



Operating Rules for UpNorth Media Center (CMC) *Published: July 25, 2008*

General Information

What is CMC?

CMC is a division of LIAA, a Section 501(c)3 nonprofit community service organization. CMC offers a range of services and facilities to individuals and nonprofit organizations throughout northwest lower Michigan. CMC is under contract with four municipalities to operate the region's public access television station (*UpNorth TV*), and provide public access television services to citizens and nonprofit organizations throughout our region. CMC operates *UpNorth TV* as a Public Forum, promoting and celebrating local achievement, community education, civic engagement, local culture and art appreciation, and individual expression.

How Does CMC operate?

CMC operations, facilities and cable channel programming are governed by policies developed with the help of community volunteers who serve on the *CMC Citizen's Advisory Committee*. The day-to-day and ongoing activities of CMC are carried out by a professional staff under the direction of LIAA's Executive Director. CMC operates under *Policies and Procedures* developed by the CMC staff with the assistance of the *Citizen's Advisory Committee* and approved by LIAA's Executive Director and Board of Directors. The *Policies and Procedures* guide CMC staff decisions to ensure that equipment and resources are available to the widest number of people in a fair and equitable manner.

Who Can Use CMC?

The resources of CMC are available to any qualified Producer (as defined by the **Policies and Procedures**).

Producer Responsibilities

First Use & Back Up

Programs produced with CMC equipment must have their first-time showing on a CMC channel. However, CMC is not responsible for maintaining a backup of shows played and will not maintain an archive of videos. Therefore, Producers should maintain their own backup of their projects.

Commercial Gain

You may not use CMC equipment or facilities for profit or personal gain. The equipment and facilities are available for the express purpose of producing programming for CMC. At its discretion, CMC may require producers to provide a copy of video content generated using CMC equipment, regardless of the quality or content of that video. The exception to this is if you are contracted by CMC itself to provide video production or editing services.

Consumables

Producers are responsible for supplying their own digital tapes, DVD-R discs, backup batteries, and other consumable materials often used in the video production and transfer process. CMC will maintain a small supply of these consumables on site for purchase by Producers, as desired.

Address Correction

Periodically, **CMC** must get in touch with producers in case of questions about programs or updates on procedure issues or other matters. **CMC** must have correct address and phone information for producers. Producers must inform **CMC** of any address or phone number changes.

Conduct

CMC producers are responsible for their own conduct, as well as the conduct of any guests that come into the studio in connection with their production.

The Producer is responsible for any damage caused to the **CMC** studio and/or equipment by the Producer or his/her agents, employees, guests, or invitees, and shall pay for the repair or replacement of any damages caused to the **CMC** studio or equipment. This liability is independent of any liability of the group or organization that the certified producer may be representing.

CMC reserves the right to refuse the use of Public Access facilities and equipment to any person appearing under the influence of alcohol, drugs, or otherwise not under full control of his/her faculties.

Paperwork

Producers must have a **Producer Update Form** on file with **CMC** before using any equipment or airtime. A producer submitting a program for playback on the channel must also submit an **Airtime Request Form** for each program.

Misrepresentation During Production

CMC producers are responsible for any misrepresentation arising from their production activity. Misrepresentation by any individual or group as being in the employ of **CMC** will be considered a major violation of the policies.

Program Content

Program Content

Producers are responsible for the total program content of programs they submit for playback on **CMC**. This includes obtaining all approvals, licenses, clearances, etc. for programs.

Responsibility for Program Content

Producers are responsible for any misrepresentation, loss, liability, or damage arising from their programs. **CMC**, Charter Communications, their directors, officers, and staff shall be held harmless against any claims arising from a producer's program.

Programs May Not:

1. Contain any advertising material, including any material designed to promote the sale of commercial products or services, or material which identifies any product, service or trademark or brand name in a manner which is not reasonably related to the non-commercial use of such a product, service, trademark, or brand name of the product. Programs may not use the name of a business as the name of the program.
2. Contain direct solicitation or appeal for funds or other things of value for any and all purposes (except in the case of **CMC**).
3. Contain **CMC**'s phone number without prior approval of **CMC**.
4. Contain obscene, pornographic, indecent, libelous, or slanderous material, nor material attacking or defaming any individual.
5. Cablecast a lottery, or any advertisement of or information concerning a lottery.
6. Contain any content which would subject the producer to prosecution under any applicable local, state, or federal law for the production or presentation of obscene material, libel, slander, invasion of privacy, or copyright or trademark infringement. Neither **CMC** nor **LIAA** will attempt to make any determination as to the constitutional legality of any content submitted for cablecast.

Viewer Discretion Warning

Producers are expected to alert **CMC** staff to programming that may be inappropriate for younger viewers, or offensive for adult viewers. Excessively violent material, offensive language, or sexually provocative content should have a warning disclaimer at the beginning. Producers should request that playback of their program be restricted to the hours between 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. to preserve a "safe haven" for viewing by all audience members.

Local Sponsor Notice

Programs submitted for cablecast, whether made with **CMC** equipment or not, will contain a tag at the end stating the name of the local producer, and the city or township of the producer's residence or place of business.

Bicycled Tape Introduction & Closing

Each bicycled tape submitted for playback on **CMC** will contain a unique opening intro and a unique closing by the presenting producer (the producer who signs the airtime request form).

Program Scheduling and Cablecasting

Schedule Development

CMC will work to organize and publish a predictable schedule of programs for each week, one week in advance of actual airing. To be included in this program schedule, Producers should complete and submit requests for airtime at least 2 weeks in advance of their preferred cablecast date.

In general, programs will be scheduled in *time blocks* allotted to each of *8 general content categories*. To assist **CMC** in planning the weekly schedule, Producers will be asked to describe the content of the program or program series on their airtime request form and identify the appropriate category.

Scheduling for Playback

Producers request playback times for their programs by submitting a properly filled out (both sides) *Airtime Request Form*, including the selection of one of the 8 general content categories. Producers are invited to suggest up to four specific playback times within the appropriate category time blocks. **CMC** will use Producer suggestions as a guide in scheduling playback times. However, **CMC** will use its discretion in scheduling programs.

Playback times may be scheduled no less than two weeks and no more than two months in advance, *except in the case of programs considered time sensitive*, and only with **CMC's** approval.

Except in the case of "live" programs and other programs deemed timely (at **CMC's** discretion), completed programs must be presented at the time that the airtime request is made.

Priorities for Programming

When scheduling *individual programs* and *series programs*, **CMC** will give priority to programs produced within the viewing area. Bicycled programs and filler programs will be scheduled after all local programs have been scheduled. Once an *individual program* or a *series program* has been scheduled, **CMC** will try to preserve their scheduled times.

Technical Quality

Every program submitted for cablecasting on **CMC** must meet minimum technical standards.

CMC Tag

Every program submitted for cablecasting on **CMC** must be tagged with a proper end tag.

Time Slots

Playback is normally scheduled for 5 minute, 10 minute, 30 minute or 60 minute time slots. Longer time slots may be available for special community events, meetings or educational presentations at the **CMC**'s discretion. A program does not have to fill the time slot exactly, but it cannot exceed the time slot.

Labeling

Video tapes, DVD's or electronic files submitted for playback must be clearly labeled with the Title of the program, Name and Phone Number of Producer, exact program length, and in-cue time. If the editing program provides one, a slate and a countdown should be used.

Number of Submissions

CMC is interested in broad public participation. Therefore, **CMC** will attempt to schedule no more than one (1) series program and/or one (1) individual program for any individual producer in any 7 day period.

Series Programming

Producers should plan ahead to establish a *Series Program*. All *Series Programs* must exhibit a common theme, format and length. Scheduling requests for a *Series Program* should be made at least 4 weeks in advance of its first planned airing. At least 3 programs must be completed before the series is scheduled.

Series Programs shall be scheduled in *3 month blocks*. Every effort will be made to keep at least one showing of each *Series Program* in the same time slot throughout the 3 month scheduled block. Depending on the overall demand for airtime, *Series Programs* may be renewed by their producer(s) in 3-month intervals. However, there is no guarantee of renewal or retention of the time slot due to the potential for increasing demand for airtime.

Producers must submit a completed *SERIES PROGRAM AGREEMENT* together with 3 completed programs to qualify. Additional shows in the series must be presented in a timely manner, but no less than 3 days prior to the scheduled playback time. If a producer fails to submit a new program in the agreed-upon time, an old program may be replayed. If a producer fails to submit a new program three (3) times, the series agreement will be terminated. If a series is terminated for reasons of the producer's inability to supply programming, the producer shall be ineligible for series status for the next 6 months. Series status will be reviewed at the end of each period. Producers wishing to continue their series must submit a new series agreement each period. Maintaining a consistent time slot is not guaranteed. **CMC** may use a lottery or other non-discriminatory method of assigning series time slots if necessary.

Preemption

CMC reserves the right to pre-empt any scheduled program in order to better serve the public interest. One example of what might better serve the public interest is the transmission of disaster or emergency information or instructions. Pre-empting a scheduled program for another first-run taped program does not better serve the public interest. Pre-empting a scheduled program for a "live" program that covers a one-time special event may be cause for preemption, but not automatically.

Training and Certification

Required Training

Any person who wishes to submit programming for playback on *UpNorth TV* must complete the Orientation Program. Producers who wish to use **CMC** equipment must be certified on **CMC** equipment they wish to use. Orientation and training workshops are offered several times throughout the year.

Procedure for Signup

CMC offers training workshops several times each year to everyone on a first-come first-served basis. The number of participants is limited so that all participants get lots of hands-on experience with the equipment; therefore, interested

people should sign up early. There is no refund for missed sessions or dropping out of the sessions. People interested in attending any **CMC** orientation session or workshop can find sign-up forms online at www.upnorthmedia.org.

Producer Training

The **CMC** offers a basic *Producer Orientation* workshop to introduce trainees to the concepts and rules of public access television. Producers must complete the *orientation* before they are permitted to submit content for cablecasting.

The *Field Producer Certification Training* will give producers an introduction to the equipment and some understanding of the fundamental concepts and techniques of video production. Producers must be *certified* to check out equipment.

The *Studio Producer Certification Training* will give Producers an introduction to the **CMC** studio and the fundamentals of video production in the studio. To use the **CMC** studio, Producers must be *certified*.

Other classes will cover lighting techniques, editing techniques, and other topics.

Advanced Training

From time to time special workshops may be offered to enhance the producer's knowledge and skill of some aspect of video production or post-production. These courses will be offered at reasonable cost on a first-come first-served basis to all certified producers.

Training as a Group

Special sessions for qualified Groups interested in certain aspects of video production (i.e. studio production only, or field production only) are available. The purpose of group training is to accommodate those organizations interested only in a specific type of show. Specifics as to pricing and topics can be arranged with **CMC** staff.

Refresher Courses

Producers are encouraged to attend refresher courses. There are two ways to review material and get a brush-up session. In addition to special refresher courses with a specific topic, which are offered from time to time at the studio, certified Producers are welcome to sit in on specific sessions of the ongoing workshops to review information. More information is available from **CMC** staff.

Equipment Usage

Equipment Use for CMC Programming Only

It is not the intent of **CMC** to compete with any commercial production or duplication business, or any other commercial business. Therefore, **CMC** equipment, studio facilities, airtime and other resources are to be used only for the purpose of producing programming for **CMC**.

Purpose of Equipment Usage Procedures

The equipment usage procedures are designed to encourage the heaviest possible usage consistent with the fair and equitable accessibility to equipment by all Producers and consistent with proper care of the equipment. Remember that **CMC** equipment and facilities can be used only to produce programs for **CMC**, and all **CMC** equipment and facilities can be used only to move programming toward playback on **CMC**. Some procedures are designed to encourage local use and discussion of local issues.

General Procedures for Checkout

Equipment may be checked out on a walk-in basis only during limited hours published by **CMC** and only if the equipment is available. **CMC** would prefer that Producers reserve needed equipment over the phone or by e-mail at least two days *in advance*, but not more than two months in advance. Procedures for checking out equipment are:

1. Request assistance from a **CMC** staff person.
2. Present your equipment request, either written or verbal, to a **CMC** staff person. Reservations are not official, nor recorded, until a **CMC** staff person enters it into the computer. You may request a printout or an email of your reservation for confirmation.
3. Be sure to keep your appointments. Your reservation means that equipment is not available for other producers—if you are not going to use your equipment, be sure to call us as soon as you know so that we may make the equipment available to others.

Procedures for Field Equipment Check out and Check in

Plan to spend about 20 minutes checking equipment out and another 20 minutes checking equipment in. **CMC** staff people will check out all equipment by entering its number into the computer, and check in the equipment in the same way. This is to ensure accuracy. Producers may request a printout of the transactions for confirmation.

All video equipment approved for off-site use is available to qualified Producers on a first-come first-served basis and may be reserved in advance. The check-out time period for cameras, lighting, and sound equipment is in 24 hour increments. The checkout time period may consist of a maximum of three consecutive 24 hour periods. After the maximum checkout period, the equipment must be returned to **CMC**. There will be no handoffs of equipment.

Editing Bays and Equipment

Off-line editing equipment shall be available on a first-come first-served basis and may be reserved in advance. Editing sessions are available in up to 4 hour increments, or at the discretion of **CMC** staff to encourage the most efficient possible usage. To encourage uses such as the logging of raw footage, there shall be no limit to the number of sessions available. Editing time may be given to walk-ins if the producer is more than 15 minutes late for a reserved session.

Equipment Knowledge

All **CMC** producers must be trained and certified on the equipment they are using. All **CMC** producers take full responsibility for any loss or damage to the equipment they have checked out or are using.

Studio Usage

A Producer who reserves the studio for a production, whether live or to tape, is responsible for finding certified crew people to work in the various crew positions. **CMC** staff members may be available for a fee.

Changes to Procedures

CMC reserves the right to make changes to Procedures at any time. Please notify staff if you encounter any lack of clarity in this document.