

# **Repeater Use Policy**

## **Walton County Repeater Group, Inc.**

Effective November 24, 2021

The Walton County Repeater Group, Inc. (WCRG) acting through its designated Trustee and officers will have the final say on any repeater systems operation and/or user access, as allowed by the FCC. This Policy may be reviewed periodically and revised. Users are responsible for reading, understanding, and adhering to this Policy. Conduct on the repeaters will be governed by this Acceptable Use Policy. Questions may be sent to the Club President. The trustee is the person responsible for WC4RG to the FCC and therefore has the final say over all operations using WC4RG repeaters or station's operating under the WC4RG callsign. Final decisions on policy are not left upon members or officers to determine, only the trustee as he/she is the point of contact to the FCC.

Amateur Radio Operators are required to be "self-policing". Each user is expected to do this in two ways – by ensuring that their own conduct of operations is above reproach, and also exhorting and challenging other operators to use their best practices on the air.

FCC Regulation 97.101(a) provides: "In all respects not specifically covered by FCC Rules each amateur station must be operated in accordance with good engineering and good amateur practice. Section 97.103(a) provides in part: "The station licensee is responsible for the proper operation in accordance with the FCC Rules." The ARRL booklet FCC Rules and Regulation for the Amateur Radio, 2014 edition, explains this Rule:

"These simple sentences underscore the responsibility of each operator to use good judgment and common sense when pursuing their interests. It means each licensee must continue to learn how stations interact properly, cooperate with fellow amateurs and treat each operator on the air with respect."

In addition, the ARRL book provides, at page 14, "[A] repeater owner or trustee may set more stringent standards for the use of their repeater[s] ...than required by the FCC." Those standards can be defined in any way the trustee/owner/chooses.

Repeater users should always remember that other members of the general public can monitor repeaters for any reason. If those people would be offended by the users language or conduct on a repeater, that language or conduct is objectionable.

The FCC Rules also requires that each repeater trustee/owner has the responsibility to require that each repeater it owns is properly used. This is accomplished by the actions of the WC4RG Trustee (acting as a control operator) and designated control operators, in accordance with WCRG use policy. FCC Rule 97.105 provides: "The control operator must ensure the immediate proper operation of the station, regardless of the type of control." This includes linking WCRG

repeaters to other networks/repeaters or the use of digital modes not natively supported by the repeater without prior authorization from an officer of WCRG and/or the trustee.

The Regulations allow the trustee/owner/control operator of an amateur radio repeater to ban certain amateur radio users from using their repeaters when an amateur radio user's conduct becomes unacceptable to the trustee/owner/control operator. Rule Section 97.205(e) states, in part: "Limiting the use of a repeater to only certain user stations is permissible." There is no FCC Regulation that requires a repeater trustee/owner/control operator to allow use by any holder of an amateur license. Thus, if the trustee/owner/control operator of an amateur radio repeater determines that a user of that repeater exhibits objectionable conduct, the trustee/owner/control operator has every right to revoke the privilege of such user to use the repeater. In practice, an offending user can be banned from using a whole repeater system affiliated with multiple licensees upon notification.

### Repeater Etiquette

1. Always identify yourself according to FCC regulations. This means every ten (10) minutes and at the end of your communication. This is not only WCRG's policy; it is also required by our license. It never hurts to give your station's call sign more than less. It helps other users know you are there if they are listening. When checking into a net or making an initial call, it is helpful to use phonetics.
2. Avoid lengthy conversations without pausing occasionally between transmissions. This in no way means keep the repeater quiet. On the contrary, the repeater is on the air to be used and we are very happy when it is busy. It does, however, mean that we all should remember to leave pauses so others can get in if they need to use the repeater.
3. Always yield the frequency to a breaking station (any station with emergency traffic). The pro sign "break" has a very specific meaning on ham radio. If you hear it, then give them the frequency. If you use it, remember the importance of its use. Ham radio has saved many lives and you never know when it may need to save yours.
4. Yield existing conversations to recognized activities: Weekly Nets, ARES, public service events, etc.
5. Do not engage in political soap boxing or views on religious matters. These subjects are very personal to others listening and should be avoided. Do not engage in any personal antagonisms. Some conversations are best held in private. Hate speech or derogatory remarks directed at any person or group (political, ethnic, racial, religious, sexual orientation, etc.) are never allowed on WCRG related repeaters. Please keep that stuff to yourself, nobody wants to hear your personal rants over the airwaves.
6. Selling items OTHER than ham related equipment is not allowed, nor is conducting any business. This is not only our policy, it is prohibited by the FCC. As Amateur Radio operators, we are prohibited from gaining any pecuniary benefit from our operation of our amateur radio stations. When in doubt take it off the air.

7. WCRG repeaters are "G Rated" 24 hours a day. Watch your language. Many hams have children in the home and amateur radio is open to all ages.
8. If you hear stations jamming or interfering do not make any comments - ignore them! Do not antagonize those interfering! This is not going to make them stop. Contact one of the club officers or the trustee via email or telephone to inform them of what is happening with dates, time, and nature of interference.