

ALAMO PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL  
PROGRAMMING STANDARDS AND PRACTICES

*Noncommercial television should address itself to the ideal of excellence, not the idea of acceptability...Television should be the visual counterpart of the Literary essay, should arouse our dreams, satisfy our hunger for beauty, take us on journeys, enable us to participate in events, present great drama and music, explore the sea and the sky and the woods and the hills...Once in awhile it does, and you get a quick glimpse of its potential.*

E.B. White  
(American Author and Essayist)

*This instrument can teach, it can illuminate; yes, it can even inspire. But it can do so only to the extent that humans are determined to use it to those ends. Otherwise, it is merely lights and wires in a box.*

Edward R. Murrow  
(Broadcaster and Journalist)

The goal of the ALAMO PUBLIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS COUNCIL (APTC) is to provide trustworthy and enriching content on-air, online, and in our community. It is imperative that we maintain the highest standards to achieve responsible use of our broadcast signal and content through digital and emerging technology platforms. For the purposes of this document, references to “public broadcasting”, “programming”, “content” and “policies” will be platform neutral and apply to all forms of communication.

It is a principal aim of the APTC to reach a wide variety of audiences. Its content will attempt to broaden the experiences and horizons of all by presenting a broad range of ideas, information, and perspectives.

As the corporation licensed by the Federal Communications Commission to operate KLRN-DT Channel 9, in San Antonio, Texas, the Directors of the APTC elect board officers, appoint the President and CEO, and set policy guidelines and programming objectives.

The following is a general statement of the programming goals and objectives of the APTC which reflects the spirit and embraces the philosophy of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) program policies adopted by the PBS Board of Directors April 29, 1987, and affirmed by PBS membership June 5, 1987 and embodied in the June 21, 2018 PBS Editorial Standards and Practices update. It is not meant to be comprehensive, but rather serve as guiding principles for KLRN management and staff responsible for content delivery.

## The Challenge

Public Television possesses the unique potential of a mass medium whose content is not limited by the requirement to compete constantly for maximum audiences. Public Television can put excellence ahead of acceptability, broadcast not just the popular but also the profound, and serve as the community's "sounding board" by experimenting with new concepts in the expression of ideas and beliefs.

In addition, public television can distribute content of significance to its community, which might not otherwise be available. It is a basic responsibility and goal of the APTC to give active consideration in its program planning and development to those distinctive audiences who make up its constituency.

These considerations are made keeping in mind that public television's diversified audiences are also significantly served through its presentation of a wide variety of subjects and viewpoints within the presentation of content across all media platforms.

KLRN programming activities include screening, acquiring, scheduling, and originating content to distribute on KLRN platforms or to be distributed on other platforms, as well as for national, regional and statewide release as deemed desirable and feasible. To meet these goals, KLRN will:

1. Ascertain the programming and educational needs of our community including but not limited to the different races, ethnicities, cultures, religions, languages, genders, sexual orientation, education levels, socioeconomic status, underserved audiences, as well as other meaningful characteristics, of the people living in our community; and
2. Locate, screen, acquire, produce, and schedule existing programs which address such needs; and
3. Study audience viewing patterns and scheduling options in order to design a program schedule which maximizes the intended audience of each program aired; and
4. Study various reports and mechanisms which provide audience response concerning the effectiveness of the types, quality and scheduling of KLRN programs; and
5. Encourage new, timely and topical local and regional programming to further strengthen KLRN's community links and distinguish KLRN from other competitive cable ,broadcast networks,and streaming media services; and
6. Develop and provide educational services that enhance and advance educational attainment and improve performance for students of all ages throughout the station's region of service. KLRN will use broadcast and various distribution media channels to serve the needs of schools, teachers, parents and students; and

7. Invest in the production and acquisition of local content that addresses community issues, as well as supplements information about local events; seek funds from present underwriters and other corporate and individual support; and
8. Ensure that producers of content for distribution by KLRN will abide by the directives embodied in this document; and
9. Include this document on the station's website for access by the public.

### **Editorial Integrity**

Public television's reputation for quality reflects the public's trust in the editorial integrity of public television programs and the process by which they are selected. To maintain that trust, public television and KLRN are responsible for "shielding" the programming process from political pressure or improper influence from program funders or other sources. KLRN also must make every effort to ensure that its programs satisfy those editorial standards and journalistic norms that are designed to assure program integrity.

### **Taste and Judgment**

Innovation in programming may occasionally raise questions of taste and propriety. KLRN will exercise care to ensure that programs containing novel or controversial themes reflect an integrity of purpose, with regard for the tastes and attitudes of the community, and are consistent with our mission and goals.

KLRN does not seek to be permissive but neither should it be bound to the conventional. We believe there is an obligation on the part of public television to broadcast a wide variety of significant programs and series of national, regional, state, and local interest that promote dialogue and engagement in the community.

KLRN staff will review content for fairness and accuracy. Accuracy means honesty, fidelity to facts, and humility on the part of producers and KLRN staff to question their own assumptions about the subjects they are handling. Accuracy includes more than simply verifying whether information is correct; facts must be placed in sufficient context based on the nature of the piece to ensure that the public is not misled. For example, facts can lack necessary context if they are presented in a way that omits important details, quotes someone without correctly reflecting what the person was asked, or distorts what occurred. Producers must also be mindful of the language used to frame the facts to avoid deceiving or misleading the audience or encouraging false inferences. A commitment to accuracy also requires gathering, updating, and promptly correcting information as a story develops. Producers must exercise the highest level of care in verifying information, especially when it relates to any accusations of wrongdoing. KLRN staff and producers that work in partnership with KLRN must consider all relevant facts and perspectives on a particular subject and present information in a respectful and responsible manner—without favoritism or discrimination.

Fairness does not require that equal time be given to conflicting opinions or viewpoints. Fairness does, however, require KLRN staff and producers to be open-minded when evaluating the merits and assessing the credibility of all opinions or viewpoints. One purpose of fairness is for audiences to appreciate and learn from content, even if they disagree with its conclusions.

### **Local Program Production**

There is an opportunity for KLRN to develop and promote creative talent available in its broadcast area. KLRN will be devoted to the development and production of locally produced programs, utilizing local talent to the greatest extent possible.

### **National Program Production**

It is a goal that programs produced by KLRN be of a quality worthy of selection or funding for regional or national distribution to public broadcasting stations and distributors as well as other partner organizations. Success in creating such programs brings important benefits to the community and to the station.

### **Public Affairs**

One of the most important roles of mass communications in a democracy is the development of informed public opinion through the public dissemination of information and ideas concerning the vital and occasionally controversial issues, which are held by the various groups that make up the community. The foundation of the American system of broadcasting is the right of the public to be informed and not the right of the government, any broadcast licensee, individual or group to broadcast only its own particular views on any matter.

KLRN abides by the mandate of the fairness doctrine as described by the Federal Communications Commission. The essence of the fairness doctrine dictates a two-fold duty:

1. the obligation to provide a reasonable opportunity for the discussion of “controversial issues of public importance” and
2. the obligation to air conflicting views when such issues are presented.

The APTC recognizes the responsibility of broadcasting in enhancing a system of freedom of expression and adopts as its primary public affairs programming the following statement:

To produce or otherwise acquire public affairs programming for broadcast which reflects the spirit and the mandate of the fairness doctrine and meets the needs of our community by presenting programs which contain a fair presentation of the issues, news, and salient topics the day at the local, state and national levels. To seek in the presentation of this programming a balance of views, so eminently a part of the First Amendment which rests on the assumption

that the widest possible dissemination of information from diverse and antagonistic sources is essential to the welfare of the public.

### **Cultural Affairs**

National public television programming makes it possible for the viewer to hear and see great symphonies, operatic performances, and other artistic programming. It is the goal of the APTC to make available as many of these fine productions as possible, complimented by station acquisitions and productions representing similar and other cultural and art forms.

### **Social Media and Emerging Technologies**

Producers and staff who are communicating with the public on behalf of APTC and KLRN by using KLRN social media channels or program channels have a heightened responsibility to ensure that they consistently adhere to the Programming Standards and Practices. Important best practices include: exercising civility, avoiding distribution of factual errors or misleading information, preventing conflicts of interest, providing adequate context, avoiding sensationalism to generate clicks, and reviewing third-party content prior to sharing on KLRN social media or program channels.

### **Education Services**

KLRN provides programming material designed to interface with traditional classroom curricula presented in schools through PBS LearningMedia. PBS LearningMedia is a digital collection of thousands of FREE classroom-ready resources aligned to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). KLRN acquires and produces instructional materials that are specifically suited to the educational needs of students across Texas. KLRN's staff of educational specialists, work to support teachers to grow the utilization of the quality resources.

### **Multichannel Television Sound**

KLRN in its broadcast operation will reserve the Multichannel Television Sound (MTS) stereo audio and second audio program (SAP) channels exclusively for program-related content.

### **Programming Standards and Practices Evaluation**

The KLRN Programming Standards and Practices Review Committee recommends that KLRN, APTC and the Community Advisory Board continue to monitor the means by which community feedback on programming and services is received and evaluated and explore ways to improve this process. Additionally, the committee recommends that the standards and practices review by the APTC board be conducted on a biennial basis.

Reviewed by the APTC Programming Standards and Practices Review Committee –July 21, 2020.  
Adopted by the APTC board -September 17, 2020.