



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

APPLICABILITY
DEPARTMENT WIDE
OFFENDER MANUAL

REVISION DATE
11/1/10

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NUMBER
DOC 150.100

POLICY

TITLE
PUBLIC INFORMATION AND MEDIA RELATIONS

REVIEW/REVISION HISTORY:

- Effective: 3/31/89
- Revised: 1/31/98
- Revised: 12/27/00
- Revised: 8/28/06
- Revised: 10/23/06 AB 06-013
- Revised: 8/28/07
- Revised: 4/6/09
- Revised: 11/1/10

SUMMARY OF REVISION/REVIEW:

Added I.B.2.a. that the Field Administrator may designate a CCS as PIO
 I.B.4. and IV.A. - Adjusted language for clarification
 II.B.4. - Removed that the Public Information Teams will maintain situational based notification procedures
 III.A. - Adjusted that Team Leaders will review and approve all news releases/press-related materials
 IV.C.1. and 5. - Added name, phone number, and email of requestor to Media Contact Report
 IV.D. - Adjusted Media Contact Report distribution
 V.B. and F. - Added PIO responsibilities related to news media access
 VI.B.5. - Added that requests by other media representatives must include a sample of previous work
 VI.E. - Added the Department may request compensation for project-related expenses
 VII.A.2. - Adjusted that news media representatives must obtain an incarcerated offender's written permission before scheduling an interview
 VII.A.3. - Adjusted restrictions for in-person interviews
 VII.B. - Removed offender's written consent for staff participation in the interviewing, filming, taping, photographing, or recording of an offender under community supervision


APPROVED:

Signature on file

ELDON VAIL, Secretary
 Department of Corrections

9/28/10

 Date Signed

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REFERENCES:


DOC 100.100 is hereby incorporated into this policy; [RCW 10.97](#); [ACA 4-4020](#); [ACA 4-4021](#); [ACA 4-4279](#); [ACA 7F-01](#); [ACA 7F-02](#); [ACA 7F-03](#); [DOC 280.510 Public Disclosure of Records](#); DOC 410.160 Emergency Information Management; [DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors](#); [DOC 450.100 Mail for Offenders](#); [DOC 450.200 Telephone Use by Offenders](#)

POLICY:

- I. Public information is an integral element of the Department mission. The Department encourages interaction with the public and news media. [4-4020] [4-4021] [7F-01]
- II. Staff will provide the public, media, and other agencies accurate and timely information per DOC 280.510 Public Disclosure of Records and the security objectives of the Department. During emergencies, DOC 410.160 Emergency Information Management supersedes this policy.

DIRECTIVE:

- I. Responsible Staff
 - A. The Communications and Outreach Director is responsible for the administration of the Public Information Program and will:
 1. Coordinate with divisions and departments to ensure that public information strategies are consistent with the Department mission, goals, and objectives.
 2. Develop Department wide guidelines promoting a uniform appearance and standards of quality in public information material.
 3. Collaborate with Division Assistant Secretaries and Administrators and the Risk Management Department on the public response to issues likely to have a significant impact on the Department.
 4. Provide training and support to staff.
 - B. Public Information Officers (PIOs) will be identified as follows:
 1. Each Superintendent will identify a facility PIO.
 2. The Field Administrators will serve as the PIO for their respective sections.
 - a. The Field Administrator may designate a Community Corrections Supervisor (CCS) as a PIO.

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3. The Correctional Industries (CI) Director will identify a PIO for CI operations.
4. The Communications and Outreach Director will designate appropriate Communications Department staff to meet the public information and media relations needs of all Headquarters divisions.


C. Public Information Teams

1. A Western Section Public Information Team and an Eastern Section Public Information Team will be established and will consist of the PIOs for Prisons and Community Corrections in the 2 geographical regions of the state defined by the Cascade Mountain Crest. The CI PIO will participate in the Eastern Section Team.
 - a. The Communications and Outreach Director will assign Communications Consultants to serve as Western and Eastern Section Team Leaders.

II. Responsibilities

A. PIOs will:

1. [4-4021] Serve as the principal point of contact for news media and stakeholders seeking routine information pertaining to the facility or section. PIOs will not engage in news media interviews without consulting the Communications Department.
2. In consultation with the Team Leader and Superintendent/Field Administrator/CI Director, engage in local public information activities, including news releases, special events coverage, facility tours, interviews, and other efforts to inform the public about the work of the facility or Field program. [4-4021]
3. Identify areas in the facility/office that are accessible to representatives of the news media. [4-4021]
4. Identify data and information protected by federal or state privacy laws or federal and state freedom of information laws. [4-4021]
5. Provide copies of news articles pertaining to his/her facility or section to the Team Leader and Superintendent/Field Administrator within 24 hours of publication. Internet links forwarded via e-mail are preferred.

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6. Review articles submitted by staff in their assigned area for internal and external publications and forward to the Team Leader.

B. Public Information Teams will:

1. Meet and consult regularly on public information matters, including current media requests and upcoming events or activities likely to be of interest to the media and public,
2. Maintain lists of elected/public officials, community resource persons and locations, and news media representatives,
3. Maintain lists of regional/site specific promotional multimedia materials, and
4. Facilitate training for staff in media relations.

III. News Releases

- A. News releases of interest to local/regional media may be released by PIOs. The Team Leaders will first review and approve news releases and other press-related materials. [4-4021]
- B. The Communications and Outreach Director/designee will distribute news releases with statewide/national interest.
- C. Emergency news releases will be handled per DOC 410.160 Emergency Information Management.

IV. Media Contacts

- A. [4-4021] Authorized media spokespersons include the Executive staff, Superintendents, Regional Administrators, Deputy Directors, Field Administrators, and Headquarters PIOs. Other PIOs may serve as authorized media spokespersons with the consent of their Appointing Authorities.
- B. To accommodate special media requests and to facilitate interest in sharing accurate and timely information with the public, additional staff may be designated as authorized media spokespersons. Staff will first obtain approval from an authorized media spokesperson before engaging in interviews. [4-4021]
- C. Any employee contacted by a news media representative will prepare a Media Contact Report in the form of an email at the earliest opportunity, but no later than 24 hours after contact. The Media Contact Report will include:



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1. The name of the news media organization and requestor,
2. The date and time of contact,
3. A brief description of the information or assistance requested,
4. A brief description of the information or assistance provided, and
5. Phone number and email of requestor.

D. Media Contact Reports will be distributed to the:

1. Superintendent/Field Administrator,
2. Team Leader, and
3. Communications and Outreach Director.

E. Staff will inform their supervisor and PIO of any events that may attract public and/or news interest.


V. News Media Access

A. News media representatives consist of persons whose principal employment is gathering and reporting news for a:


1. Radio or television program whose primary purpose is news reporting for a licensee of the Federal Communications Commission,
2. Newspaper reporting general interest information news and circulated to the public in the community where it is published,
3. News magazine that has a national circulation and is sold by mail subscriptions or on newsstands to the general public,
4. National or international news service,
5. Website whose primary purpose is news reporting, or a web-based counterpart of any of the above, or
6. Web-based publication whose primary purpose is gathering and reporting news in a manner similar to other news organizations listed in this section.

B. [4-4279] [7F-03] Pre-arranged news media visits to facilities are encouraged and will be coordinated by the facility PIO. Requests from news media representatives for access to the facility must be in writing and include the following information:

1. Full name, Social Security number, date of birth, race, and gender for the purpose of National Crime Information Center/Washington Crime Information Center (NCIC/WACIC) and background checks,

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2. Purpose of visit,
 3. Time and duration of visit,
 4. Identity of staff/offender(s) to be seen, if applicable, and
 5. Proposed use of camera or other recording devices. The PIO or Superintendent/designee must approve possession of news media cameras and recording devices before being allowed into the facility.
- C. News media representatives must provide positive identification. Foreign media, except for Canadians, must have an "I" Visa on their passport.
 - D. News media representatives visiting a facility are subject to search procedures per DOC 420.340 Searching and Detaining Facility Visitors.
 - E. The PIO will ensure media representatives complete and sign DOC 05-805 Media Visit Information Sheet and DOC 05-807 Media Agreement prior to being allowed into the facility.
 - F. The PIO will ensure media representatives receive a copy of public information policies and operational memorandums related to their visit.
 - G. [4-4279] [7F-02] News media representatives will be granted access to the facility consistent with preserving offender rights to privacy and maintaining order and security, and must be escorted by staff. Random access not specific to the purpose of the visit is prohibited.
 - H. During an emergency, news media representatives will be restricted to a designated Information Center.
 - I. The Indeterminate Sentence Review Board has authority to determine if media representatives will be allowed to attend Board hearings held within Department facilities. The Superintendent may limit the number of media representatives based on space availability. News media representatives will follow visiting procedures outlined in this section. Consent to contact media forms are not required to videotape, record, or photograph offenders present at Board hearings.
- VI. Other Media Representatives
- A. Other media representatives include persons engaged in the production of documentary films, non-fiction books, or other freelance projects.

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- B. Requests by other media representatives for access to facilities, staff, or offenders will be submitted in writing to the Communications and Outreach Director on company letterhead at least 2 weeks prior to commencement of the project. The following information will be included in the request:
1. A description of the media representative's project, including a proposed list of facilities, offenders, activities, or situations the representative wishes to include in the project,
 2. An estimated project completion date and proposed schedule for completing each element involving the Department,
 3. A list of major financial contributors to the project,
 4. An estimate of time required to complete each element involving the Department, and
 5. A sample of previous work of a similar nature.
- C. The Communications and Outreach Director will collaborate with the Superintendent/Field Administrator to approve or deny the request.
- D. Other media representatives whose projects have been approved by the appropriate Superintendent/Field Administrator will be regarded as news media representatives for purposes of granting access.
- E. The Department may request compensation to cover the cost of staff overtime and other expenses associated with the project.

VII. Offender/Visitor Interviews

- A. The Department will provide reasonable access between offenders and the news media, subject only to the limitations necessary to maintain order and security and protect offender privacy.
1. Incarcerated offenders may correspond with representatives of the news media via United States Mail per DOC 450.100 Mail for Offenders, and may be permitted in-person and/or telephone interviews per DOC 450.200 Telephone Use by Offenders with representatives of the news media.
 2. News media representatives must obtain the incarcerated offender's permission in writing prior to an interview being scheduled. Offenders will complete DOC 05-806 Consent to Contact with Media prior to any interview, filming, taping, photographing, or voice recording. [4-4279] [7F-03]


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- a. Offender interviews will be scheduled at times that are not disruptive to the orderly operation and security of the facility.
3. The Superintendent/Field Administrator may deny or restrict in-person interviews if the contact is determined to be disruptive or a threat to the safety, security, and/or orderly operation of the facility. Representatives of the news media may be denied in-person contact if the offender has:
 - a. Been segregated for disciplinary reasons,
 - b. Filed criminal charges against another offender, or
 - c. Been determined to endanger the security of the facility or the offender.
- B. Offenders cannot accept compensation, or anything of value, for news or other media interviews.
- C. Visitors to Department facilities will complete DOC 05-806 Consent to Contact with Media prior to any interview, filming, taping, photographing, or voice recording.

VIII. Staff Interviews

- A. On duty, in-person interviews and photographs of staff by news media representatives may be permitted only with prior authorization of the Superintendent/Field Administrator and the staff.
 1. Staff cannot accept compensation for on-duty news or other media interviews.
 2. Photographing on-duty staff without their consent, in locations not generally accessible to the public, is prohibited.
- B. The Department may photograph, videotape, and audio record staff when producing Department advertisements, promotional materials, videos, brochures, newsletter articles, and other materials intended to publicly promote the Department's strategic goals or enhance morale.
 1. Staff participation in such activities will be voluntary and considered part of the employee's regular work day. Staff must complete DOC 05-802 Use of Photograph Personal Release prior to the Department's use of any photograph, videotape, or other recording.

DEFINITIONS:

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Words/terms appearing in this policy may be defined in the glossary section of the Policy Manual.

ATTACHMENTS:

None

DOC FORMS:

[DOC 05-802 Use of Photograph Personal Release](#)

[DOC 05-805 Media Visit Information Sheet](#)

[DOC 05-806 Consent to Contact with Media](#)

[DOC 05-807 Media Agreement](#)