

Rules and Policies

of

WRBB 104.9FM

These Rules and Policies have been developed and adopted to create a safe, stable, and secure environment that nurtures and fuels the growth of creativity, accessibility, and integrity. They apply to all on-air announcers (both students and community members), employees, students, and all other individuals affiliated with or visiting WRBB 104.9FM (“Station”) in any capacity.

Behavior that is abusive to anyone affiliated with Station or Northeastern University (“University”) or that compromises the integrity of Station or the University is not allowed or condoned, and will be addressed in accordance with these Rules and Policies and the Student Code of Conduct of Northeastern University.

The Station acknowledges individuals’ rights of freedom of speech and values the opportunity to express opinions publicly. However, all individuals affiliated with the Station are expected to express their views peacefully and respectfully of others, and to never speak or give the impression of speaking on behalf of the Station or the University. Appropriate disclaimers must be given as needed or requested by Station management.

If there are any questions or concerns regarding these Rules and Policies or any related policies, please direct them to the Station General Manager or Program Director.

Article I Legal Requirements

Section 1 The Station requires that all on-air announcers, staff members, and guests of the Station follow these Rules and Policies, as well as all other applicable Northeastern University policies, state and federal laws and regulations, and FCC rules, regulations, and guidelines (collectively, Legal Requirements), when present at the Station, representing the Station in the community, or performing any service or other act on behalf of the Station.

Section 2 The Station reserves the right to notify Northeastern University officials, police, and other authorities of any violation of the Legal Requirements by any person, depending on the nature of the violation.

Section 3 Disciplinary action shall be determined by the Station’s Executive Board and appropriate officials of Northeastern University, who shall have the right to intervene and to recommend and enforce any disciplinary action in addition to that recommended by the Executive Board.

Article II Violations, Investigation and Disciplinary Action

Any violation of these Rules and Policies will result in disciplinary action at the discretion of the Station General Manager and Executive Board and pursuant to University policy, as further set forth below.

Section 1 Any violation of the these Station Rules and Policies is subject to investigation by the Executive Board and other officials of Northeastern University, during which the subject of the investigation may be temporarily suspended (in which case, the restrictions set forth in the last paragraph of Section 2 below will apply).

Section 2 Depending on the nature of the violation, one or any combination of the following disciplinary actions may be imposed by the Station Manager, Executive Board or Northeastern University as determined in their sole discretion:

- a. A written warning.
- b. Suspension for a definite period.
- c. Cancellation of the subject's show for a definite or indefinite period (the subject may be permitted to re-apply for a show when the cancellation period has expired).
- d. Permanent termination of any affiliation with Station.
- e. Additional disciplinary action as determined by Northeastern University at any time, in its sole discretion.

In the event of a suspension, show cancellation, or permanent termination, the subject will: lose card access to the Station, be prohibited from broadcasting or participating in any Station activities, and be prohibited from representing themselves as a member of the Station.

Article III Building and Studio Regulations

Access to any portion of the studio complex at 174 Curry Student Center is a privilege, not a right, and the Station reserves the right to revoke any person's access at any time.

Section 1 Card access to the Station facility at 174 Curry Student Center is only granted to staff that have an on-air show and, or are a member of the WRBB administrative staff that actively participate at or on the Station, as determined by the Station Manager or the Board.

Section 2 Access to student and community members is granted at one of three levels, and is valid on a per-semester basis. Individuals are prohibited from accessing rooms above their access level unless they are accompanied by an individual with a higher access level.

- a. Level 1: On-air announcers who have broadcast clearance and have a show on the programming schedule for the given semester are given Front Door and On-Air Studio access only.
- b. Level 2: Administrative staff members of the station who work for a Station department and work-study employees are given access to the Front Door, On-Air Studio, and other rooms within the complex on a limited, as-needed basis.
- c. Level 3: Executive Board members and Northeastern University staff are given Full-Suite access to the Station studio complex.

Media Team members and previously cleared on-air announcers who do not have a show on the programming schedule during the active semester will not be given access to the Station studio complex.

Section 3 Students or guests without clearance are not allowed to be in the Station facilities unless accompanied at all times by a staff member with valid and current card access. Access is limited to the level available to the accompanying staff member.

Section 4 Individuals with Station card access are prohibited from sharing or lending their Husky Card with or to any other person.

Section 5 Guests are allowed in the On-Air studio, but are limited during certain hours.

- a. During Curry Student Center building hours, 5 guests in addition to the on-air announcer are permitted.
- b. During Curry Student Center closed hours, 3 guests in addition to the on-air announcer are permitted.
- c. On-air announcers must request approval from the Program Director and General Manager at least 24 hours in advance in order to exceed guests limits during their show. Permission will be granted on a case-by-case basis and may be withheld in Station management's sole discretion.

Article III Building and Studio Regulations *(continued)*

Section 6 All on-air announcers must accurately report all guests in the Show Report Form and are fully responsible for the actions of their guests. On-air announcers and their guests will be subject to investigation and disciplinary action by the Board and Northeastern University if any of these rules and policies are violated by the guests.

Section 7 Any non-Northeastern student under the age of 18 must be directly supervised by a parent or legal guardian, or an authorized Northeastern University staff member. Anyone intending to bring a non-Northeastern student guest under the age of 18 onto the Station premises must give at least 48 hours' advance notice to the Program Director and General Manager, who may deny access in their sole discretion.

Section 8 The Front Door to the Station must be securely closed at all times. Propping or leaving the door open without direct and uninterrupted supervision is prohibited.

Section 9 Posting stickers, posters, flyers, or any other items within the Station or on any Station property without the prior approval of the Station Manager is strictly prohibited.

Section 10 Alcohol, drugs, and smoking (including e-cigarettes and vaping) are strictly prohibited in 174 Curry Student Center. Any individual found under the influence of, or in possession of, alcohol or drugs in the Station will be immediately reported to the Northeastern University Police Department and subject to investigation as per Article II above.

Section 11 Pets are prohibited in all of 174 Curry Student Center.

Section 12 Food and drink, with the exception of water, is strictly prohibited in the on- and off-air Station studios. Water must be in a closed container to minimize spilling.

Section 13 Theft of or damage to any Station or Northeastern University property will be investigated and disciplined in accordance with these Rules and Policies and any applicable laws. Individuals may be required to reimburse Station or Northeastern University for any such theft or damage upon demand.

Section 14 Announcers are prohibited from changing passwords or downloading, deleting, adding, or tampering with the On-Air Studio computer or any of its software.

Section 15 Upon completion of their shift, announcers must remove any trash and return the studio furnishings and equipment to the condition in which they found it, including the board, levels, chairs, etc.

Article IV Programming and Show Regulations

Section 1 All students and community members must request a time slot for a show prior to the beginning of each semester (fall, spring, summer I, and summer II) in order to be considered for a show in that semester, and are not guaranteed either a show or any particular time slot in any given semester.

Section 2 The on-air announcers listed on the programming schedule are considered the primary announcers.

Section 3 On-air announcers are only allowed one show per semester as a primary announcer.

Section 4 Only primary announcers are granted Station card access, and only for the semester in which they are a primary announcer.

Section 5 Any person who requests a show and is not a student of Northeastern University is required to email the General Manager and Program Director to request a community member application form. Community member status is only granted on a case-by-case basis and is subject to review by a committee designated by Northeastern University.

Section 6 Community member shows are limited to 10 slots per semester, and may be fewer as determined in the sole discretion of the Station Manager and Program Director.

Article V On-Air and FCC Regulations

Northeastern University is licensed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to broadcast the Station as a Class D non-commercial, educational, low-power FM (LPFM) radio station. The FCC investigates public complaints, and regulates content, ownership, and usage of the public airwaves. The University and all individuals involved with the management and operation of the Station must abide by all regulations and guidelines of the FCC, as well as the additional Station rules set forth below.

Section 1 All broadcasts are required to identify the station's legal ID, "WRBB 104.9FM, Boston, Massachusetts," every hour on the hour, as close to the beginning of the hour as possible.

Section 2 Announcers are prohibited from disrupting any scheduled or emergency broadcast from Station or Northeastern University (including, without limitation, any sports broadcasts) unless required by FCC regulations (e.g., airing the emergency broadcast signal), or any local, state, or federal emergency broadcasts.

Article V On-Air and FCC Regulations (*continued*)

Section 3 The broadcast of obscene content is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate termination from the Station. The broadcast of “indecent” programming and profane language is prohibited except during the so-called “safe harbor” hours from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m., but is discouraged at all times.

- a. “Indecent” is defined as material that depicts or describes acts or organs that are sexual or excretory in nature or that the national “contemporary community standard” would find to be patently offensive.
- b. Profanity is defined as offensive language or swears, including (without limitation) the “F” word and the “S” word. The General Manager and Program Director reserve the right to determine whether any particular language could be considered a violation of this clause and therefore should not be used on the Station.
- c. Obscenity is defined as content, language, and speech that violates any of these three clauses (set forth in the Supreme Court case of *Miller v. California*).
 - i. Whether the average person, applying contemporary community standards, would find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to a prurient interest (having or encouraging an excessive interest in sexual matters).
 - ii. Whether the work depicts or describes sexual conduct in a patently offensive way.
 - iii. Whether the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

The above definitions apply to all languages and dialects. In other words, indecent, profane or obscene content broadcast in a foreign language will still be considered indecent, profane or obscene.

Section 4 Between 10 p.m. and 4 a.m., the Station operates Late Night Programming, which is subject to all provisions of Article V Section 2 except that indecent or profane language is permitted in music and other pre-recorded programming if broadcast for an artistic or educational purpose.

- a. Announcers are still prohibited from using indecent, profane, or obscene language during the broadcast.
- b. All Late Night Programming shows must begin with the approved recording regarding listener discretion and a 10 second buffer after the discretionary warning.

Section 5 Announcers are not allowed to endorse or discuss third-party products or services on behalf of Station or Northeastern University.

Article V On-Air and FCC Regulations (*continued*)

Section 6 Announcers and staff are prohibited from engaging in any kind of payola, plugola, commercial kickback, or receipt of a financial or personal benefit relating to any material broadcast on the Station.

- a. Payola is the act of accepting money, services, or any other benefit in exchange for broadcasting any content on the Station, unless the transaction is fully disclosed on-air in accordance with FCC regulations.
- b. Plugola is any mention of non-broadcast activities that can result in a benefit or other consideration to an individual affiliated with the Station, such as the promotion of products, services, venues, concerts, etc., without timely and adequate disclosure of the relationship between the individual and the matter being promoted.
- c. If an on-air announcer or staff member is unsure if they are participating and/or engaging in payola or plugola, they must notify the General Manager and Program Director immediately.

Section 7 As a non-commercial station, WRBB cannot broadcast commercial advertising; however, underwriting is allowed as directed by the Station Manager or Program Director.

- a. Announcers are prohibited from saying prices on-air; describing something as “free” within a context of pricing is still prohibited.
- b. Announcers are prohibited from using call-to-action and qualitative/comparative language when describing products.
- c. Announcers cannot endorse or discuss any product or service on behalf of the Station or Northeastern University.
- d. All underwriting must be approved in advance by the Executive Board.

Section 8 Immediately following completion of every show, primary announcers must complete and submit the online Show Report Form and Spintron playlist. These documents must be completed fully and accurately.

Section 9 Primary announcers must notify the Program Director at least 24 hours in advance if they know they will be absent during their show for that week. Emergency absences will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Section 10 Announcers are only allowed to play the Public Service Announcements (PSA) from the PSA playlist provided to them on the On-Air Studio computer, and are prohibited from playing any rogue and/or independent PSAs that have not been downloaded onto the computer, or otherwise approved, by the General Manager or Program Director. Announcers must play 1.5 minutes of PSAs per hour.

Article V On-Air and FCC Regulations *(continued)*

Section 11 Announcers may only broadcast during their allotted time slot awarded to them at the beginning of the semester by the Executive Board, and are not allowed to be in the on-air studio or broadcast during any other times outside their show time, unless they are a guest or co-host on another radio show, or are given prior approval to substitute.