies & Regulations.

The staff of DATV exclusively reserves the right to enforce the DATV Policies & Regulations. The DATV 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 and Regulations of DATV.

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, to the DATV Executive Director or Board of Directors 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 DATV Executive Director will review the grievance and render a decision in a timely fashion.

3. Should the decision of the DATV 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 DATV staff member (not involved with the incident), one DATV board member (not involved with the incident), two DATV access users (not involved with the incident), and the President of the DATV Board of Directors. The DATV President shall choose the staff member, board member, and two access users. If the DATV President is involved with the incident, the following order of Command will be followed:

1. DATV Vice-President.
2. DATV Secretary.
3. DATV Treasurer.
4. Most senior DATV board member in alphabetical order.

VII. 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, but not required, to make a donation to DATV 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 V, Sponsorship Credits.

VIII. Responsibility

Users of the access channels shall indemnify DATV, 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 DATV Agreement with Policies and Regulations (see form B).

DRACUT ACCESS TELEVISION, INC.

Agreement with Policies and Regulations *(Form B)*

Dracut Access Television, Inc.
91 Mill Street, Suite 8
Dracut, MA 01826
978-957-5522

FOR PRODUCERS

I, _____HAVE READ, AND AM FAMILIAR WITH AND AGREE TO ABIDE BY DRACUT ACCESS TELEVISION, INC. POLICY AND REGULATIONS AS SET FORTH IN THIS DOCUMENT.

_____
MEMBERS SIGNATURE DATE

For PARENT or LEGAL GUARDIAN if Producer is under 18 years of age:

I, _____HAVE READ, AND AM FAMILIAR WITH THE DRACUT ACCESS TELEVISION, INC. POLICY AND REGULATIONS AS SET FORTH IN THIS DOCUMENT, AND AGREE TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY OF MY MINOR CHILD.

_____
PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN SIGNATURE DATE

FORM B