

Procedures & Technical Specifications



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Introduction

Access Bellingham is a public access cable television service offered by the City of Bellingham. Please be sure to carefully read Access Bellingham Policies, in addition to these Procedures and Technical Specifications. All documents about Access Bellingham are available at <http://www.cob.org/AccessBellingham>.

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Section 1. Access Bellingham Overview

A) Pilot Program

The Bellingham City Council has approved Access Bellingham as a pilot project for a period of twelve (12) months. Public access means access where organizations, groups, or individual members of the general public, on a non-discriminatory basis, are the primary or designated programmers (also referred to as producers) or users having editorial control over their programming. Community members may submit their programming to be cablecast on Bellingham Television Channel 10 during the time set aside for public access.

B) Access Bellingham Policies

Access Bellingham policies have been created to document legal requirements and policy guidelines for the public access television services. The latest copy of Access Bellingham Policies can be found at <http://www.cob.org/AccessBellingham>.

C) Services

Initial services will begin in October, 2014. The first phase of service centers on providing the Bellingham community with access to public access television, for approximately six hours each week.

Additional services will be offered as this program evolves. We anticipate updating this document during the pilot project period to provide the latest information about services, procedures, and standards.

Section 2. Technical Specifications

A) Media types

Producers will submit programs on one of the following types of media:

- A flash or thumb drive
- A USB hard drive
- A data DVD

Programs are not acceptable on Video DVD, tape or film. Programs are also not acceptable as downloads from a video service such as YouTube or Vimeo.

B) Video file formats and standards

Programs may be in any of the following video file formats:

- .wmv
- .avi
- .mpg
- .mov
- .h264

Programs in Standard Definition, 640x480 29.97fps are acceptable.

Programs in High Definition, 1280x720 30 or 60fps are acceptable.

Video levels should fall within the normal range with pure whites at about 100IRE and blacks at 7.5IRE.

Audio levels should fall within nominal range with peaks at about -6db.

C) Maximum program length

Maximum program length is 1 hour, 59 minutes.

D) Closing Credits Required

Producer's names must appear in the credits of every program they produce.

All programs must contain closing credits, in text, which include the Producer's name. The Producer's name must be easily readable and displayed for at least 5 seconds. Closing credits appear within the final two minutes of the program.

Suggested formats include:

Produced by

(producer's name)

Producer

(producer's name)

Producer.....(producer's name)

E) Optional additional credits

Producers may wish to acknowledge support received in the production of a program. Because Access Bellingham is a non-commercial channel, such acknowledgement should *only* occur in the closing credits of the program.

Because Access Bellingham is a non-commercial channel, producers should ensure that neither the program, nor the credits, appear to promote the purchase or sale of any service or item.

Credits for support received should be formatted in one of the suggested formats below:

Support for this program provided in part by

(business name and/or logo, city, telephone, e-mail, or web address)

Or

Thanks to the following for their support

(business name and/or logo, city, telephone, e-mail, or web address)

Section 3. Program Scheduling Procedures

A. Public Access Channel Schedule

Access Bellingham will provide approximately 6 hours per week time on Comcast Cable Channel 10, also known as BTV10. The schedule will begin on Sunday nights at 6pm.

A single block of time will be provided to allow for consistent program scheduling and viewing of public access programming.

B. First-come, first-served scheduling

Programs will be scheduled to be aired on first come, first served basis following submittal.

Access Bellingham will require at least two weeks lead time following receipt of a program before the program is cablecast. Time between submittal and airing of programs may be further delayed depending on the quantity of materials received.

C. Short-run programs

Programs under 10 minutes in length will not be expressly named in the program schedule, but will be scheduled in a block of time that will include shorter run submittals. The time slot will be identified on the program schedule as "Access Bellingham Shorts", or something similar.

D. Availability of Program Schedules

The program schedule for Access Bellingham's programs will be available one-week in advance on the Access Bellingham website. Additionally, the program schedule will be viewable on television sets to Comcast Subscribers who have access to the digital programming guide as part of their Comcast services.

E. Web Stream

In addition to broadcasting your content, Access Bellingham streams all channel content on the Internet. Links to the BTV10 Live Stream can be found on the Access Bellingham web pages at <http://www.cob.org/AccessBellingham>.

F. Repeat Programming

Programs may be aired up to seven additional times after the first airing. Repeat airings will be scheduled in subsequent Sundays from the initial Sunday, for a maximum of 8 weeks.

Note that there is no guarantee that programs will be repeated, but Access Bellingham may repeat programming based on the amount of new programming received. Repeat airing will be based on a first come, first served basis, with new programming taking a priority over repeat programming.

Producers should not submit programs more than once.

G. Master Copies

Producers should not submit "master" copies of programming to Access Bellingham.

H. Providing Copies of Programs

Viewer requests to Access Bellingham staff for copies will be referred to the Producer's public contact information.

Access Bellingham will not maintain an archive copy of programs beyond a minimal operating time period.

Section 4. Steps to Submit Programming

Step 1: Read Key Materials

Carefully read these important documents about Access Bellingham:

- Policies
- Procedures & Technical Guidelines (this document)
- Frequently Asked Questions

Make sure your program meets policy requirements and technical specifications.

The latest copies of these materials will be posted on the website at www.cob.org/AccessBellingham.

Step 2: Fill out and sign the Submittal Form

Make sure your program meets policy requirements and technical specifications.

Fill out and sign the program submittal form. Forms are available on the Access Bellingham website.

Note that if the producer is a minor, a parent or legal guardian must sign the program submittal form.

Step 3: Bring the form and your video to City Hall

Make sure your media is clearly labeled with your name.

Drop off your video and your signed submittal form at Bellingham City Hall, located at 210 Lottie Street.

Program delivery hours: 9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday-Friday (except City holidays).

You will be asked to provide proof of identification and residency. A Driver's License showing a Bellingham address, Student ID with photo ID, Business License showing a business located in Bellingham, or some other combination of documents showing identification and Bellingham residency will be accepted.

Scheduling and media returns

Access Bellingham will process your video and get it onto our video server. You will be informed as to when your program is scheduled to run on BTV10 for its first airing. You will be contacted to pick up your media.