

# FREE-TO-AIR TELEVISION CLASSIFICATIONS AND AUDIENCE ADVISORIES

Free-to-air television broadcasters in New Zealand are required to ensure that programmes are appropriately classified (ie rated) and screened in the appropriate timeband. The classifications below should be broadcast on all content except news, current affairs, sports and live content. Classifications must screen at the beginning of each programme, and for M, 16 and 18, also screen at the beginning of each ad break. Classifications and advisories should be included in all electronic and printed programme guides. Broadcasters should use an appropriate audience advisory if the programme is likely to disturb, distress or offend a significant number of viewers or be outside audience expectations. There are restrictions on when programmes classified M, 16 and 18 can be shown.

## CLASSIFICATIONS

For the purposes of these classifications a **child** means a person under the age of 14 years.

**G**

### GENERAL: APPROVED FOR GENERAL VIEWING

Programmes which exclude material likely to be unsuitable for children. Programmes may not necessarily be designed for child viewers but should not contain material likely to alarm or distress them.

*G programmes may be screened at any time.*

**PG**

### PARENTAL GUIDANCE: PARENTAL GUIDANCE RECOMMENDED FOR YOUNGER VIEWERS

Programmes containing material more suited for mature audiences but not necessarily unsuitable for child viewers when subject to the guidance of a parent or an adult.

*PG programmes may be screened at any time*

**M**

### MATURE AUDIENCES: SUITABLE FOR MATURE AUDIENCES 16 YEARS AND OVER

The M classification means the programme might contain violence, sexual material, offensive language, adult themes, nudity, or other content that some children and parents find challenging. The programme may contain content with a moderate impact and themes that require a mature outlook.

*On free-to-air television, M programmes may be screened between 9am and 3pm on weekdays (except during school and public holidays, as designated by the Ministry of Education) and after 7.30pm until 5am.*

16

## 16: PEOPLE UNDER 16 YEARS SHOULD NOT VIEW

Programmes classified 16 contain stronger material or special elements which are outside the M classification. These programmes may contain a greater degree of sexual material, offensive language, realistic violence, and stronger adult themes.

*On free-to-air television 16 programmes may be screened after 8.30pm until 5am.*

18

## 18: PEOPLE UNDER 18 YEARS SHOULD NOT VIEW

Programmes classified 18 contain themes which may be challenging or offensive even to some adult viewers.

*On free-to-air television 18 programmes may be screened after 9.30pm until 5am.*

## AUDIENCE ADVISORIES

C

CONTENT MAY OFFEND

L

LANGUAGE MAY OFFEND

V

CONTAINS VIOLENCE

S

SEXUAL CONTENT MAY OFFEND

If a programme is likely to disturb or offend a significant number of viewers, or programme content is likely to be outside audience expectations, an appropriate written, or written and verbal, on-screen audience advisory (warning) should also be broadcast.

## UNCLASSIFIED PROGRAMMING

News, current affairs, sports and live content is not, because of its distinct nature, subject to classification. However, broadcasters must be mindful of children's interests (Standard 3) and other broadcasting standards and include audience advisories (i.e. a warning) where appropriate.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT CLASSIFICATIONS OR AUDIENCE ADVISORIES USED ON FREE-TO-AIR TELEVISION SEE [WWW.BSA.GOV.T.NZ](http://WWW.BSA.GOV.T.NZ) OR CALL BSA AT 0800 366 996**