

## Public Access Center – Frequently Asked Questions

### What is the Public Access Center?

The Highland Park Public Access Center was implemented to inform the public on municipal affairs, promote participation in community programs and events and preserve public access through community television. Highland Park City staff is responsible for coordination and production of programming on cable access channels 10 and 19 for the City of Highland Park, City of Highwood, Village of Deerfield and Village of Winnetka.

### Who is allowed to utilize the Public Access Center?

Certified community producers who either reside or are employed within Highland Park, Highwood, Deerfield or Winnetka may utilize the Public Access Center to produce, edit and broadcast programs on Access Channels 10 or 19. Those who live outside the service area may drop off tapes to be broadcasted on Access Channel 19.

### How can I get involved with public access?

The City of Highland Park will utilize its Public Access Center staff to instruct residents in television production techniques in a comprehensive television production workshop. The workshop will include a written manual, detailed lectures and hands-on training. Those under 18 years of age must have the permission of a parent or guardian before participating in a workshop. Certification is based on proven proficiency with all production equipment and the successful completion of a final production. Community producers must be residents of or employed within the City of Highland Park, City of Highwood, Village of Deerfield or Village of Winnetka. Upon certification, community producers are entitled to reserve studio time for the purpose of producing community access programs only. There is a great deal of material presented during each workshop session and participants work closely together and will rely on one another during exercises and program tapings. For these reasons, **attendance at all workshop sessions is mandatory!**

Upon successful completion of a workshop, producers will be certified to use the Public Access Center and equipment. In order to remain certified, producers must log six (6) hours of activity per twelve-month period beginning with the date of certification. At the discretion of the staff, producers may be required to re-certify if the above requirement is not met. In lieu of a workshop, producers may take a proficiency exam

### How do I sign up for the workshop?

If you would like to take the workshop, please contact the Public Access Center at (847) 926-1751. Public Access staff will notify you when workshops are being conducted.

### **How long does my public access certification last?**

Your public access certification does not expire as long as you remain active. To remain active, you need to log at least six (6) hours of usage within each 12 month period. If you fail to log six (6) hours of usage within that time, your certification expires and you will be required to become re-certified before you can begin to utilize the Center's equipment and facility.

### **What does it cost to produce a public access program?**

The costs to produce, edit and broadcast a public access program are minimal. The workshop, equipment and studio are free to those who reside or are employed within the service area. Additional materials for production beyond what the City provides must be supplied by the producer. The City provides recycled ¾", dvcams and mini-dvs for production.

**Can I profit from my program?** No, you cannot make a profit from your public access program. You are also prohibited from using public access equipment and facilities on other projects which can generate revenue.

### **Can I utilize the public access equipment or facilities for my own personal interests?**

No, you may not use public access equipment or facilities for your own interests, even if they do not generate revenue. The equipment and facilities are provided to you SOLELY for use in producing public access programming. They are not intended for use in producing school projects, family videos, or other hobbies -- unless you intend to SHOW said projects on the Access Channel 19.

### **Can I use my own equipment to produce my program?**

Yes, you may use your own equipment to produce your program. The final tape must be in a format which is acceptable for playback on Access Channels 10 or 19.

### **How many people do I need for a crew?**

The more people you have to crew your program, the easier it will be to produce a program. Ideally, you will need 9 people for your program. You can make by with a smaller crew, if needed, but ideally, you'll want a person for each position. To make your studio reservation more productive, we require a minimum of 4 people to crew your program (you, plus 3 other people). City staff SHOULD NOT be considered to fill crew positions.

### **Can I use music or video from other sources for my program?**

As a certified access producer, you assume the responsibility for the content of your program. Therefore, you are responsible for acquiring permission to use anything from other sources in your program - whether it is music, video, photographs, etc.

## **Do I have to be a certified producer in order to playback my program on Cable Access Channel 19?**

No. Anyone with a non-commercial message or idea can have a program on Cable Access Channel 19. Certification grants you access to the Center's equipment and facility.

## **If I don't have time to do a regular series, what are my options?**

If the possibility of a weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly series is too demanding on you or your available time, then we have several options. If your program could be produced in a single segment, you can submit it as such. It will be scheduled as a special program, receiving no more than 4 total airings - and perhaps only one airing, depending on schedule availability. Another option within the realms of special programming is a mini-series. You can produce a series of at least two (2) and no more than 12 installments, and submit it as such. In similar fashion, it will be scheduled to run, and you will be notified of the dates and times which it will be aired.

## **What channels are available through the Center?**

Playback is available on Comcast's Cable Access Channel 19 and Government Access Channel 10 in Highland Park, Highwood, Deerfield and Winnetka.

## **What tape formats do you accept for playback?**

The Public Access Center has the capability to playback programs on the following formats: ¾", dvcams and mini-dvs. Tapes submitted for playback must be prepared following the format outlined below:

- 1.30-seconds of color bars
- 2.10-second countdown
- 3.Program content
- 4.Appropriate production credits

## **How long does my program need to be?**

For a 30 minute timeslot, your program needs to be between 28 and 30 minutes. For a 60 minute timeslot, it needs to be within 58 and 60 minutes. This time measurement includes the countdown, the program contents and the appropriate end credits. There is no time requirement for special programming.

## **How do I get a timeslot?**

If you are a certified community producer applying for a timeslot, you need to request a timeslot using a program proposal form. In all other cases, you will need to request a timeslot by filling out a playback waiting list form. These forms need to be submitted to Mark [Tulloss](#), Access Center Coordinator. Channel time is granted in the following order of priority:

1. **In-house access producers** are City staff or contractors that use the facilities to produce, shoot, or edit their programs and use air time to show their programs.
2. **Out-of-house access producers** are certified producers who use the facilities to produce, shoot, or edit programs and use air time to show their programs.
3. **Out-of-house producers** are producers who do not reside in the service area and do not use the facilities or equipment but do submit programs for playback.

When a timeslot becomes available, the Access Coordinator will contact you regarding the timeslot and make arrangements for tape drop-off. DO NOT send or drop off any tapes until after the Access Coordinator contacts you regarding a timeslot and instructs you to do so. Once your program has been given a timeslot, you will keep that timeslot, unless the Access Coordinator has a scheduling conflict, or if you fail to turn in your programs in a timely fashion. Timeslots can also be revoked if you lose your access privileges for other reasons.

### **Once I have a timeslot, how do I submit my program?**

Once you have a timeslot, you will hand in the master tape for playback to the staff members. In addition, you will need to fill out a playback form. This form indicates to the Access Coordinator and the Access Technician who you are and what your program is about. It also serves as your permission for the City to play your tape over the air. Once your tape has been received, it is viewed to make sure it meets the technical standards and playback requirements needed for the playback system it is to play out of. Once approved for airing, the Access Coordinator will begin to air your program based on the information given on the playback form.

### **What happens if I don't get my program turned in on time?**

As mentioned above, an access producer can lose their time slot if they fail to get their program turned in on time. Please view the public access rules and regulations for the specific requirements.

### **What are the technical requirements I should be aware of?**

Yes. You need to make sure there are no breaks in the control track, or glitches, found on your tape. If our playback system encounters one while playing your tape, there's a good chance it will automatically will stop airing your tape and immediately cut to the bulletin board. You also need to pay attention to your audio and video. These need to be at an acceptable level. Audio that is too loud will sound distorted, and audio too soft will not be heard. Also, your video can't be too bright. Feel free to ask Vic Walter, Access Technician, or Mark [Tulloss](#), Access Coordinator, any further questions.

### **How long after I turn in a program can I expect it to broadcast?**

New program submissions will be scheduled to start two weeks after submission. New program submissions must be turned in at least 2 weeks prior to their start date. For example, if your program is submitted between the 1st and 15th of this

month, it will be scheduled to start the first week of next month.

### **Can I pick the timeslot for my program?**

The Public Access Center staff will try to accommodate any requests; there are many factors that will determine when a program will play. Timeslot availability, deck availability, and program content are a few factors, just to name a few.