



Sample: Staff Media Policy

Responding to Media Calls and Inquires

From time to time there are incidents, deaths and mistakes at other agencies that spur attention from the media – radio, television, newspaper and online – or state personnel. Sometimes, media are seeking information, resources, facts and commentary on topical issues, feature stories and controversies. When the media calls, it is **YOUR ORGANIZATION'S** policy that:

The Executive Director (**NAME**) is the primary spokesperson for **YOUR ORGANIZATION**, and **SECOND IN COMMAND (NAME)** is the secondary spokesperson with the media or state personnel. Any media or licensing personnel inquiries – by phone, in writing or in person – should be reported to the Executive Director (**NAME**) immediately.

Phone:

If you receive a media inquiry, these are the proper steps to take:

1. Refer the call to the Executive Director by saying, "The best person to answer your question is our Executive Director (or selected media spokesperson)." Do not say "no comment" as it sounds defensive and can raise suspicion. Remember, you should never share anything identifying about clients served/staff/etc.
2. If the caller is persistent, and insists on speaking with you, or begins interrogating you, keep calm and politely direct him/her to the Executive Director or media spokesperson.
3. **Never give out any staff, volunteer or board members' personal phone numbers.**
4. Do not put the call directly through to the Executive Director, instead take a message and let the reporter know someone will return the call as quickly as possible.
5. Try to **get as much information as possible** from the reporter, such as:
 - a. Reporter's organization/news outlet and location (bureau or city)
 - b. Connection, if any, of the topic to a recent event or occurrence
 - c. Reporter's deadline, phone number and e-mail address

In person:

In the event a reporter, photographer or other media shows up at your organization's offices or program locations unannounced and unanticipated, politely inform him/her this is a private agency and they must make an appointment with the Executive Director, who will gladly provide a tour and answer questions. You do also have the right to not allow photographs to be taken inside of your facility or of your staff or the people you serve without permission. Unless your organization has difference circumstances, you cannot typically control photographing the outside of your the building.

In the event of a crisis:

In the event of a tragedy, crisis, disturbance or other potentially negative media situation, enact your organization's Crisis Communications Plan.

If you would like an editable copy of this sample document, email info@coloradononprofits.org.



Contributed by **Barefoot PR**

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