

CITY OF AGOURA HILLS

**POLICY FOR GOVERNMENT ACCESS PROGRAMMING ON
AHTV, THE AGOURA HILLS CHANNEL**

Section 1. MISSION STATEMENT

The goal of AHTV, the government access channel for the City of Agoura Hills, is to provide the residents of Agoura Hills with information concerning their local government and their community.

Section 2. REGULATIONS GOVERNING USE OF THE AGOURA HILLS GOVERNMENT ACCESS CHANNEL (AHTV)

A. Purpose

The purpose of these regulations is to establish guidelines for the use of AHTV, the government access channel. AHTV is a government access channel as provided for in the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984. This federal legislation relates to the use of channel capacity for public, educational, or governmental use. Because AHTV is a government access channel, there is no legal requirement to broadcast any type of programming that is not government-sponsored. AHTV is committed to programming that helps residents learn more about City-sponsored services, programs, events, and activities and about significant issues facing the community.

B. Objectives

The objectives for use of AHTV are as follows:

1. To serve as an on-going source of local government information for residents within the AHTV cable franchise service area.
2. To increase public knowledge of the functions and responsibilities of City government, and of the functions of various departments, commissions, and committees of the City.
3. To serve as the official information center in the event of a local emergency.
4. To supplement the public safety awareness efforts of local law enforcement and of the Fire Department.
5. To enhance awareness of local history, culture, issues, and activities.

C. Administration of the Government Access Channel

The City Manager, or the City Manager's designee, is responsible for programming activities and program schedules that are in compliance with guidelines adopted by the City Council.

D. Programming Statement

1. AHTV will provide information to the residents of Agoura Hills concerning the services, functions, activities, programs, and issues of the City. The government access channel is

not intended to be used as a political forum by any individual or group, nor as a means of creating support for a particular person, program, or issue. Use of the government access channel will be governed by the operating procedures set forth herein, and by the rules and regulations of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as they may apply to the operations of AHTV.

2. The City Manager reserves the right to review all programs, whether proposed or completed, in order to determine compliance with these programming regulations and objectives.

E. Programming Restrictions

The City recognizes the programming content restrictions imposed on AHTV by regulations of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), by prevailing community standards, and by applicable federal, state, and local laws. AHTV will not cablecast any programming that contains the following:

1. Paid advertising in which commercial appeals for funds are made. Paid advertising includes, but is not limited to, advertising by or on behalf of a candidate for public office, and program material that is made available without charge by individuals, business entities, or institutions that have a commercial interest in the subject matter.
2. Copyrighted material, unless clearances for use have been obtained, and written proof of such clearance can be presented.
3. Programming produced by any governmental body, individual, or entity that is not an official branch of the City, or that is not a local non-profit organization serving the community, unless the program proposed to be cablecast is sponsored or co-sponsored by the City.
4. Programming that is prohibited by applicable federal, state or local laws.

F. Political Broadcasts

Declared candidates for any local elective public office, and persons advocating any cause, viewpoint, or policy, may not appear on AHTV, except in a pre-taped program where the format enables all candidates, or all sides of an issue, to be heard on an equal basis and within the same format. Final decisions on program formats and appearances by qualified candidates for local elective offices will be made by the City Manager.

G. Program Type

Programming that is cablecast on AHTV will fall into one or more of the following programming categories, listed by scheduling priority:

1. Emergency

Emergency programming may consist of live, taped or alpha-numeric programming, and may be shown at any time, as the emergency dictates. The purpose of this programming is to inform residents of emergency situations and to instruct viewers in evacuation, detour, notification, and escape procedures. Upon any emergency, regularly scheduled programming may be interrupted or cancelled. The content and scheduling of any emergency programming must be approved by the City Manager, or his or her designee.

2. Taped Programs

Taped coverage of City Council and Planning Commission meetings will be cablecast on a weekly basis, or more frequently, as may be determined.

3. AHTV Community Bulletin Board

The Community Bulletin Board will be used to display City-related messages to the public. Message content and message suitability will be governed by these programming regulations and objectives and are subject to approval by designated City staff.

4. Outside Pre-Produced Programming

- a) Outside pre-produced programming may be considered for cablecasting on AHTV in accordance with the following schedule of implementation:

- (i) During the first six-month period following the effective date of these regulations, no outside pre-produced programming will be accepted for cablecasting on AHTV.

- (ii) During the second six-month period following the effective date of these regulations, outside pre-produced programming prepared and submitted by governmental agencies may be considered and accepted for cablecasting on AHTV.

- (iii) Commencing one year after the effective date of these regulations, outside pre-produced programming prepared and submitted by non-profit entities may be considered and accepted for cablecasting on AHTV, in addition to pre-produced programming prepared and submitted by governmental agencies.

- b) All outside pre-produced programming will be reviewed by the City Manager for suitability and for compliance with all applicable programming regulations, and the determination of the City Manager will be final.

- c) The regulations applicable to outside pre-produced programming prepared and submitted by governmental agencies and non-profit entities include the following:

(i) Eligible Content. Outside pre-produced programming must consist of information that serves a governmental purpose or that meets one or more of the following criteria:

- (1) Addresses topics, activities, and events that are appropriate for the general public.
- (2) Promotes civic pride.
- (3) Enhances the image and reputation of the City.
- (4) Informs the community of the availability of governmental and non-profit services, activities, events, or projects.
- (5) Educates the public concerning public health and safety issues.
- (6) Promotes community events that typically enjoy broad citizen support and enhance the City's positive aspects.
- (7) Provides information on community-based resources and programs that are of social, educational, recreational, or cultural benefit.
- (8) Provides news or announcements concerning achievements or accomplishments by the City, community organizations, or City residents.

(ii) Ineligible Content. The following categories of information may not be included in outside pre-produced programming that is prepared and submitted by governmental agencies and non-profit entities:

- (1) Information or support for or on behalf of religious organizations.
- (2) Information or support for or on behalf of political candidates, political campaigns, and ballot measures.
- (3) Information or support for special interest groups that do not serve a governmental or civic purpose.
- (4) Advocacy or debate related to issues under consideration by the City Council or other local decision-making bodies.
- (5) Information or programs, events, or activities that are not open to the general public or that relate to regular meetings of local service organizations or clubs.

H. Access Policy

1. AHTV Community Bulletin Board Procedures

- a) AHTV is a government access channel, as described in the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984, and was established for the dissemination of local government-related information to the viewing public. Access to the channel by an authorized person, department, or organization described below in subparagraph (g) may be requested by submitting a request for a public service announcement on the AHTV Community Bulletin Board, or a request for the cablecasting of outside pre-produced programming.
- b) The City Council, all City departments, and the Agoura Hills Library may submit public service announcements to be cablecast on AHTV. All announcements must be submitted in writing at least five working days prior to the requested start date. Forms for this service are available from AHTV at City Hall, 30001 Ladyface Court, Agoura Hills, CA 91301, (818) 597-7302 or (818) 597-7317; e-mail to AHTV@ci.agoura-hills.ca.us. Completed forms must be delivered to Agoura Hills City Hall. No announcement requests will be accepted over the phone, except in case of an emergency.
- c) Public service announcements submitted by a City department must be approved by AHTV staff.
- d) Public service announcements are input by the AHTV staff and appear on the TV screen a “slide” at a time. Announcements should be concise and should contain basic information concerning “what, when, where, how, and how much.”
- e) No classified ads or commercial messages are allowed on AHTV.
- f) Receipt of a public service announcement does not guarantee its appearance on AHTV. Suitability for this channel and compliance with the City’s programming regulations and objectives will be determined by the City Manager. The date of input and the length of run of any announcement will be determined by staff availability and channel programming capacity.
- g) Every reasonable attempt will be made to input all public service announcements received by AHTV. If channel programming capacity is limited, announcements will be carried a maximum of five days, on a first-come, first-served basis, with the following priorities:
 - 1) Emergency and public safety notification messages, originated by the Sheriff’s Department, the Fire Department, or Emergency Services;
 - 2) Announcements ordered by the City Council;

- 3) Announcements ordered by the City Manager;
- 4) Announcements submitted by City department managers;
- 5) Announcements submitted by governmental agencies and local non-profit organizations that serve the community, provided that such announcements comply with the regulations set forth above in Section 2(G)(4) under the heading "Outside Pre-Produced Programming."

2. Coverage of City Council and Planning Commission Meetings

AHTV currently tapes the City Council and Planning Commission meetings for cablecasting on Adelphia and Charter channels at 7:00 p.m. on the Sunday evening following the meeting. In addition, tapes of these meetings will be scheduled for cablecasting on AHTV at times in the morning, afternoon, and evening during the week to facilitate maximum viewing by the community.

3. Equipment Usage Procedures

- a) Video equipment and facilities may be used in studio, or in the Council Chambers, by trained members of AHTV staff with the approval of the City Manager.
- b) AHTV may at various times conduct training sessions for the benefit of City staff members as directed by the City Manager.
- c) AHTV will not allow City equipment or facilities to be interconnected with any other equipment or facilities. Any user tampering with, adjusting, or altering any City equipment or facilities may be subject to immediate forfeiture of the right to use that equipment or those facilities.

4. Air-Time Request Procedures for Non-AHTV Pre-produced Programming

- a) Air-time on AHTV may be requested for the cablecasting of a non-AHTV pre-produced program or series as set forth above in Section 2(G)(4), provided that the request is made by an authorized person, department, or organization, and that the program is suitable for cablecasting on the channel.
- b) To submit a program for consideration, an Air-time Request Form describing the program title, topic, format, and running time is required, along with a SVHS or DVD for the program.
- c) The program will be screened for suitability, compliance with the City's programming regulations and objectives, and for technical quality. The program may be accepted or rejected, in whole or in part.
- d) No programming containing commercial advertising will be approved.

- e) If approved for cablecasting, the City Manager will determine when and how often the program will appear in the AHTV schedule.
- f) It is the responsibility of the applicant to obtain all copyrights and all clearances to all portions of the submitted program including, but not limited to: video, performance, music, song, theatrical, and film rights. The City Manager may require written proof of approvals or require the applicant to sign a statement that all approvals have been obtained and to provide satisfactory indemnification of AHTV and the City of Agoura Hills.
- g) Applicant must provide all programs on SVHS or DVD, which will be retained by AHTV staff for the length of time that the program is to be run on AHTV. If applicant desires to have the SVHS or DVD returned after it has completed its run on AHTV, the applicant must provide a mailing envelope or carton, with address label and sufficient postage, or make arrangements for pick up within two weeks of the end of the scheduled run. Any tapes left longer than two weeks, unless otherwise arranged, may be discarded or erased for re-use.

5. Emergency Procedures

Emergency programming is to be originated only by the City Manager, the Sheriff's Department, the Fire Department, or emergency operations personnel. Under no circumstances will access to AHTV for emergency communications be granted to anyone who is not authorized to initiate emergency procedures.