



## CROSSROADS TELEVISION SYSTEM

All material broadcast by CTS, including in-house and purchased programs, commercials and promotion material, must adhere to Canadian Broadcast Regulations and the CTS Code of Ethics...

As a potential member of the CTS broadcast family, please familiarize yourself with the conditions herein. If you have any questions concerning compliance of our broadcast code, please make inquiries through CTS management.

### CTS CODE OF ETHICS

#### A. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Crossroads Television System affirms that all eligible religious communities have access to it. This right includes both freedom of expression as well as protection against comments which may incite or contribute to discrimination, hatred or violence.

Crossroads Television System upholds the following principles and practices:

1. Crossroads Television System supports and adheres to: the rights and principles set out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms; the Canadian Broadcasting Act; all other rulings and policies of the CRTC; all other Canadian laws guaranteeing freedom of expression and prohibiting discrimination, abusive comment and hate propaganda; the Code of Ethics of the Association of National Christian Broadcasters; established guidelines of The Canadian Broadcast Standards Council and The Canadian Association of Broadcasters.
2. Religious groups who purchase time on CTS are entitled to state their faith and beliefs freely and clearly within a framework of responsibility, however:
  - a) While groups and ministries are free to express their views about beliefs or behaviour they consider to be wrong or contradictory to their own values, such comments must only be expressed within the context of religious belief.
  - b) If a religious broadcast refers to the beliefs, practices, liturgy or behaviour of adherents of another faith, the references must be accurate and fair and must not take words or phrases

out of context. All programs broadcast on CTS must meet high standards of accuracy and fairness.

3. The tone and content of programming must not abuse, misrepresent or incite hatred against any individual or identifiable group. It must not call into question the human rights, equal rights or dignity of any individual or group. The tone of programming must not expose or incite individuals or groups to hatred, contempt, malice, bigotry or violence based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, mental or physical disability, marital status or political affiliation.
4. Identifiable groups must not be targeted for conversion.
5. While differing points of view will be broadcast, programs must not have the effect of provoking or abetting domestic or international religious or political conflicts.
6. Religious organizations which purchase broadcast time on Crossroads Television System must ensure that their programs uphold the highest standards of integrity. These include:
  - a) Adherence to Crossroads Television System's policies governing the duration, nature and content of advertising and solicitation of funds.
  - b) Ensuring that appeals for funds are responsible and do not place undue pressure on viewers.
  - c) Avoiding deceptive or misleading business practices.
7. Contravention of this Code will result in a series of penalties leading to indefinite suspension of the program.

## **B. GENERAL POLICIES**

### **1. Balance**

All CTS programs will maintain an appropriate balance within the following areas:

- a) The rights and needs of a general audience and the interests of specific faith groups.
- b) The needs and interests of all faith groups, proportionate to their reality in the community.
- c) Local needs and interests.
- d) The exposition of all relevant and significant points of view.
- e) Over time, and where appropriate and necessary, Crossroads Television System will seek out a diversity of interests and voices.
- f) Personal and/or institutional opinions offered will be clearly labeled and understood as such.

### **2. Journalistic Standards and Practices**

The highest journalistic standards apply to every producer of programming for Crossroads Television System. These include:

- a) Telling subjects why they are being interviewed and ensuring they know when they are speaking "on the record".
- b) Ensuring accurate attribution of statements.

- c) Equitable reflection of relevant facts and significant points of view, including adequate research and contextualization.
- d) Equitable treatment of persons on various sides of issues.
- e) Editing that maintains the context of questions and statements and accurately reflects significance, reality and truth.
- f) Ensuring the presence of production staff, lights, cameras and microphones does not become a provocation.
- g) Ensuring that the presentation of participants' points of view generally reflect their current opinions.
- h) Persons selected as commentators and participants in programs will have a background which qualifies them to provide expert opinion based on experience and accurate information. Their background, experience and qualifications must be made clear to allow the audience to place their comments in perspective.
- i) Every effort should be made to include relevant points of view. Refusal to participate in a program, whatever the reason, or for no stated reason, must be respected. No dramatic devices or comments shall be employed to underline such a refusal.
- j) When persons are telephoned from a program, they shall be informed of the purpose and context of the interview and their permission will be obtained before the call is broadcast.
- k) Crossroads Television System is solely responsible for the programs it transmits. CTS will have the authority and the right to withhold from broadcast all or any portion of any program.

### **3. Open Line Programming**

Open Line programming will be subject to the following provisions:

- a) When accepting telephone calls to be aired on a program, care will be taken to ensure principles of fairness, integrity, balance and diversity of individual expression.
- b) Suitable technical and screening procedures will be employed to preclude abusive comment which might violate the law or local standards of decency.
- c) Persons whose voices are to be broadcast shall be so advised before they are on the air.

### **4. Program Taste, Public Morality and Controversial Subject Matter**

Though notions of "good taste" may vary substantially, CTS programming will respect and reflect standards of moral behaviour consistent with the faith community.

- a) Programming will seek a balance between respect for the audience and the obligation to reflect reality. In the event some programming may not be suitable for all persons or age groups, such programming shall be introduced and accompanied by an appropriate caution.
- b) The tone and content of programming must not abuse, misrepresent or incite discrimination against any individual or identifiable group based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, family status or political affiliation.
- c) Neither the content nor the tone of programming will incite people to commit violent acts or attacks on any group or person.

- d) Programs must not have the effect of provoking or abetting domestic or international religious or political conflicts.
- e) Matters of personal privacy will not be portrayed without the subject's expressed consent or volunteering. Particular sensitivity must accompany matters of sorrow and grief.

## 5. Errors and Omissions

As far as is reasonably possible, CTS will ensure the accuracy and appropriate context of the materials it presents.

- a) When a material error has been made or a significant omission occurs, it shall be corrected and admitted in a context of equal prominence.
- b) When complaints or requests are judged to have legal implications, they will immediately be referred to CTS's legal council and no further action will be taken until legal advice received.
- c) Release forms, notes, transcripts and other program material will be retained and protected.

## 6. Solicitation, Advertising, Free Offers and Sponsorships

In all agreements, guidelines and undertakings, Crossroads Television System upholds the following definitions:

- a) "Solicitation" - Consists of direct appeals to viewers for gifts of cash, cheques, money orders, credit card charges, or electronic and other means of transferring; for example where the primary objective is to raise revenues to sustain broadcast of the program. Alternatively, the issuing of a charitable tax receipt, under applicable laws, will represent a further test of when a program element is deemed to be a solicitation.
  - i) Solicitation will be permitted for a period no longer than 5-minutes per half-hour.
  - ii) The wording and tone of presentation of such solicitations on air, or in corresponding printed matter, will in no case place an undue responsibility on the viewer to respond to the appeal, be unduly alarmist in suggesting that the program may be discontinued in the absence of such promise, predict any dire or negative divine consequences as a result of not responding, or exaggerate the positive results of responding.
  - iii) Where a 1-900 number or toll-charge telephone number or other fee-based method of electronic transmission is being used to elicit view response, there must be displayed on screen along with the telephone number, the estimated cost per order or call and cost per minute of additional time. The message must be at least as large as the message making the offer. The word "free" may not be used in conjunction with any service that charges a toll or fee.
  - iv) Organizations soliciting funds must be able to substantiate that funds are being directed to the causes for which they are raised, in compliance with Revenue Canada regulations.
  - v) "Special Charitable Appeals" - No programs in which the primary purpose is raising of funds for whatever reason, can be broadcast without the authorization of Crossroads Television System.

- b) "Advertising" - Includes a commercial message where a product or service is being sold directly or implicitly for money.
  - i) The sum total of such messages must not exceed the limits imposed by CRTC regulation.
  - ii) The message must adhere to all applicable laws and codes regarding television advertising in Canada.
  - iii) The message must be otherwise consistent with the Code of Ethics and the objectives of Crossroads Television System.
- c) "Free Offer" - Involves a product or service being given away without conditions and with no transfer of funds.
  - i) Time spent discussing free offers will be subtracted from allowable advertising time.
  - ii) Notices of upcoming church events and free church courses, recitals, meeting and seminars are exempted from categorization as "free offers".
- d) "Promo" or "Announcement" - Is a short message that informs viewers of an upcoming program or event. There shall be no profit making or monetary gain for the broadcaster or sponsor attached to such messages.
- e) "Sponsorship" - Corporate sponsorship of programs and series on Crossroads Television System shall be permitted, subject to the following provisions:
  - i) The nature of the sponsor and the sponsor's product or service are consistent with CTS objectives.
  - ii) The sponsor and the sponsor's product or service will be identified only at the beginning and end of the broadcast, and according to an approved audio and visual format.

## C. PAID PROGRAMMING

### 1. Religious Programming

Religious programming is defined by the CRTC as "anything directly relating to, inspired by, or arising from an individual's relationship to divinity, including related moral or ethical issues." A religious program "deals with a religious theme, including programs that examine or expound religious practices and beliefs or present a religious ceremony, service or other similar event."

### 2. Religious Groups and Organizations

To purchase airtime on CTS:

- a) Faith communities must meet at least three of the following four conditions:
  - i) Permanency: Existence for a minimum of 75 years.
  - ii) Ontario Identity: At least 2,000 adherents in the province.
  - iii) Entitlement to perform marriage: The legal right to perform marriages in Ontario.
  - iv) Charitable status: Registered charitable status in Canada.

- b) Broadcast ministries must meet the following two criteria:
  - i) Recognition by a major faith group in Canada.
  - ii) Registered charity status.
- c) Faith-related accredited educational institutions must have accreditation from a nationally-recognized religious education association.
- d) All eligible organizations shall adhere to the highest standards of financial accountability in accordance with Revenue Canada requirements.

### **3. Viewer Complaint Process**

Upon receipt of a complaint about a specific CTS program, CTS will follow this procedure:

- a) A staff person will view and evaluate the program and, if appropriate, notify the producer. This may lead to a warning. The complainant will be contacted by CTS and, where appropriate, the producer will offer an explanation or apology.
- b) If further action is required, the Chair of the CTS Compliance Committee will be notified and asked to screen the program and determine whether the program contravenes this Code of Ethics.
- c) The producer, the complainant and the CTS Compliance Committee are informed of the assessment.
- d) For any complaint regarded by the Compliance Committee as frivolous or vexatious, CTS will retain the right not to respond to the complaint.
- e) CTS will respond in a timely and responsible manner to all complaints referred to it by the Canadian Radio/Television and Telecommunications Commission.

### **4. Enforcement of the Code**

For all paid programming, CTS will enforce its Code of Ethics as follows:

- a) A first infraction of the Code will result in a warning from CTS to the program producer.
- b) A second infraction of the Code will result in a formal warning.
- c) A third infraction would lead to suspension of the program from the broadcast schedule. Reinstatement would be at the discretion of Crossroads Television System.
- d) Producers of any program suspended from the program schedule would be required to submit any future program series for prescreening by CTS, at the sole expense of the producer.

This Code of Ethics may be amended from time to time by the Crossroads Television System Board of Directors. In the event of any change, the CRTC, all CTS staff and all CTS producers and suppliers will be furnished with a revised Code.

**CROSSROADS TELEVISION SYSTEM**  
P.O. Box 5321, 1295 North Service Road  
Burlington, Ontario L7R 4X5

Tel: (905) 331-7333 Fax: (905) 331-7222 E-mail: [cts@ctstv.com](mailto:cts@ctstv.com)