

OPB Editorial Policy

Adopted by the Board of Directors
September 11, 2012

1. Background

OPB is an Oregon nonprofit corporation serving as a primary source of news, information and culture that is distributed through radio and television, as well as through digital and social media. To maintain the integrity of its noncommercial educational licenses and the trust of its listeners, viewers, donors and community, OPB must operate its stations in conformance with all applicable laws, including rules issued by the Federal Communications Commission (“FCC”), and in a manner that reinforces the trust that the public places in OPB. OPB’s Board of Directors, Management, and the Community Advisory Board all play important, separate and distinct roles in ensuring both compliance with applicable rules and in formulating, implementing or evaluating OPB’s programming policies.

2. Policy Purpose

OPB Management faces an array of editorial decisions. These include deciding which programs are broadcast on radio and television, which issues to cover in digital media, and when and how all such content will be made available. As OPB’s role as a trusted source of news, information and culture has become more prominent, its focus on original journalism has increased, and the frequency and character of editorial decisions have changed. Often, the decision of how to cover and distribute a story must be made on a moment’s notice.

OPB recognizes that it must exercise diligence and discipline in order to maintain its reputation as a trusted source of news, educational material, entertainment and information (“Programming”). For purposes of this policy, “programming” refers also to content created or distributed by OPB for promotional or engagement purposes, whether distributed by radio, television or digital media.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that OPB:

- adheres to the highest professional standards,
- complies with its mission statement,
- has the ability to maintain its independence and creative freedom with regard to creating and disseminating content, and
- is not faced with undue influence from either internal or external sources.

3. Undue Influence

For purposes of this policy, “undue influence” shall mean intentionally coercive behavior undertaken by any source – including but not limited to governmental agencies, private corporations, funders, audience members, news or content sources, powerful individuals, or special interest groups – that seeks to influence or interfere

with the accurate, impartial, professional creation of content for news coverage or programming.

(This policy is not intended to diminish or prevent internal editing or quality control practices designed to ensure the maintenance of professional journalistic and/or program production standards.)

4. Editorial Quality

- (a) Programming should be consistent with OPB's mission statement -- Oregon Public Broadcasting: giving voice to the community, connecting Oregon and its neighbors, illuminating a wider world.
- (b) Programming should be of a high professional quality and, in its totality, represent a well-balanced diversity of views.
- (c) Programming should be credible, accurate, fair, valuable, stimulating and relevant to OPB's audience.
- (d) Programming decisions should be made in compliance with all legal requirements and applicable industry ethical guidelines.
- (e) At all times, OPB should strive for transparency regarding its Programming and funding decisions.

5. Goals

- (a) OPB should maintain editorial independence in the creation of all Programming.
- (b) Decisions of editorial and programming staff should remain independent from the undue influence of any internal or external source.
- (c) All content creators and production personnel should be aware of and strictly comply with FCC rules and OPB policy relating to payola and plugola.
- (d) Editorial and journalistic functions should operate freely from any undue influence from business, marketing, or funding functions within OPB.
- (e) OPB journalists should conform their activities to the most current ethical guidelines of Society of Professional Journalists Code of Ethics.

6. Oversight

- (a) OPB Management will be responsible for day-to-day editorial and Programming decisions.

- (b) OPB Management will establish detailed procedures and guidance to staff as necessary on the use of social media, information technology resources, and employee conduct to ensure compliance with this Policy.
- (c) OPB Management will ensure that staff is aware of and complies with OPB's conflict of interest policies.
- (d) OPB Management will use care in the selection of Programming subject matter and the manner in which it is expressed so as to protect OPB's reputation and the trust placed in it by its audiences.
- (e) OPB Management will exercise appropriate oversight to ensure that the above goals are met and that OPB staff complies in all material regards with this Policy.
- (f) OPB Management oversight will include regular reports to the Board of Directors.
- (g) In the event that a particular editorial decision may have a significant public impact or could potentially result in material harm to OPB, OPB Management will consult with the Board of Directors in advance of the Programming being distributed to the public, if advance notice is possible; otherwise OPB Management will notify the Board within a reasonable period of time.
- (h) OPB Management and the Board of Directors will consult on a regular basis with the OPB Community Advisory Board for advice and community feedback regarding OPB Programming.
- (i) The oversight of the Board of Directors with regard to OPB Management's editorial decisions and practices will be exercised in a manner that is consistent with the Board's fiduciary duties to OPB.
- (j) This Policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors.