

<p style="text-align: center;">STATE OF IOWA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">POLICY AND PROCEDURES</p>		Policy Number	Applicability
		AD-GA-09	DOC CBC
		Policy Code	Iowa Code Reference
		Public Access	Chapter 21, 904.602
Chapter 1	Sub Chapter	Related DOC Policies	Administrative Code Reference
ADMINISTRATION & MANAGEMENT	GENERAL ADMINISTRATIO N	AD-CR-04	N/A
Subject		ACA Standards	Responsibility
CONTACT WITH THE NEWS MEDIA AND THE PUBLIC		4-4019, 4-4020, 4-4021, 4-4022, 4-4279	Fred Scaletta
Effective Date	Authority		
May 2011			

I. PURPOSE

To describe the methods that shall be used in the Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) institutions to maintain informative relations with news media representatives and the public.

II. POLICY

Within security limitations and privacy protection statutes, including consideration of possible disruptiveness, it is the policy of the IDOC to maintain open communication with representatives of the news media and the public and, within security concerns, allow access to the institutions. **(4-4020)**

III. DEFINITIONS – As used in this document:

A. News Media Representative – A qualified and properly identified representative of general circulation newspapers, magazines of national circulation sold through newsstands and/or mail subscriptions to the general public, national/international news services, or radio/television stations holding a Federal Communications Commission license.

- B. Public – Individuals who are not officials in the law enforcement or academic communities, news media representatives, employees of the IDOC, or offenders or their family members.
- C. See Policy **AD-GA-16** for additional Definitions.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Media Visits and Interviews

1. When media representatives visit an institution, the Warden/Superintendent or designee and the IDOC's Public and Media Relations Office have the responsibility to grant, deny, or guide the extent of:
 - a. Coverage of institutional functions and special events.
 - b. Use of facilities, personnel, offenders, or records in connection with the making of motion pictures and the writing of books, magazine articles, or syndicated stories.
 - c. Interviews with offenders and staff.
2. Personal interviews and photographs of an offender are not allowed except under special circumstances, and only with the approval of the Warden/Superintendent or designee and the IDOC's Public and Media Relations Office. These requests must be submitted in writing or email and shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. If approved and the offender agrees to the interview, the offender shall be required to consent (see **AD-GA-09 F-1**) in writing, waiving any and all liability against the institution and the IDOC. The interview shall take place in areas where security of the institution is not a concern. The approval and consent restrictions are waived during public meetings (i.e., Parole Board hearings) pursuant to Code of Iowa, Chapter 21, absent security violations or concerns. **(4-4022)**
3. Any media visit of any purpose can be denied, canceled, or restricted by the Warden/Superintendent or designee and the IDOC's Public and Media Relations Office for security concerns based on present circumstances, and subject matter, including, but not limited to, pending appeals, or legal matters including criminal and civil related to the offender, institutional adjustment, need to complete treatment programming, unsuccessful or failure to participate in required or

recommended treatment programming, re-victimization, security status, pending commutation reviews, etc.

4. Correspondence between the media and offenders shall be guided by the same regulations imposed by the institution for general correspondence.

5. Scheduled media visits must be submitted in writing or email and, at a minimum, shall include the person(s) (staff/offender) to be interviewed, reason for interview, subject matter, the name of representing media organization and the name of the media representative. **(4-4279)**

6. All media contacts, even unscheduled media contacts with staff of a routine or general nature shall be immediately reported to the Warden/Superintendent or designee who shall report to the IDOC's Public and Media Relations Office.

7. With the exception of public meetings, all media representatives are subject to a security check and must be prepared to present media credentials showing that they represent or are employed by a bonafide or incorporated media organization.

B. Release of News Items

1. Information of a routine or general nature can be released to the newspaper, radio, television station, wire service, etc. by the Warden/Superintendent or designee. **(4-4021)**

2. Media contacts or inquiries regarding an incident that is considered serious or critical shall be released to the DOC media distribution list. Routine matters such as minor disturbances or a fight may not be reported to the media. The IDOC shall maintain a media notification list for those media organizations that request to be directly contacted upon initial notice of an incident. All media notices or releases shall be sent by e-mail and posted on the DOC website.

3. There are two types of media releases:

a. General Media Release – normally involves major changes, improvements, staff or offender recognitions of the institution. Such changes or improvements shall be described in writing and be released by the Warden/Superintendent or designee.

b. Emergency Media Release – normally involves deaths, escapes, acts of violence, hostage situations, disturbances, fires, and natural disasters. If the incident in such cases necessitates coverage at an institution, representatives of the news media shall be located in a designated area on or near the perimeter of the institution. The Warden/ Superintendent or designee shall periodically update the situation.

4. News releases shall have two formats:

a. Telephone or person-to-person interviews - The information shared with the media shall be factual in nature. Relevant information shall be limited to the event or incident.

b. Written media releases. Major media releases shall be brief, concise, factual, and approved by the Warden/Superintendent or designee and the IDOC's Public and Media Relations Office. The Media and Public Relations Director shall forward copies of all media releases to the Director.

5. Information that may jeopardize security, investigations, and control of the institution's attempt to restore or return the institution to normal operations shall be withheld until such time as the need no longer exists. Confidential information shall be withheld.

a.C. Emergency Announcement

a.C.1. If an offender(s) escapes or absconds, the supervising institution shall immediately contact all area law enforcement agencies and the IDOC's Public and Media Relations Office.

a.C.2. The IDOC'S Media and Public Relations Office shall immediately notify the largest print media organization within 25 miles of the institution and the Associated Press.

D. Public Contacts

1. Employee contacts with the public, offenders or offender family members, regarding institutional operations must be professional and respectful at all times.

2. Employees that are authorized contact with the public, offenders or offender family members, shall be knowledgeable of the subject matter

and experienced in public speaking, to ensure prompt, courteous, and correct responses to inquiries.

3. Personnel assigned or authorized to publicly address the IDOC or institution issues must be knowledgeable of public information, and confidentiality regulations and applicable statutes.
4. Employees receiving requests from the public, offenders or offender family members, regarding IDOC business information shall refer all such inquiries to the office of the Warden/Superintendent or, the institutional Public and Media Relations Office.
5. Employees receiving requests for comments or information from the news media or public, offenders or offender family members, shall refer such requests directly to the office of the Warden/Superintendent or the institutional Public and Media Relations Office.

1.3.a. Response to inquiries must be prompt and accurate.

1.3.b. All responses shall meet all applicable local, state and federal laws governing public information and right of privacy. **(4-4019)**

E. Notification of Speaking Engagements

Wardens/Superintendents should inform the Regional Deputy Director, in advance of scheduled speaking engagements and public appearance.

F. Compensation

1. Individual compensation for participation in public information programs related to the employee's job responsibilities shall not be accepted.
2. Donations to the institution may be accepted, and must be processed through the institutional Associate Warden/Administration.