

Town of
Darien
Government Access
Television

Government Access Television Policies and Procedures

10 / 2018

POLICY

Darien Government Access Television (DGAT) shall provide unbiased, non-partisan information to residents. It shall not be used for partisan political or commercial purposes.

PROCEDURES

1. Darien Government Access Television (“DGAT”) AKA Darien TV79 shall be supervised by a committee (the “Darien Government Access Television Advisory Committee”), appointed and charged by the Board of Selectmen, which may modify the committee and its charge from time to time. The committee shall consist of seven (7) residents, no more than five (5) of whom shall be from the same political party. Two of the members shall be the designated appointees by the town to the Area Nine Cable Council (ANCC)., Each

member shall be appointed for a term of one (1) year.

2. The DGAT Advisory Committee shall meet at least quarterly to be updated on the operation of DGAT, hear from the public and address any issues of concern. The Chairman, who will be elected by the DGAT Advisory Comm each year, may call additional meetings.

3. The DGAT Advisory Committee shall appoint a Program Director and General Manager who shall be responsible for DGAT's day to day operations, including selection and assignment of coverage, recruiting / training / assigning camera operators and production staff, submission of payment sheets from such staff to the Finance office and the design, installation, maintenance and enhancement of such technical equipment as needed to perform its programming responsibilities. DGAT officers (except the Committee Chair) may be named at the discretion of the Advisory Committee to the volunteer positions of Program Director and/or General Manager.

4. The objectives of DGAT shall include, but not be limited to the following:

A. To expand community awareness and information about local government and it's decision making process;

B. To provide information about programs and services offered to the Darien community by Town departments and Town-funded agencies;

5. The following general provisions shall apply:

A. DGAT shall provide gavel to gavel meeting coverage of the Town's governmental elected and appointed boards, commissions and similar bodies in addition to information of general civic importance to the community.

B. The primary priorities will be as follows:

1. Local governmental meetings;
2. Information regarding local governmental bodies;
3. Information regarding services and programs offered by Town departments and Town-funded agencies;
4. Special programs on current events or particular community issues (LWV non-partisan speakers),
5. Programs and alphanumeric displays regarding Town services.
6. Such coverage may be distributed on DGAT's cable TV channel, video archives or social media.

C. The secondary priorities of DGAT will be as follows:

1. Public Service announcements for Non-Profit or Civic Organizations.
2. Programming of a civic nature obtained from outside sources to supplement locally produced government programming;

3. State or federal government meetings of special local interest;
- D. Programs which contain, in whole or in part, any of the following subject matter will not be produced, aired or distributed:
1. Commercial messages or material promoting a company, product or service with the primary objective of producing a monetary profit.
 2. Businesses, individuals and organizations may be acknowledged for assistance in the production of a program or the provision of other means of support.
6. Political Campaigning: DGAT will be not used for political campaigning by individuals or organizations seeking public office or legislation. Neither will the service be used for the solicitation of funds for political purposes.
- During the two month period preceding an election, programs which feature elected officials who are candidates for election or re-election will not be produced or distributed. This will not preclude their participation in public meetings or special forums of public debate. Debates between or among candidates may be aired when produced by non-partisan groups or organizations (such as the League of Women Voters.)
7. Religious Material: Program material which would advocate a particular religious belief will not be produced or distributed. Religious organizations or

ideals may be mentioned as incidental information as part of a program. This is not to preclude the appearance of an individual representing a particular religious organization as part of a program, which provides general information. This will also not preclude the distribution of announcements of public events, which are sponsored or conducted by religious organizations.

8. Program material which constitutes libel, slander, violation of trademark or copyright, or which might violate any local, state, or federal laws, including regulations of the Federal Communications Commission, will not be produced or distributed.

9. The following program production and distribution provisions shall apply:

A. Public meetings:

1. All public meetings of the Town's commissions, boards, appointees and other town related public meetings are authorized for electronic media recording and distribution, except for executive sessions, which are closed to the public.
2. All public meetings to be broadcast live or be recorded and distributed will be done so in their entirety, gavel-to-gavel. Recesses, when called in a meeting under Roberts Rules, will not be recorded or distributed as audio or video.

3. Informal comments among persons attending before, during or after a public meeting will not be aired if not recognized by the Chair as "Public Comment" as part of gavel-to-gavel coverage.

B. Written permission for the use of copyrighted materials for airing on DGAT must be obtained in advance from the materials' owner and shared with DGAT by the department or agency sponsoring the local use of the materials.

C. Community information messages:

1. Information for distribution may be submitted by any government department, Town-funded agency or bona fide nonprofit organization which serves the residents of Darien.

2. The events' submitted must be open to the general public, and must not discriminate based on age, sex, race, religion, national origin, physical impairment, or sexual orientation.

3. Messages may provide general information about a specific fundraising event but not be commercial in nature or solicit funds.

4. Airing of such messages will be at the discretion of DGAT Program Director.

D. Statement by individuals:

1. Statements by members of the general public and elected officials will be permitted in the regular discourse of a public meeting (pursuant to the rules of such meeting) or as participants in a panel discussion.

2. . Panel discussion programs will not be modified or edited but aired in their entirety

10. The DGAT is an operating entity of the Town of Darien under the supervision of the Board of Selectmen.

11. The Town of Darien, its officers, employees and agents do not warrant the accuracy of any information, produced or distributed.

NOTE: Revised January 2008 to a 7-member board, per Bd of Selectmen. NOTE: Revised September 2017, January 2018, October 2018, and March 2019.