


DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION 	DIVISION OF PRISONS	SECTION NUMBER: 110.02.01.001	PAGE NUMBER: 1 of 5
		SUBJECT: Media and Public Relations	Adopted: 08-15-95 Revised: Legal Review: 08-21-95 Reformatted: 03-2001

01.00.00. POLICY OF THE DEPARTMENT

It is the policy of the Board of Correction that the Department of Correction will maintain open and responsive communication with the public and the media. It is the intent of the Board that the Department keep the public well informed of its activities and maintain a consistently high community rapport through public presentations and special programs.

01.01.00 PURPOSE

To provide a system for establishing and maintaining appropriate relationships with the public, news media, and law enforcement agencies.

Applicability

To all employees and especially to the mailroom officer, the public information officer, and support staff.

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Department Policy 110, Media and Public Relations

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04.00.00. DEFINITIONS

Administrative correspondence: individually addressed and signed letters, not to include form letters or routine forms to which facsimile signatures are attached.

Administrative correspondence: Initial reviewing of all administrative correspondence from legislative bodies, courts, law enforcement agencies, and representatives of the news media.

72-hour mandatory response: preparing a written response to all letters within three working days of receipt.

Correspondence records: recording all incoming and outgoing executive correspondence and copies of the correspondence.

Routing method: informing appropriate officials of correspondence regarding their areas of responsibility and routing those requests and letters. Administrative staff: warden, deputy wardens, medical manager, RDU manager, and associate warden.

Field Public Information Officer: Any employee designated by the facility head to deliver information to the public and media and coordinate media activities with the Public Information Officer.

News media: Representatives 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 federal communications commission license.

Public Information Officer: (PIO) Any employee designated by the Director to deliver Department information to the public and to the media.

05.00.00. PROCEDURE

05.01.00 Field Public Information Officer

Each facility head will designate a field public information officer in writing and notify the department PIO.

05.02.00 Written Communication

Written correspondence should be answered within 72 hours of receipt.

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Legislative and judicial correspondence shall be forwarded directly to the facility head and replied to within three working days. A copy shall be forwarded to the Director and Division of Prisons Administrator.

News media correspondence shall be answered by the FPIO and coordinated with the public information officer.

Correspondence from law enforcement agencies shall be routed to the facility head or designee.

All replies to requests for information shall be answered unless there is some question as to the validity of the information or an individual's right of privacy.

Those requests may be referred to the office of legal counsel for an opinion.

05.03.00 Verbal Communication

05.03.01 News Media Visits

Visits from the news media shall be encouraged and handled directly through the Field Public Information officer. The FPIO shall, with the approval of the facility head and departmental PIO:

Allow media access to all program areas of the facility.

Any photographs or videos of inmates that identify the inmate require the inmate's written release.

Preserve the inmate's individual right of privacy.

Portray a factual picture of the institution.

Requests for staff interview should be approved in advance by the department PIO and routed through the FPIO.

Ensure that members of the news team are aware of their responsibility regarding custody and security.

Telephone interviews with inmates should be approved and message delivered to inmates.

The facility will not be responsible to ensure that the inmate calls the media, rather the FPIO will simply relay the message to the inmate and it is the inmate's

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decision whether or not to call.

This message should include the interviewer's name, phone number, and what they wish to interview the inmate about.

Telephone interviews will generally be made on collect telephones.

The facility head, Division of Prisons Administrator, or Director may at their sole discretion deny delivery of a message.

Any denial may be appealed to the Director in writing within two days of such denial.

No face-to-face or on-camera interviews will be permitted in any Division of Prisons facility.

Exceptions to this are at the sole discretion of the Director.

No exceptions to inmates under sentence of death will be granted in accordance with Idaho Code Section 19-2705.

All media contacts will be reported to the Division of Prisons Administrator.

05.03.02 Contact With the Public

Employee contact with the public shall be conducted with professionalism. All employees dealing directly with the public shall receive special training to ensure their prompt, courteous, and correct responses to inquiries. When approached by the media, staff shall direct the request to the department PIO or FPIO by providing appropriate phone number and name. If necessary, staff shall explain that they cannot provide any information. This training shall include information relating to the following subjects.

The Right of Privacy Act

Public information legislation

Approved telephone procedures

A basic indoctrination of policies relating to contact with the public.

05.04.00 Release of Official Information

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Individual employees receiving requests for information from groups mentioned in this directive shall forward all such inquiries to the FPIO. It is important that all inquiries be promptly, accurately, and completely answered in compliance with state, local, and federal laws governing public information and right of privacy.

All official information and press releases referring to agency or institutional policy or statements regarding institutional programming or conditions shall be issued only by the facility head or designee.

During an emergency situation, no information will be released to the media or the public without prior approval from the commander.

05.05.00 Tours

Tours of Division of Prisons facilities are encouraged and will be arranged by the field public information officer.

Administrator, Division of Prisons

Date