



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES 2025

Mission Statement: Marshfield Broadcasting, a division of the Communications Department, provides a pathway between local government and the community through its multimedia platforms. We aspire to unite the community by using Marshfield Broadcasting (community media) to be as transparent as possible and build upon community engagement and encourage freedom of speech.

Platforms:

- Charter Cable Channels – Producers 989, Marshfield Now 990, and Government 991.
- Marshfield Broadcasting mobile app (IOS and Android)
- Website – marshfieldbroadcasting.com
- City Website – cityofmarshfieldwi.gov/marshfieldbroadcasting
- Facebook Pages – Marshfield Now Channel and Producers Channel.
- YouTube Channel – Marshfield Now Channel, Producer's Channel, and Government Channel.
- Internet Archive – archive.org/details/@marshfield_broadcasting_-_marshfield_wisconsin.

Vision:

- Follow the strategic plan for communications.
- Post the strategic plan in the communications office for a continual reminder.
- Encourage the community and staff to support our mission.
- Build up our community relations activities.
- Listen to others.
- Respect others.
- Don't judge others.
- Encourage freedom of speech.

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Definitions:

Advertising Material - Any material in a program designed to sell commercial products or services, or the solicitation of donations, remuneration, or barter.

Cablecast - To send video and audio signals through a cable television system instead of traditional broadcast (over-the-air) systems.

Communications Department - The Communications Department operates the television and streaming platforms known as Marshfield Broadcasting and produces programming for Marshfield Now Channel and the Government Channel. The department provides a pathway between local government and the community by informing, educating, and promoting Marshfield through ever-evolving media channels.

Copyright - The exclusive legal right of publication, duplication, imitation, or sale of literary, musical, or artistic work. All necessary copyright clearances are the sole responsibility of the access user.

Government Channel - A cable and streaming channel on Marshfield Broadcasting operated by the City's Communications Department, providing video coverage of government meetings.

Libel - Defamation by publishing or broadcasting that may expose its subject to public hatred, shame, or disgrace.

Lottery/Raffle - Any promotion, contest, or other program that involves the elements of prize, chance, and consideration, which is considered a lottery/raffle under applicable local, state, or federal laws.

Marshfield Broadcasting - Marshfield Broadcasting is a division of the City of Marshfield's Communication Department. The division operates three TV stations, available on cable television and on several leading streaming platforms, including mobile devices.

Marshfield Now Channel - A cable and streaming channel on Marshfield Broadcasting operated by the City's Communications Department provides local, state, and national news, entertainment, and information for residents and visitors.

Obscene, Indecent, and Libel Material - Any material in a program and presentation that would be deemed obscene, indecent, or libelous by local community standards or by standards established by any federal, state, or local regulation or law applicable to cable television.

Partnership - Marshfield Broadcasting partnerships are collaborative relationships with businesses, community organizations, and producers to achieve shared goals. These partnerships are crucial for leveraging resources, networking, and assisting one another.

Producer - A person, group, organization, or other entity that conceives of the program idea and manages its production. They are not volunteers of the channels.

Producer's Channel - A cable television and streaming channel on Marshfield Broadcasting dedicated for use by non-profit organizations, schools, persons, or groups residing within the city of Marshfield on a first-come, non-discriminatory basis.

Single Program: A single program is any program whose content is contained in a single presentation, which is not part of any Marshfield Broadcasting series.

Series: A program comprised of several original episodes under one single title, which is regularly scheduled in the same time slot.

Streaming: To send video and audio signals through the internet onto websites and over-the-top platforms.

Volunteers: Are those who assist staff in various ways when asked. They're not paid, nor are they community producers.

Section 1- Producers/Partnerships/Freelancers

Section 1.1

Subject: Producers

Purpose: To provide an opportunity for all ages to learn and produce programs to be seen on the Marshfield Producer's platforms.

Community producers are not the same as volunteers for Marshfield Broadcasting. They're individuals or organizations that provide programs of their choice.

Producers are permitted to utilize our equipment when it's available. A computer workstation in the department is available, but producers and volunteers need to schedule a time to use it. A password login will be dedicated to each person after they sign the user policy and are adequately trained. There is no time limit unless other users want to use the workstation. Producers can also receive assistance and training from staff as time permits.

Producers are not employees, staff, or representatives of Marshfield Broadcasting.

Section 1.2

Subject: Volunteers

Purpose: To assist the staff as needed

Volunteers assist staff in various ways. They're not paid, nor are they independent community producers. They perform tasks such as vacuuming the work area, folding and distributing the weekly TV guide and newsletters, assisting with studio programs, and scheduling the Producer's Channel. The staff can assign other tasks as needed.

Volunteers sign in and document their time and tasks in the office. Additionally, these individuals will be issued a badge labeled as "Volunteers" or "Producers" for Marshfield Broadcasting while working in-house and/or on location.

Tasks can be assigned by both the Communications Director and the Community Media Coordinator.

Section 1.3

Subject: Independent Contractor

Purpose: Hire for a service

An independent contractor is paid for projects assigned by staff. Each project is paid an agreed amount noted in a contract. Each party signs the contract.

Section 1.4

Subject: Partnership

Purpose: Collaborating on a multimedia project. Partnerships are crucial for leveraging resources, addressing community needs, and improving the overall quality of life in the area.

Partners can be non-profits, producers, volunteers, or other organizations that want to work together on a project under the Marshfield Broadcasting label.

Section 1.5

Subject: Representation

Purpose: To understand and not to misrepresent Marshfield Broadcasting.

Producers are not agents or employees of Marshfield Broadcasting; they are considered independent and create programming for themselves or the organization they represent. At no time may any individual or organization identify themselves as an employee or agent of Marshfield Broadcasting - City of Marshfield.

Producers must not identify their production efforts as of 'Marshfield Broadcasting. Instead, producers should indicate that their programs "Will be seen in cooperation with Marshfield Broadcasting (City of Marshfield) on the Producer's Channel. Producers shall have no authority to speak for or on behalf of Marshfield Broadcasting represent their views as anything other than their own or those of their organizations.

Section 1.6

Subject: To establish a clear responsibility for programming.

Purpose: Compliance with these policies and procedures is a prerequisite to using equipment and scheduling programming.

Every producer submitting a program for broadcast must acknowledge legal responsibility for program content. Producers are responsible for any damage to facilities and equipment they sign out beyond normal wear, as well as for the actions of their on-air personnel, talent, crew, guests, and any others involved in their production.

Section 2 – Scheduling and Playback of Programs

Section No. 2.1

Subject: Channel regulation

Purpose: Establish responsibility for the regulation of Marshfield Broadcasting platforms.

Marshfield Broadcasting is managed through a City of Marshfield Community Media Coordinator who operates under the direction of the City of Marshfield's Communications Director.

The Community Media Coordinator and appointees shall administer the programming and operation of the cable, streaming, and on-demand platforms.

Section No. 2.2

Subject: Scheduling Priorities

Purpose: To establish the priority of scheduling for cable, online, and streaming.

Marshfield Broadcasting's priorities in scheduling programming will be as follows:

- The Producer's Channel is a channel for residents to provide programs for playback.
- Facebook, OTT streaming services, and on-demand platforms are also available for programs.
- The Community Media Coordinator is responsible for scheduling programming and appointees. We will make a reasonable effort to accommodate all participating producers in the scheduling and broadcasting of their respective programming. The time available to programs will be based on demand for channel time, station capabilities, and staff time.

Section 2.3

Subject: Scheduling Requests

Purpose: For producers requesting the broadcast of a program or series of programs.

Producers must submit a broadcast request form available on the Marshfield Broadcasting website for a program. A form should include a reasonably detailed description of the requested program, the submitter's contact information, and an acknowledgment of responsibility for the content.

Producers may request the general day and time they prefer to broadcast their programming.

In consultation with the producer, the coordinator will find the appropriate broadcast times for you. A single program will be scheduled based on available time slots. Series programs will be assigned regular time slots based on available time slots.

Section No. 2.4

Subject: Single programs

Purpose: A program contains content in a single presentation.

Single programs may be broadcast more than once. The coordinator has the exclusive discretion of whether to rerun any single program and, if so, how many times.

Section No. 2.5

Subject: Series Programs

Purpose: Create a system for scheduling series programs on Marshfield Broadcasting.

A series program comprises several original episodes under one title, which is regularly scheduled in the same time slot.

The coordinator will notify producers of a series's original broadcast date before the series airs. The coordinator shall have the sole and exclusive discretion to rerun any episode of a series and, if so, how many times, at such dates and times as appropriate.

Section 2.6

Subject: Prohibited programming

Purpose: To establish guidelines for prohibited programming.

Producers are fully and legally responsible for the content of their program. The producer is legally and financially responsible for any disputes arising from a program's content, including programming judged to be obscene, libelous, or slanderous and programming that makes unauthorized use of copyrighted, trademarked, or service-marked material.

The producer shall indemnify and hold the City of Marshfield and its employees harmless from all submitted programs broadcast on the channels.

Presentation of the following is prohibited:

- Any commercial programming or advertising as defined by the Federal Communications Act (47 U.S.C. §§ 151, et seq.) and any rules and regulations promulgated by the Federal Communications Commission (47 CFR §§ 0 et seq.)

The staff believes that when it comes to controversial content in programming, the correct response is to encourage more speech rather than enforce silence. Staff encourages anyone who disagrees with a program to produce a counter-program that presents an opposing point of view.

Section No. 2.7

Subject: Disclaimers

Purpose: As applicable, an announcement in substantially one or more of the following forms may precede and follow the broadcast of public access programs.

The following program is being aired at the request of a producer sponsoring its content and is presented to further free speech and civic discourse. The content and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the City of Marshfield or the cable provider. More information about member program sponsorship is available at marshfieldbroadcasting.com or by calling (715) 207-0379."

- "The following program was produced by a producer sponsoring its content and is presented to further free speech and civic discourse. The content and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the City of Marshfield or the cable provider. More information about member program sponsorship is available on marshfieldbroadcasting.com or by calling (715) 207-0379."
- "The following program may contain upsetting or unsuitable material for all ages. Viewer discretion is advised."
- "The City of Marshfield does not condone or endorse speech that promotes fear, hatred, prejudice, or discrimination toward any group based on religion, ethnicity, race, gender, or sexual orientation."
- The City's Communications Department staff shall have the right, in its sole discretion, to select the appropriate disclaimer(s) applicable to the particular program sought to be aired on Marshfield Broadcasting.

Section 2.8

Subject: Election/Campaign Programming

Purpose: To establish guidelines for using Marshfield Broadcasting times and equipment used by local producers running for political office

The staff provides programming for those running for local, state, or national public office. Equal access to airtime is on a first-come, first-served, non-discriminatory basis. The staff is committed to providing its members equal time for persons running for local, state, and national public office.

For purposes of this policy, a person is considered a candidate from the time of publicly announcing their intention to seek elective office. In the case of ballot initiatives, an initiative is deemed to be placed in the public domain when at least one petition commences circulating to identify the industry to be placed on the ballot.

For purposes of assessing and applying the equal access policy provided herein, such equal access will not be computed based on the amount of airtime an elected official receives in carrying out their duties as an elected official, as opposed to the airtime allotted to such an elected official in seeking an additional term in such elected office. For example, and by model only, the equal access policy expressed herein shall not be computed based on an elected official's presence at and participation in a public meeting called by the body (e.g., the City of Marshfield to which the official has been selected).

The coordinator will assist political candidates by:

- Scheduling programs to be distributed on Marshfield Broadcasting platforms.
- Producing a studio program with a candidate.
- Hosting a televised public forum for candidates running for office, or filming one.

Section 2.9

Subject: Political Programming

Purpose: Establish guidelines on political programs that lean towards one particular party.

Political programs that lean to the "left" or the "right" can only be allowed to be broadcast at the request of a resident living within the city limits. The only time this would be permitted without public request is to include representatives of Republicans, Democrats, and independents in different programs with equal airtime.

Section 3 - Program Requirements

Section 3.1

Subject: Application Form

Purpose: To establish requirements to broadcast programs.

- Read Marshfield Broadcasting policies and procedures.
- Complete a producer application form.
- Sign the Marshfield Broadcasting agreement, including acknowledgment and acceptance of Marshfield Broadcasting terms.

Sections 3.2

Subject: Orientation

Purpose: To initiate an orientation process for new producers

Each new producer will receive an orientation session covering key user policies and responsibilities. This orientation is a prerequisite for anyone using equipment and submitting programs.

- Ability to broadcast programs on Marshfield Broadcasting Producer's Channel.
- Access to training and use of production equipment.
- Eligible to receive technical advice from staff.
- PSA style promotional days
- Studio/on-location programs

Section No. 3.3

Subject: Technical issues regarding audio and video conditions and compatibility.

Purpose: To define technical problems that may prevent a program's broadcast on Marshfield Broadcasting.

Marshfield Broadcasting may refuse to play programs that contain one or more of the following problems, as determined by the staff:

- The video level is not adjusted correctly (the picture is either too bright or too dark)
- The media is in poor physical condition
- The video level is inconsistent
- Video displays too much generational loss (It is a copy of a copy of a document)
- The picture needs to be quieter, less snowy/grainy.
- The video is unstable (the picture frequently jumps or flickers).
- Media is not compatible with Marshfield Broadcasting equipment
- The audio contains a loud hum or buzz
- The audio level varies wildly from scene to scene.
- The audio is distorted
- The audio level is too low
- There is no disclaimer
- Not the correct aspect ratio

Section 3.4 Program format

Subject: Formats for media submitted for broadcast

Purpose: To establish formats for media submitted for broadcast on Marshfield Broadcasting.

Programs may be submitted in the following formats:

- DVD
- Portable hard drive, flash drive
- Upload to a server
- Communications Department staff will assist members in transferring and converting videos to an acceptable format.

Section 4 – Facilities/Equipment

Section 4.1 Equipment usage

Subject: Use of the Marshfield Broadcasting Studio

Purpose: To reserve the studio

The Community Media Coordinator can schedule studio production time and arrange staffing and equipment requirements.

- Reservation/ Cancellations: Reservations can be made in person, by phone, or by e-mail. Reservations will be taken one week before the production date. Reservations will be made on a first-come, first-served basis. Production times will depend on staff availability. Cancellations must be made at least 24 hours before the production date. In any case, using the studio for official City business will take priority over any producer uses.
- Audiovisual Equipment: Audiovisual needs must be discussed with staff at least three business days in advance.
- Damage: Users of the studio other than City officials and employees will be billed for any damage to City facilities or equipment. Users are responsible for their clean-up and may be charged a fee if the facilities are not returned to their original condition.

Section No. 4.2

Subject: Right to Refuse

Purpose: Establish the right to refuse access to any user who threatens staff or equipment, human life, health, or safety, or property.

Staff reserves the right to restrict the use of its facilities.

Equipment to any person who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, who physically or verbally abuses staff members, or who interferes with the orderly conduct of business. Further, Marshfield Broadcasting has the right to refuse to allow the use of its facilities or equipment to any person whose use will present a clear and present danger to human life, health, safety, or property.