



**Metuchen Public  
Educational and  
Governmental (PEG)  
Television Station**

**Policies &  
Procedures**

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## Introduction

- MEtv is a local, non-profit television production facility owned and operated by the Borough of Metuchen. MEtv provides public, educational and governmental programming to the residents of the Borough of Metuchen. It provides diverse programming which informs, educates, and entertains. MEtv also provides a video bulletin board which airs notices from non-profit organizations.
- MEtv functions as a department under the government of the Borough of Metuchen (the Borough).
- MEtv and its associated facilities are managed by the Borough's Video Coordinator under the supervision of the Borough Administrator.
- Programs aired on MEtv shall not consist of advertising, promotion of a particular commercial interest, or be produced as a profit-making venture itself.
- All operational and content decisions are under the sole jurisdiction of the Borough of Metuchen, as per Federal Communications Commission FACT SHEET, Cable Television Information Bulletin, Aug. 1997 cited below:

*"Under the 1984 Cable Act, local franchising authorities may require that cable operators set aside channels for public, educational, or governmental (PEG) use. In addition, franchising authorities may require cable operators to provide services, facilities, and equipment for the use of these channels. Many cable systems include several PEG channels.*

*In general, cable operators are not permitted to control the content of programming on PEG channels. Cable operators may impose non-content-based requirements, such as minimum production standards, and may mandate equipment user training.*

*PEG channel capacity which is not in use for its designated purpose may, with the franchising authority's permission, be used by the cable operator to provide other services. Under certain conditions, a franchising authority may authorize the use of unused PEG channels to carry low power commercial television stations and local noncommercial educational television stations that are required by law.*

*Information relating to PEG channels may be obtained directly from the cable system or the local franchising authority.*

- FCC and other federal and state regulations regarding copyright, obscenity, and privacy shall be adhered to. The Borough may enact additional ordinances governing use and operations of MEtv and its facilities.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this manual is to establish guidelines for MEtv operations including, but not limited to:

- ◇ Taping events
- ◇ Developing, producing, scheduling and airing programs
- ◇ Regulating accessibility of MEtv equipment and related training
- ◇ Establish technical standards for broadcast

## **Station Operations**

- MEtv shall operate a video bulletin board providing:
  - ◇ The station's program schedule
  - ◇ Public notices
  - ◇ Emergency information
  - ◇ Information about borough events
  - ◇ A vehicle for non-profit community organizations to advertise meetings and other events
- MEtv shall air programs pertinent to the Metuchen community.
- The Video Coordinator shall establish a volunteer group (The MEtv Production Team) to assist in the taping and development of programs. Membership on the Production Team is open to those persons who express an interest and a willingness to participate regularly in the taping of MEtv programs.
- The Production Team members shall be trained on the operation of equipment used to produce programs as outlined in the *Taping of Events* section of this document.
- The Production Team may develop programs of interest to the residents of the Borough of Metuchen.
- Any tape (audio and/or video) created by a member of the Production Team while on an assignment scheduled by the Borough of Metuchen and/or its designated representative will be the property of the Borough of Metuchen and that the person responsible for the creation of the product will be acting in a "WORK FOR HIRE" capacity. This shall apply to any work done in the creation of a tape, regardless of the equipment used, to include all pictures, sound and related documentation used in the creation of a program. This will also apply to any pre- or post-production work done.
- All members of the Production Team under the age of 18 shall have a *MEtv Student Release Form, Exhibit F*, signed by a parent or guardian providing consent for them to participate in MEtv tapings.
- A letter of agreement between the Borough of Metuchen and each member of the *Production Team, MEtv Work for Hire Agreement, Exhibit G*, shall be filed with the Video Coordinator.

## **Taping of Events**

- Borough Council meetings shall take top priority for taping.

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- Every effort shall be made to tape all Borough sponsored events. However, some Borough events may not be taped as a result of scheduling conflicts, lack of equipment, weather conditions, and/or the lack of personnel.
- Requests for taping other events pertinent to the Metuchen community should be sent to **MEtv, 500 Main Street., Metuchen, NJ 08840**. These requests should be submitted at least three months in advance of the event and will be reviewed at the monthly Production Team meeting. While every effort will be made to accommodate all requests, events shall only be considered:
  - ◇ If the required MEtv Production Team members volunteer to tape these events
  - ◇ If the necessary equipment is available
  - ◇ With the reasoned approval of the Video Coordinator
- Requests for taping events with less than three months notice will be considered using the Video Coordinator's best professional judgment.
- A producer from the Production Team or the Video Coordinator will respond to the request originator once an event has been discussed at a Production Team meeting and a decision is made with regard to the taping.
- When a program being taped contains a performer who is being paid for services, *MEtv Performer Release Form, Exhibit E*, must be signed by the performer or the tape shall be destroyed.
- The Borough of Metuchen (and MEtv as a government department) is not a news agency and therefore has no obligation to tape or air press conferences or other events not pertinent to Borough business.

### **Use of MEtv Equipment**

- Borough-owned equipment and MEtv facilities shall only be used by qualified Production Team members as determined by the Video Coordinator.
- Training and/or certification are required for use of equipment (re-certification may be required as determined by the Video Coordinator).
- *MEtv Portable Equipment Request Form, Exhibit A*, shall be used when any equipment is removed from the MEtv facilities.
- Any equipment which is damaged or malfunctions while in the control of a Production Team member must be reported immediately to the Video Coordinator and a *MEtv Incident Report, Exhibit B*, must be submitted to the Borough of Metuchen.
- Equipment may only be used for the taping of approved events.
- No equipment shall be available for use by the general public.

### **Independently Produced Programs**

An independently produced program is one that is made by an individual without the use of Borough equipment and/or was an event not scheduled for coverage by the Video Coordinator or the Production Team. These programs must meet the technical standards outlined in this document and require:

- ◇ Submission of *MEtv Broadcast Request Form, Exhibit C*

- ◇ Submission of *MEtv Producers Agreement and Indemnification, Exhibit D*
- ◇ Submission of *MEtv Performer Release Form, Exhibit E*, as deemed applicable by the Video Coordinator
- The Borough reserves the right to reject any tape submission if it is not deemed suitable to the mission of a PEG station, or appropriate for the current programming mix of MEtv.
- Approved tapes will be scheduled by the Video Coordinator using their best professional judgment.
- The Borough will not be responsible for videotapes damaged or lost in the mail or while in its possession.

## **Technical Standards for Programs**

- Tapes submitted for airing must be in VHS or SVHS format only.
- Audio must have a minimum noise level (i.e., audio buzz, hum or other noise) when amplified.
- All tapes must begin with a minimum of 30 seconds not to exceed 60 seconds of control track black.
- Following control track black tape must have a title graphic.
- The end must have closing credits and/or graphic.
- Following the closing credits and/or graphic the tape must have 30 seconds of control track black.
- Tape (which consists of control track black, title graphic, program, closing credits and/or graphic and control track black) must contain continuous video control track with no loss of sync.
- Picture and sound quality must be clear throughout.
- Tapes must contain a side label with the name of the show, start time, end time and total length.
- The Borough will not accept masters of programs, only good quality dubs will be accepted.
- Any videotape not meeting these requirements will be rejected and returned to its producer.

## **Programming Content Guidelines**

MEtv programs shall not contain:

- ◇ Any material contrary to local, state or federal laws
- ◇ Any material that violates state or federal law relating to obscenity
- ◇ Any material containing profanity, which when considered by an average community viewer, would be offensive to the general viewing public. This shall include, specifically, a prohibition of the airing of those words that the FCC prohibits from being broadcast on over-the-air networks
- ◇ The direct or indirect presentation of lottery information, gaming, or games of chance
- ◇ Advertising material designed primarily to promote the sale of commercial products or services
- ◇ Advertisement by or on behalf of officially announced candidates for public office

- ◇ Any solicitation or appeal for funds
- ◇ Any material that is libelous, slanderous or an unlawful invasion of privacy
- ◇ Any material having been previously obtained and produced that is copyrighted or subject to ownership or royalty rights without necessary releases, licenses or other permission

## **Copyright Responsibilities**

Liability for unauthorized use of copyrighted material shall rest solely with the producer. Independent producers, in consideration of airing on MEtv, agrees to indemnify and save harmless MEtv, the Borough of Metuchen, and each of their officers, directors or employees from and against all losses and claims, demands, suits, actions, payments and judgments arising from such use, including any and all expense, legal or otherwise, incurred by the Borough or its representatives in the defense of any claim or suit, as specified in *MEtv Producer Agreement and Indemnification, Exhibit D*.

## **Scheduling of Programs**

All scheduling will be by the Video Coordinator. MEtv-produced programs will have highest priority in the programming schedule. These include, but are not limited to:

- ◇ Live or tape-delayed public meetings
  - ◇ Emergency information
  - ◇ Government sponsored events
  - ◇ On-going features
  - ◇ Other programs of specific community interest
- Every effort will be made to air all properly submitted programs provided by independent producers in a timely manner as scheduling permits.

## **Purchase of Tapes of MEtv-Produced Programs**

Tapes of MEtv-produced programs are available for purchase at a nominal fee and can be ordered by contacting the Video Coordinator. All fees will be paid directly to the Borough of Metuchen.

## **Use of Video Bulletin Board**

Any non-profit organization with a non-commercial, public service announcement regarding events and/or meetings may have an announcement aired on the MEtv Bulletin Board by sending it to: **MEtv, 500 Main Street, Metuchen, NJ 08840.**

- Requests must be less than 20 words.
- All requests must be received at least three weeks in advance of the event.
- All requests must be submitted on organization's official letterhead.
- All requests must have name of contact person and their phone number.
- Events will be prioritized and posted according to the calendar date of the event, as space and time permit.

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- The Borough reserves the right to edit or deny any request without notice.
- No advertisements relating to political campaigns will be aired on the bulletin board.
- No advertisements pertaining to religious services and/or programs held as part of a religious service will be aired on the bulletin board.
- Local requests will take precedence over regional requests.
- Date sensitive requests will take precedence over general information notices unless said notice is of a critical nature to the residents of Metuchen.
- Emergency information shall take precedence over any and all requests.
- Some requests may not be aired due to a lack of space in the program used to operate the bulletin board or receiving the request too late to add to the bulletin board.
- Detailed procedures used by personnel updating the bulletin board are contained in *MEtv Bulletin Board Procedures for Airing, Exhibit H*.