

Policy on Editorial Independence, Accountability and Whistleblowing, and the Role of the General Manager and Board Personnel Liaison

KMXT has served the Kodiak community for fifty years as an independent, community-supported public radio station. Our success and credibility rest on one principle above all: the independence of our newsroom from political, commercial, and managerial influence.

When employees at KMXT also serve in separate elected capacities, to ensure transparency and maintain the highest ethical and journalistic standards, the KMXT Board of Directors reaffirm the station's governance structure and operational "silos" that preserve our editorial integrity and compliance with FCC, CPB, and affiliated news standards.

1. The Five Pillars of Independence

KMXT's operations function through five distinct, interdependent divisions, each governed by clear boundaries and accountability structures:

a. Board of Directors

The Board establishes organizational policy, ensures compliance with non-profit and FCC regulations, oversees the station's finances and mission, and maintains the firewall between management and editorial content. The Board does not direct news coverage or editorial decisions.

b. General Manager (Administration and Operations)

The General Manager implements the Board's policies, manages finances and grants, oversees staffing, fundraising, licensing, and procurement, and ensures compliance with state, federal, and regulatory requirements.

The General Manager has no role in news coverage, story assignments, or editorial decisions. Engaging in those activities would compromise the station's journalistic independence, its membership in Alaska Public Media and other news networks, and its eligibility for broadcasting grants.

c. Programming and Community Advisory Board

Programming decisions (music, cultural, and community programming) are made collaboratively by the Programming Department and the Community Advisory Board. These decisions reflect listener interests and uphold KMXT's public service mission.

d. News Department

Editorial decisions, story assignments, and partnerships with other news organizations are made solely by the News Director and news staff. Their work adheres to the standards of the Radio Television Digital News Association (RTDNA), the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and Alaska Public Media. The News Department operates with complete editorial independence from the General Manager, Development, and Board.

In accordance with KMXT's policy on editorial independence and newsroom standards, no employee with an external public role (e.g., elected official) has independent editorial discretion over local municipal stories or over the placement, timing or prioritization of any local news stories in KMXT newscasts. All decisions concerning local news content remain solely under the authority of the KMXT News Director.

e. Development and Underwriting

The Development Department works with the General Manager and Board to raise funds, secure underwriting, and organize community events. A strict firewall exists between Development and News, ensuring that sponsors, donors, or funders do not influence editorial content.

2. Ethical and Legal Compliance

This structure is not optional. It is essential. Violations of these silos could endanger:

- KMXT's nonprofit 501(c)(3) status
- FCC licensing and CPB and other grant eligibility
- Public trust in the independence of our local news
- Our membership in statewide and national news networks

3. Accountability, Whistleblowing, and Reporting Concerns

To preserve KMXT's editorial independence and uphold the ethical standards of public media, the Board establishes the following reporting and whistleblowing procedure:

A. Internal Reporting to the General Manager

Any employee who believes that editorial independence has been compromised, or that the required silos between departments have been breached, is encouraged to report the concern to the General Manager promptly. Examples include:

- Attempts to influence news coverage for political or commercial reasons

- Pressure from management, board members, donors, or elected officials
- Fundraising activities that appear to affect editorial decisions

B. Reporting to the Board's Personnel Liaison

If the concern directly involves the General Manager, or if the employee feels the issue was not adequately addressed, the employee may contact the Board's Personnel Liaison. The Personnel Liaison will:

- Receive concerns confidentially
- Ensure a good-faith review by the Board
- Protect the employee from retaliation
- Ensure that any action needed is taken

C. Non-Retaliation Policy

KMXT strictly prohibits retaliation against any employee who raises concerns in good faith. Whistleblowing is a protected action, and no employee will face adverse consequences for reporting an issue related to editorial independence or ethical standards.

D. Confidentiality

All reports will be handled as confidentially as possible, consistent with the need to resolve the matter.

This process ensures that KMXT maintains strong internal accountability and safeguards the ethical foundations of community public media.

4. Our Commitment to the Community

KMXT's value lies in being a trusted, independent voice for Kodiak. The Board, General Manager, and staff affirm that our newsroom will continue to operate free of political or managerial interference. Our listeners deserve nothing less than a community press that serves the public interest with accuracy, fairness, and integrity.

Approved by:

KMXT Board of Directors

Kodiak Public Broadcasting Corporation

Date: November 18, 2025