



Frederick County Government

IIT Video Services
Cable Television

Video Broadcasting Policy



(The following policy was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners on May 25, 2004).

Programming Statement

IIT Video Services / Frederick County Government Cable Channel (“FCG TV”) provides information to Frederick County (“the County”) citizens concerning the functions, activities, and programs of Frederick County Government. The mission of FCG TV is:

1. To expand and enhance public participation in the governmental process by (a) broadcasting meetings of governmental bodies, public hearings, and other related governmental events; (b) creating and presenting programs that expand citizen awareness of County government, its organizations and functions, and its decision-making processes; and, (c) facilitating communication between citizens and government officials;
2. To expand and enhance citizen access to County programs and services by bringing comprehensive information on those services, programs, and resources to citizens via cable television; and,
3. To enhance emergency communications in the County.

Programming Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed on FCG TV may not necessarily reflect those of the Board of County Commissioners, Frederick County Government, or any employees of the Frederick County Government.

Programming Restrictions / Prohibited Content

Frederick County Government recognizes programming content restrictions imposed on FCG TV by the Federal Communications Commission, by prevailing community standards, and by applicable Federal, state, and local laws. Programming containing any of the following will not be broadcast on FCG TV:

- information concerning any lottery, gift, enterprise or similar scheme, offering prizes dependent in whole or in part, upon lot or chance, or any prizes drawn or awarded by means of any such lottery, gift, enterprise, or scheme, whether the information describes any part or all of such prizes;
- material which is intended to defraud the viewer or designed to obtain money by false or fraudulent pretenses, representations, or promises;
- obscene or indecent matter;
- libelous or slanderous matter as defined by law;
- copyrighted material, unless appropriate advance clearances have been obtained and written proof of such clearance can be presented;
- advertising materials whose primary purpose is to promote the sale of commercial products, trade, or services. This prohibition does not apply to promotion of governmental materials and services for which a fee may be charged.
- audio or visual reference to any business, service, or product for which any economic consideration was received in exchange for the display, announcement, and/or reference to such business, service, or product. However, brief audio and video credit may be given at the end of a program where special materials or assistance have been donated by a commercial or charitable enterprise.

- political programming by individual candidates after the public announcement of candidacy or filing for office, political party representatives, or supporters and opponents of any candidate designed to campaign or otherwise solicit public support.

Political programming exception: “Debates” where all competing candidates are given equal time to explain their views and advocate their election and “open forums” where elected officials and/or candidates/advocates appear to discuss issues in a public meeting place, without soliciting for their election, are permitted.

The following are not considered political programming and are also thus permitted: (a) statements by persons who receive incidental air time as part of a public meeting being broadcast on FCG TV; (b) statements made in public meetings as part of the normal debate preceding official action; and (c) statements made in response to reporters' questions in a news broadcast dealing with public policy issues.

Programming Priorities / Permitted Programming Content

FCG TV programming priorities are as follows:

1. Announcements of an emergency nature affecting public health or safety.
2. Live and repeat broadcasts of sessions of governmental bodies including the Board of County Commissioners public hearings and worksessions or meetings of Commissioner appointed Boards and Commissions.
3. Press conferences.
4. Local origination public affairs programming and informational programming about the governmental process such as “Inside Frederick County”.
5. Local origination programs about County Government services such as “Best Kept Secrets” and “Bookends”.
6. Coverage of special events, e.g., dedication ceremonies marking the opening of new or renovated County facilities, swearing in of a newly elected Board of County Commissioners, and coverage of the local “Maryland You Are Beautiful” ceremony.
7. Acquired programming deemed to be useful to Frederick County citizens.
8. Character generated material (“bulletin board”)

Accountability

The programming priorities enumerated above should be followed when making programming decisions. County departments and agencies using FCG TV services are responsible for the content of the finished video project and must review the end product along with FCG TV staff before the project is added to the playback schedule. It is FCG TV’s responsibility to ensure that any program adheres to the programming statement provided above and is technically sound.

FCG TV staff members are to consult the following person, in the order indicated, when questions arise regarding broadcasting content:

1. IIT, Manager Technical Projects
2. IIT, Chief Information Officer
3. County Manager