

FIRST AMENDMENT TELEVISION LLC

EDITORIAL CONSTITUTION

The Governing Editorial Standard for All First Amendment Television Productions

Version 1.0 — July 2026

Version History

This constitution carries a version number and revision history. When provisions are amended, the revision is recorded here with the date, the revising authority, and the nature of the change. The version in effect at the time of any given production is the controlling standard for that production.

Version	Date	Revised By	Notes
1.0	July 2026	First Amendment Television LLC	Initial publication

No provision of this Constitution may be amended except in accordance with Article 22.

PREAMBLE

A free people require access to an accurate documentary record.

First Amendment Television derives both its name and its governing philosophy from the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. Because this document establishes the editorial principles of the organization, the text of that amendment appears here in full.

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution states: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”

Those 45 words are the legal foundation of American public life. They do not grant freedom of speech or freedom of the press — they prohibit the government from taking those freedoms away. Speech and press were understood by the framers to be pre-existing rights of a free people, not gifts from a government that could be withdrawn. The First Amendment exists to ensure the government cannot silence the record.

First Amendment Television takes its name from that amendment and from the principle it encodes: that the public’s access to information, to an honest press, and to a documentary record of what institutions actually do is not a privilege to be granted or denied. It is a right to be defended. Every production this organization makes is an exercise of that right and an argument for its continued existence.

Institutions derive credibility from their demonstrated willingness to have their conduct examined against their own published standards and against the historical record. An institution that cannot be examined has placed itself beyond accountability. First Amendment Television was founded on the conviction that no institution — including this one — belongs there.

The purpose of First Amendment Television is not to determine what citizens should think. It is to preserve, organize, and present verified evidence so that citizens may exercise independent judgment. Every production this organization makes, in every format, on every platform, is built on that distinction.

The record is the resistance. That phrase is not a slogan. It is a statement of method. In every era when institutions have failed the public, the documentary record has outlasted the failure. When what was said contradicts what was done, the record says so. When what was denied is nonetheless established by evidence, the record says so. First Amendment Television exists to ensure that record reaches the people it belongs to: the public.

This constitution governs the institution, not one program or one season. It applies to every format First Amendment Television produces, every platform on which it distributes, and every person who works on any First Amendment Television production in any capacity.

First Amendment Television LLC — Chicago, Illinois — 2026

STATEMENT OF EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE

First Amendment Television LLC recognizes that every production exists within a world of political, financial, institutional, and cultural pressures. Those pressures are acknowledged. They do not determine the documentary record.

Editorial decisions on all First Amendment Television productions are governed by verified evidence, professional judgment, and the standards contained in this constitution. No other authority applies.

No donor, sponsor, advertiser, subject, political organization, government agency, commercial partner, distribution platform, or any other party may direct, alter, delay, suppress, or determine the editorial conclusions of any First Amendment Television investigation or completed production. This prohibition applies before production, during production, and after production is complete.

When pressure is applied — regardless of its source, its stated purpose, or the relationship it represents — that pressure does not constitute a reason to alter the documentary record. It constitutes a reason to document the attempt.

The documentary record is the controlling authority of every First Amendment Television production. It was the controlling authority before this constitution was written. It will remain the controlling authority after everyone currently working at this organization has moved on.

This declaration is not aspirational. It is operational.

Foreword

Every production organization eventually answers a question. Some ask how to entertain. Others ask how to persuade. Some ask how to attract attention. First Amendment Television begins with a different question: What does the evidence show?

This constitution is the answer to that question in institutional form. It establishes not how to make one program, but how First Amendment Television exercises editorial judgment across

every production it puts its name on.

Technology will change. Staff will change. Hosts will change. Formats will change. This constitution should not. Its provisions govern every production regardless of format, platform, or personnel.

The Sticks and Stones Show was the first production developed under this constitution. It is referenced throughout as an example of this method in practice. It is not the owner of the method. The method belongs to the institution.

This constitution is the highest editorial authority within First Amendment Television. Every production manual, production blueprint, standards manual, training guide, or future policy document shall be interpreted consistently with this constitution. Where any conflict exists between this constitution and any other First Amendment Television document, this constitution controls.

Personnel may change. Leadership may change. Productions may change. The governing standard remains the same until amended under Article 22.

ARTICLE 1

The Purpose of First Amendment Television Productions

The purpose of every First Amendment Television production is disciplined public examination — not advocacy, not entertainment, not the promotion of any institution, individual, ideology, or outcome. Every production examines documented evidence so that audiences can think for themselves. Whenever possible, the audience encounters the evidence before hearing interpretation. The audience is treated as intellectually capable. The audience is expected to think, not merely react.

The Executive Producer of each production is accountable for this standard.

ARTICLE 2

The Editorial Mission

The mission of every First Amendment Television production is to evaluate institutions, events, and claims against the documentary record — not against public opinion, not against political ideology, not against popularity — against the evidence. When an institution publishes standards, promises, policies, constitutions, ethical codes, or operating principles, those documents become legitimate evidence for public examination. First Amendment Television asks one question of every subject it examines: does the record support what was said?

The Executive Producer and Senior Producer of each production are accountable for this standard.

ARTICLE 3

The First Principle

The record comes before the conclusion. No narration, no interview, no discussion, no graphic, no edit, and no distribution of any First Amendment Television production may contradict the verified documentary record. This principle applies to every format this organization produces: documentary film, television series, digital publication, written position paper, educational curriculum, social media content, or any other form. When uncertainty exists, uncertainty is acknowledged. Certainty is not manufactured where evidence does not support it.

The Executive Producer holds sole authority over this standard. It is not delegable.

ARTICLE 4

The Audience

The audience is never treated as a consumer. The audience is treated as a citizen. Citizens possess both the right and the responsibility to examine public evidence. First Amendment Television provides organized access to that evidence. It does not tell citizens what conclusions they must reach.

This standard applies to every decision made in every role on every production.

ARTICLE 5

The Role of On-Camera Talent

The on-camera talent — whether host, correspondent, narrator, or interviewer — is not the authority. The documents are. Talent functions as organizer, guide, examiner, and facilitator. Talent introduces evidence, explains context, maintains standards, and protects fairness. Talent never becomes the story. The authority in every First Amendment Television production comes from the documentation, not from the delivery. Individual talent may change across productions and across time. The standard they serve does not.

The Executive Producer is accountable for talent selection and direction. On-camera talent is accountable for execution.

ARTICLE 6

The Documentary Record

Every factual statement presented as fact must rest upon one or more identifiable, authenticated sources. Preference shall always be given to original documents, original recordings, original photographs, original broadcasts, official records, court filings, and primary interviews. Secondary reporting may provide useful context. It does not replace original evidence and does not constitute documentary evidence on its own.

The Researcher or Story Producer is accountable for sourcing. The Senior Producer is accountable for verification approval.

ARTICLE 7

Chain of Custody

Every document introduced into evidence follows a documented chain of custody. The following steps must be completed and confirmed in writing before a document may be used in any production:

- Source identified — Researcher or Story Producer
- Authenticity verified — Senior Producer, with Legal and Standards Reviewer sign-off
- Date confirmed — Researcher or Story Producer
- Completeness confirmed — Senior Producer (confirms the document has not been excerpted in a way that alters its meaning)
- Citation recorded — Researcher or Story Producer (entered into the production record)
- Rights confirmed — Archival and Footage Clearance Specialist

If authenticity cannot be reasonably established, the material is not used. Questions about authenticity are acceptable and must be disclosed. Fabrication is not acceptable under any

circumstance and constitutes grounds for immediate removal from the production.

The Senior Producer holds chain of custody authority. The Legal and Standards Reviewer holds authentication sign-off authority.

ARTICLE 8

Verification Standard

Verify first. Produce second. Speed does not outrank accuracy. Convenience does not outrank verification. Deadline pressure does not outrank the verified record. When verification cannot be completed before release, the unverified status of the assertion is disclosed to the audience as part of the production. First Amendment Television does not withhold uncertainty from its audience.

The Senior Producer of each production is accountable for this standard.

ARTICLE 9

The Language Standard

Language shall clarify, not inflame. Words selected for narration, on-camera delivery, graphic text, or any other First Amendment Television output shall describe evidence, not characterize motives. Loaded language weakens credibility. Precise language strengthens it.

- Describe. Don't accuse.
- Demonstrate. Don't speculate.
- Document. Don't assume.

The Writer or Segment Writer is accountable for drafting. The Senior Producer is accountable for approval. The Executive Producer holds final authority.

ARTICLE 10

The Camera Standard

The camera functions as a witness, not an advocate. Camera movement must have purpose. The camera does not manufacture emotional response through unnecessary movement, angle, or framing. Visual restraint communicates confidence. The audience should feel they are observing evidence, not watching a performance designed to lead them to a conclusion.

The Director of Photography is accountable for execution. The Director is accountable for approval.

ARTICLE 11

Editing Standards

Editing exists to improve understanding, never to alter meaning. Edits shall not create false chronology, remove essential context, combine unrelated statements, manufacture reactions, or misrepresent sequence. When editing shortens material, the original meaning must remain intact. The editing standard does not relax for shorter formats or faster turnaround requirements.

The Editor is accountable for execution. The Senior Producer is accountable for review. The Executive Producer holds final lock authority.

ARTICLE 12

Music Standards

Music may establish atmosphere. Music shall never establish conclusions. When documentary evidence carries its own emotional weight, music must step aside. The following prohibitions apply to every production without exception:

- No music beneath any sequence in which a primary source document is being read aloud or displayed for audience examination
- No music beneath any closing statement or formal recitation of verified fact
- No music beneath archival footage unless that music was original to the archival material itself
- No music that signals a conclusion before the evidence has been fully presented

When in doubt, silence is the most honest score.

The Editor is accountable for execution. Music approval is the Executive Producer's decision alone.

ARTICLE 13

Graphics Standards

Graphics exist for explanation, not decoration. Every graphic must answer one question: does this improve the audience's understanding of the evidence? If not, it is removed. Animation shall remain restrained. Documents shall remain readable. The audience must have sufficient time to read any text or document displayed on screen.

Graphics and Motion Design is accountable for execution. The Director or Editor is accountable for approval. The Senior Producer is accountable for content accuracy.

ARTICLE 14

Interview Standards

Interviews are opportunities to gather information, not performances. Interview subjects shall be treated with professional respect. Questions shall remain direct and grounded in the documentary record. Answers shall remain complete in the edit. Editing shall preserve the subject's intended meaning. Significant factual assertions made in interview shall be independently verified before the interview is included in any production. Interview subjects are not ambushed with information they have had no reasonable opportunity to examine.

The Researcher or Story Producer is accountable for pre-interview preparation. The Senior Producer is accountable for editorial review of the interview in cut.

ARTICLE 15

Examination and Discussion

When any production includes a moderated examination or discussion segment — whether at a table, in a panel, in a public forum, or in any other format — that segment represents disciplined examination, not debate, argument, or performance. The purpose is not to determine who wins an argument. It is to determine what conclusions the documentary record will support, and where that record ends.

Every examination segment includes at minimum one voice whose function is to test the evidence for weaknesses, identify what the record does not establish, and raise alternate interpretations the evidence may support. This function is the production's quality control, not its opposition. Any conclusion that cannot survive this test requires additional reporting before the production is locked.

Show-specific formats for this segment — including chair titles, staging, and camera direction —

show specific formats for this segment — including chair uses, staging, and camera direction — are established in each production's individual blueprint. They answer to this article.

The Host or Moderator is accountable for segment direction. The Senior Producer is accountable for panelist selection and preparation. The Executive Producer is accountable for standard enforcement.

ARTICLE 16

Burden of Proof

The burden of proof always belongs to the person or institution making the claim. Extraordinary claims require extraordinary documentation. Unsupported assertions remain opinions and are presented as such. Verified documentation becomes evidence and is presented as such. The distinction between opinion and evidence shall always be made clear to the audience.

The Senior Producer is accountable for enforcement. The Legal and Standards Reviewer is accountable for final review before lock.

ARTICLE 17

Corrections

Mistakes happen. Professionalism requires correcting them promptly, transparently, and on the record. When a factual error is discovered in any First Amendment Television production, the following protocol applies regardless of format or platform:

- Verify the error — Senior Producer confirms the error is factual, not interpretive
- Correct the record — Executive Producer determines the appropriate correction format for the production type
- On-air or on-platform correction — a correction is issued through the same platform on which the error appeared
- Distribution correction — all distribution partners carrying the original production are notified and provided the correction
- Social and digital correction — any social or digital cuts containing the error are corrected or withdrawn
- Production record — the error, its source, and the correction are entered into the permanent production record

Transparency strengthens credibility. Concealment weakens it. There is no statute of limitations on correcting the record.

The Senior Producer is accountable for error identification and verification. The Executive Producer holds correction authority.

ARTICLE 18

Independence

Editorial decisions shall never be influenced by political preference, financial pressure, personal relationships, institutional popularity, or the desires of any external party. The documentary record determines content. When editorial independence is challenged — by a subject, a funder, a distribution partner, a government agency, or any other party — two things happen: the challenge is refused, and the challenge is documented. The attempt to compromise editorial independence becomes part of the production record and is disclosed to the Executive Producer immediately. Failure to disclose such an attempt is itself a violation of this constitution.

The Executive Producer holds ultimate editorial authority. All staff are accountable for immediate disclosure of any challenge to editorial independence.

ARTICLE 19

Respect for the Audience

The audience deserves accuracy, context, fairness, documentation, and time to think. First Amendment Television rejects the assumption that speed, outrage, volume, or entertainment should replace understanding. Every production decision that trades comprehension for pace, or clarity for sensation, is a decision made against the audience this organization exists to serve.

This standard applies to every decision made in every role on every production.

ARTICLE 20

The Production Standard

Before every production meeting, every member of the production team must be able to answer one question: does this decision help the audience understand the evidence?

The purpose of this production is not to tell people what to think. The purpose is to show people enough verified evidence that they are able to think for themselves.

Every shot, edit, graphic, line of narration, music cue, social cut, and distribution choice shall be measured against that standard. Every decision that fails that test is removed.

The Executive Producer holds final authority on every production decision.

ARTICLE 21

The Final Editorial Test

Before locking any production, the Executive Producer and Senior Producer jointly confirm the answer to each of the following questions:

- Does every major factual assertion have documentary support?
- Have significant contrary facts been fairly represented?
- Has context been preserved throughout?
- Has editing altered meaning anywhere in the production?
- Has the audience been given sufficient time to examine the evidence?

If the answer to any question is no, the production is not finished. This test applies to a 90-second social cut with the same force it applies to a feature-length documentary. Format does not modify the standard.

The Executive Producer and Senior Producer hold joint authority. Both must confirm before lock on every production.

ARTICLE 22

Amendment Procedure

This constitution is intended to provide continuity while allowing thoughtful improvement. Experience in production will reveal provisions that require refinement, expansion, or correction. That process is expected and welcome. What is not permitted is amendment by default, by neglect, or by individuals acting without institutional authority.

The Preamble

The Preamble states why First Amendment Television exists. It may not be amended except by written resolution of the Executive Producer that specifically identifies the Preamble as the subject of amendment and states in writing the reason the founding purpose requires revision. Any amendment to the Preamble requires a higher standard of deliberation than amendments to the Articles because it alters not how the organization operates but why it exists.

The Articles

Any Article of this constitution may be amended by written approval of the Executive Producer of First Amendment Television LLC. No amendment takes effect by informal instruction, verbal direction, or production practice alone. Every amendment shall receive a new version number, include the date of adoption, identify the specific Article affected, and state in writing the reason for the change.

Preservation of Prior Versions

Previous versions of this constitution are retained as part of the permanent institutional record and shall not be destroyed. Previous versions are available to the public upon written request to info@firstatv.com. The amendment history of this constitution is itself a documentary record and is subject to the same preservation standard applied to all First Amendment Television production records.

Limitations on Amendment

No amendment may alter the First Principle (Article 3) or the Statement of Editorial Independence in a manner that reduces First Amendment Television's editorial independence, weakens the evidentiary standard, or substitutes any authority for the documentary record as the controlling authority of First Amendment Television productions. Those provisions may be clarified or expanded. They may not be diminished.

The Executive Producer of First Amendment Television LLC holds sole amendment authority.

Closing Statement

Institutions often ask the public to trust them. Trust is important. Verification is better. This constitution exists because the public deserves both.

Every First Amendment Television production leaves its audience with one lasting impression: they were not asked to believe. They were invited to examine.

That distinction is the foundation of this organization.

THE FIRST AMENDMENT TELEVISION PRODUCTION PRINCIPLE

The Record Comes First. Everything else follows.

Free Press. Free Speech. Free to Create.

ADOPTION

This Editorial Constitution was adopted by First Amendment Television LLC in July 2026 and became the governing editorial standard for all First Amendment Television productions as of that date.

Adopted by:

Adopted by.

Robert Tutman

Founder and Executive Producer

First Amendment Television LLC

Chicago, Illinois

July 2026

Free Press. Free Speech. Free to Create.

APPENDIX A

Definitions

The following definitions govern the use of these terms throughout all First Amendment Television production documents, including this constitution, all production blueprints, all show-specific standards addenda, and all Production Standards Acknowledgments. Where a term appears in any First Amendment Television document, it carries the meaning stated here unless a show-specific blueprint explicitly narrows or extends that meaning for that production alone.

Chain of Custody

The documented sequence of steps by which a source document is identified, authenticated, dated, confirmed as complete, cited, and cleared for rights before it is used in any First Amendment Television production. No document enters any production without a completed chain of custody. The chain of custody is a written record retained in the production record.

Commentary

A statement of opinion, interpretation, or judgment offered by a speaker that is not directly supported by a specific documentary source cited in the same statement. Commentary may appear in First Amendment Television productions when it is clearly attributed to the speaker and presented as the speaker's view, not as established fact. Commentary is never presented as evidence.

Documentary Evidence

Any primary source document, recording, photograph, official record, court filing, or authenticated artifact that directly establishes a fact relevant to the production's subject. Documentary evidence is the witness in every First Amendment Television production. It is distinct from testimony, interpretation, secondary reporting, and commentary.

Documentary Record

The complete body of authenticated primary source material relevant to a given production, assembled before production begins and held in the production record. The documentary record is the controlling authority for every editorial decision made in that production. No narration, edit, graphic, statement, or distribution of any First Amendment Television production may contradict the documentary record.

Examination Segment

Any segment of a First Amendment Television production in which on-camera talent, panelists, or contributors engage in moderated discussion of the documentary record. Regardless of format — table, panel, forum, or any other — the purpose of an examination segment is to determine what conclusions the documentary record will support and where that record ends, not to generate argument or entertainment. Show-specific names and formats for examination segments are established in each production's blueprint.

Interpretation

A reasoned conclusion drawn from documentary evidence by a qualified person. Interpretation is permitted in First Amendment Television productions when it is clearly identified as such, attributed to the person offering it, and grounded in specific documentary evidence cited in the same context. Interpretation is not evidence. It is the audience's right to accept or reject it after examining the same documentary record.

Primary Source

A document, recording, photograph, official record, court filing, testimony, or artifact created at the time of the events being examined, by a participant in or direct witness to those events, or by an institution whose own conduct is under examination. Primary sources are the foundation of the documentary record in every First Amendment Television production. They are preferred over all other source types in every format.

Production Record

The permanent file maintained for every First Amendment Television production containing: the complete chain of custody for every document used; all verification records; all rights clearances; all signed Production Standards Acknowledgments; any record of challenges to editorial independence and how they were resolved; and the correction log if applicable. The production record is retained indefinitely and is not destroyed when personnel change.

Secondary Source

A document, report, or account that describes, summarizes, or analyzes primary source material rather than constituting primary source material itself. Secondary sources may provide useful context and may direct a production toward primary sources. They do not replace primary sources and do not constitute documentary evidence on their own.

Skeptic Function

The role in any First Amendment Television examination segment whose purpose is to identify weaknesses in the documentary record, test conclusions for evidentiary support, raise alternate interpretations the evidence may support, and find what the case does not establish. The skeptic function serves the audience and the integrity of the production. It is not an adversarial position. It is the production's quality control. Show-specific titles for this function are established in each production's blueprint.

Verification

The process of confirming that a factual assertion is supported by an identifiable, authenticated source before that assertion is presented in any First Amendment Television production as fact. Verification is completed before production, not during or after. Speed does not excuse failure to verify. When verification cannot be completed, the unverified status of the assertion is disclosed to the audience.

The Table

The moderated discussion segment used in The Sticks and Stones Show and any First Amendment Television production that adopts the same format. The Table is a structured examination, not a debate. Its purpose is to determine what conclusions the documentary record will support and where that record ends. Three fixed-function chairs — The Reporter, The Lawyer, and The Skeptic — are defined in the show-specific production blueprint. They answer to Article 15 of this constitution.

Word and Stone

The two-part evidentiary structure at the center of The Sticks and Stones Show and any production that adopts the same framework. The Word is the speech, statement, broadcast, publication, or document that initiated the chain of events under examination. The Stone is the verifiable consequence that followed. The relationship between Word and Stone is established through the documentary record, not through assertion.

