



KFAI Host's Handbook

For Volunteer Program Hosts

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When you become a program host, KFAI entrusts you with a scarce and valuable resource. By accepting a program, you promise to follow programming rules set up by KFAI and the FCC, and you begin a relationship with the station's listeners and the community in general.

What KFAI agrees to provide program hosts:

- A safe and healthy volunteer environment
- Access to production equipment and facilities
- Opportunities for training and skills development
- Sufficient notification of membership drive dates
- Sufficient notice of preemption by special programming
- The opportunity to take a leave-of-absence
- Prompt resolution of intra-volunteer conflicts
- The right to file an appeal regarding programming decisions that affect your show

What KFAI expects of program hosts:

- **A high-quality product** - *We expect you to produce compelling radio*
- **Listener engagement** – *We expect you to think about, and connect with KFAI's audience*
 - Use social media to call attention to your work at KFAI
 - Graciously accept in-studio phone calls
 - Fill out your program music playlist at spinitron.com
 - Provide program episode information at KFAI.org
 - Participate fully in pledge drives
 - *Follow staff directions for pitching*
 - *Attend training and workshops*
 - *Devote off-air time to taking calls, encouraging membership*
- **Respect for other volunteers** – *Program hosts will be considerate of the rights of other hosts that adjoin them in the schedule. Tardiness, guests or equipment issues shall not prevent fellow program hosts from starting or finishing their shows on time, and in a non-stressful manner.*

In addition to the items listed above, KFAI program hosts must be familiar with requirements listed in the KFAI Host's Handbook, including these key points:

Attendance – We expect you to be present for listeners

***Absences** – Hosts are allowed a maximum of 12 absences per year and no more than two consecutive absences unless they have filed for a leave.*

***Leave** – Hosts must request a leave of absence if they will be gone for more than two consecutive weeks. Three months is the maximum leave allowed in any calendar year, and only one leave is permitted per year. Host leaves will be reviewed by the Content Manager in consultation with the General Manager and the Content Advisory Committee. While there is no lifetime limit on leaves, a series of such requests in subsequent years would be cause for concern.*

Program Integrity – Any fundamental change to the original program proposal must be submitted as a request to the Content Manager, and is subject to review by the Content Advisory Committee. This includes: changes to program focus, program name, degree of primary host's involvement, and the addition of permanent co-hosts.

- For shows where a primary host is added to the schedule, or a primary host is taking a leave of absence, it is necessary to **fill out a [Program Alteration Request](#)** and submit it to the Content Manager.
- In the event that half or more of the listed primary hosts no longer participate in a program, the time slot may be opened for proposals, with the remaining hosts eligible to reapply.

Language and Content

Board operators are responsible for everything that goes out on the air. This includes every word spoken by guests and everything contained in a recording. The FCC will fine stations that are in violation of language and content guidelines. Violations are often reported by listeners, so it is important for board operators, program hosts and guests to understand and follow the rules.

The FCC rules regarding language and content involve several categories:

- Sensitive language
- Commercialism
- Partisanship/Political broadcasts and equal time
- Telephone conversations (this includes Zoom/Skype/other online conversations)

Note: Libel and slander are important language issues that do not fall under the jurisdiction of the FCC. Libel and slander are prosecuted in the courts. This is discussed in the KFAI rules section.

Sensitive language

KFAI is governed by the FCC in relation to what we can, or cannot, say on the air. To the FCC, there are three types of sensitive language: obscene, indecent, and profane.

Obscene

Obscene language is not protected by the First Amendment and broadcasters are prohibited from airing obscene programming at any time. According to the U.S. Supreme Court, to be obscene, material must

- appeal to the prurient interest [prurient: obsessively interested in sexual matters]
- describe sexual conduct in a patently offensive way, and
- lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.

This law was created to protect the public from hard core pornography.

Indecent

The FCC defines indecency as the broadcast of language that “describes, in terms patently offensive as measured by contemporary community standards for the broadcast medium, sexual or excretory actions or organs.”

Profane

The FCC says that profane language, “includes those words that are so highly offensive that their mere utterance in the context presented may, in legal terms, amount to a nuisance.” The word ‘fuck,’ on its own, could be considered profane. In other contexts it could be obscene or indecent. For example, words that could be considered obscene, indecent and/or profane: shit, piss, fuck, cunt, cocksucker, motherfucker, tits. This, however, is not a complete list.

Safe Harbor

Obscene language is prohibited at all times. However, the hours between 10 pm and 6 am local time are considered “safe harbor” for indecent and profane content. During these hours, the FCC relaxes its enforcement of rules regarding profane and indecent language.

Handling Obscene, Indecent, and Profane Content on KFAI

- Screen all recorded material before broadcast (music, interviews, etc.) (“I didn’t know that word was in there” is NOT an acceptable explanation at any time. KFAI expects programmers to know what is in the songs they broadcast.)
- Do not broadcast obscene material at any time.
- Do not broadcast indecent or profane content between 6am and 10pm.

Between 10pm and 6am, indecent or profane language is allowed on KFAI if the sensitive words occur as part of a song’s lyrics. Any KFAI host choosing to air indecent or profane song lyrics between 10pm and 6am must be prepared to defend their decision to do so on the basis of free speech, scientific merit and/or artistic merit.

Any KFAI 10pm – 6am program that uses songs with indecent or profane language must air a disclaimer announcement at least once each hour. The disclaimer should read something like this: ***“In recognition of freedom of speech protections in the first amendment of the US Constitution and FCC policy on “Safe Harbor” hours, this KFAI late night program may include indecent or profane song lyrics. Listeners who object to coarse language may find some elements of this program offensive.”***

A similar disclaimer should also be posted on the show’s page at KFAI.ORG, with a language advisory notice accompanying each archived program.

In the course of their announcing duties, and in interviews and conversations, KFAI hosts and their guests may not use indecent or profane language at any time during the broadcast day, including the “Safe Harbor” hours. Indecent and/or profane language is allowed only during “Safe Harbor” hours and only when it is part of the recorded or live performance of a song.

KFAI hosts are also prohibited from using their platforms to launch personal attacks of any kind over the air. This includes but is not limited to the defamation of individuals, businesses and organizations, the station and its management, and the community itself. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action and changes in volunteer status.

Inform all guests/interviewees of these rules. If a guest violates the rules, first warn them politely. If they continue, it is the board operator’s responsibility to take them off the air.

Confused? When in doubt, play it safe and err on the side of NOT broadcasting indecent or profane content.

Payola & Plugola

It violates Federal law, FCC rules and KFAI policy to engage in Payola and Plugola.

- **"Payola"** is the broadcast of material for which a station or its employees, producers, or program suppliers have received or are promised consideration, without disclosing that the consideration was paid or promised.
 - **Section 317** of the [Communications Act of 1934](#) requires broadcasters to disclose to their listeners if matter has been aired in exchange for money, services or other valuable consideration. The announcement must be aired when the subject matter is broadcast.
 - **Section 507** of the [Communications Act](#) requires that, when anyone provides or promises to provide money, services or other consideration to someone to include program matter in a broadcast, that fact must be disclosed in advance of the broadcast, ultimately to the station over which the matter is to be aired. Both the person providing the money or services and the recipient are obligated to make this disclosure. Failure to disclose such payment is commonly referred to as "payola" and is punishable by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or imprisonment for not more than one year or both.

- **"Plugola"** is the on-air promotion of goods or services for which the station or anyone with programming responsibility has an undisclosed financial interest.

Examples:

If a record company pays you to play their releases on your program, that's "Payola".

If you own a record company and play your releases on your program without disclosing that you will get paid every time someone buys a disc or a download, that's "Plugola."

If you are a DJ who gets paid to spin at a local club, promoting that event without disclosing that you benefit from it financially is "Plugola."

No employee or volunteer, who has any role in the production or selection of broadcast matter, may:

1. Accept money, services, goods, or other valuable consideration from individuals, organizations, associations, or other entities to broadcast a program or program material.
2. Promote any activity or matter in which he or she has a direct or indirect financial interest.
3. Broadcast any material that to his or her knowledge requires sponsorship identification as outlined in the FCC's regulations and that does not include the required sponsorship identification.

In addition, we must abide by some general commercialism rules that are outlined in the KFAI Host's Handbook:

- You cannot mention prices or discounts.
- You cannot use calls to action ("Go to this show," "Buy this disc," etc.).
- You cannot use qualitative language when describing a product, service, event or performance. ("best," "better," "great," etc.)

Program hosts should be mindful of these guidelines when talking about any product, service, or event.

As a general rule: *the station can inform but not promote.*

KFAI Late Night Access / Security Policy

KFAI strives to be a welcoming place where everyone feels respected. All KFAI volunteers and program hosts should feel comfortable and safe while working in our facilities, especially after regular business hours and very late at night.

The volunteer hosts on air should be respectful towards all visitors but must remain focused on the broadcast and serving KFAI's listeners.

- Only on-duty show hosts, program production volunteers, staff and their guests are allowed to be at the studios between the hours of 10pm-5am.
- Volunteers not live-hosting a show should only be present in the station during the above nighttime "off-hours" when working on a station-related project.
- Whenever possible, hosts and producers should personally escort guests into and out of the building during off-hours, making certain no unauthorized visitors "hitchhike" through the door. If a guest must be "buzzed in", on-air hosts should take care to see that they are not followed.
- On-air hosts may refuse entry to unscheduled, unexpected visitors during off hours.
- Volunteers arranging meetings at KFAI during off-hours should take responsibility for their guests. On-air hosts are not responsible for buzzing in other volunteers' supervised guests after hours. When inviting guests at these times, please wait for them downstairs personally or have your guests call you on a cell phone when they are in the alley.
- It is at the discretion of the on-air host that they may call police if a person denied building access continues to press the buzzer or loiters around the alley entrance. In the event police are called, the on-air host should also make an effort to notify staff, and should inform their guests and other volunteers at the station that a call to police has been made.

- Hosts, production volunteers and guests should be wary of leaving the building when a person who has already been denied access continues to wait by the entrance.

Pre-Recorded Shows and Reruns

KFAI's Rivendell automation system allows for regular and occasional pre-recording of any program. However, this system still requires human interaction by volunteers or staff to ensure that recorded segments are loaded to play correctly on-air. With this in mind, the following guidelines have been put into place (with exceptions in cases of emergency):

- All regularly automated programs MUST keep at least one unaired, pre-recorded "safety show" in the system.
- If you want to re-broadcast one of your previously aired programs, you must prepare that show for re-broadcast by removing all dated references.
- Any rebroadcast program must be an episode of your show that is at least 6 weeks old.
- One rebroadcast is permitted for each specific episode of a program. Any additional rebroadcasts of an episode must be cleared case-by-case with the Content Manager.
- No more than two consecutive weeks of re-broadcast programs are allowed without being previously cleared with the Content Manager.
- The deadline for delivering new or rebroadcast audio is 1 full business day before air time.
- The deadline for committing to a prerecorded episode or live broadcast of your show is 1 full business day before air time.
- If you are committing to a live broadcast of your show to be done by a board-certified substitute host, the name of that substitute host must be submitted to the Content Manager no later than 24 hours before air time.
- Missing the 24 hour deadline means KFAI will use your safety show. Another safety show should then immediately be prepared.
- Missing the deadline with no safety show and no live broadcast option means your show is replaced that week with an alternative program – not from your archive but from a selection of other KFAI broadcast or web-exclusive programs that have been prepared in

advance.

- Missing the deadline with no safety show and no live broadcast option requires a meeting with the Content Manager as soon as possible, and may result in repercussions, such as the suspension of your show.

KFAI Program Host's Agreement (2021)

I will comply with the terms specified in this Program Host's Agreement and those contained in the KFAI Host's Handbook. In addition, I understand the following points:

- Staying in touch with KFAI staff is an important part of my volunteer service.
- Staff will work with me to answer questions, resolve problems and alleviate concerns that affect my volunteer service and KFAI's programming.
- Staff may find it necessary to preempt regularly scheduled programs in order to broadcast special productions.
- While the Content Advisory Committee provides guidance, all programming decisions at KFAI are made by the General Manager and Content Manager. The General Manager answers to the Board of Directors for keeping the station legal, viable, and aligned with its mission.
- Any violation of this Agreement or its provisions, as determined by staff, the Content Advisory Committee, or the KFAI Board of Directors, may affect my volunteer status.
- I have the right to appeal any changes in my volunteer status.

Please provide the requested contact information and sign below. Thanks!

Program Host: _____(please print name)

Mailing Address:

Email: _____

Day Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____(indicate if same)

As a volunteer host at KFAI, I agree to host the assigned program, _____, in adherence to the policies and procedures outlined in the Program Host's Agreement and Host's Handbook.

Signature of Volunteer Program Host:

Date:

KFAI General Manager:

Date:

PAYOLA / PLUGOLA DISCLOSURE

Station/Employee Sponsorship Identification Declaration

I understand KFAI's role is to inform, not promote.

I have been told that Federal penalties for payola and plugola violations may include a fine of up to \$10,000 and imprisonment of up to one year for *each* offense.

I will comply with the policy that any person at this station who has any role in the selection of broadcast matter will not:

a) accept money, services, goods, or other valuable consideration from individuals, organizations, associations or other entities to broadcast a program or program material

b) promote any activity or matter in which I have a direct or indirect financial interest

I will cooperate with KFAI staff to keep the station in compliance with federal and state law and FCC rules.

I will confer with KFAI staff about ways to responsibly inform listeners about my program-related activities outside the station.

(date) _____

(name) _____