



Series: Public Relations
COA: ETH 1, HR 5.02, RPM 2
CFOP: 175-40; 175-89

Procedure Name: Crisis and Media Communications
Procedure Number: PBR-3007
Revision #/Date: NA
Effective Date: 3/01/09

Applicable to: All CBCB Staff, Board Members and Contract Providers

SUBJECT: Crisis and Media Communications

PURPOSE: The purpose of the crisis communications policy is to educate staff on importance of open communication with the public and the media and to establish protocol for any incident or crisis in which communication with the media and/or general public is necessary.

PROCEDURE:

References

CBCB Policies/Procedures: GOV018, OP1140, OP1089

Florida Statutes: 39.202 (2) (o)

The following procedures apply to inquiries or requests from any media such as newspaper, radio, television, cable access, Web site, magazine, etc. or from any person in the general public seeking comment regarding an incident or crisis.

- I. Procedure for handling inquiries. This procedure applies to all internal and external staff of CBC of Brevard and its Partners and Providers. CBC of Brevard will abide by all terms and conditions of its DCF contract in the reporting of critical incidents and alerting DCF to media inquiries.
 - A. Please refer all calls, emails or visits to the CEO. If the CEO is not available, refer to the Alternate Designee. The Alternate Designee will make every effort to contact the appropriate personnel.

Primary Contact: Dr. Patricia Nellius-Guthrie, CEO
Phone: (321) 752-4650 ext. 2002
Cell: (321) 626-0261
Email: Patricia.Nellius@cbcbrevard.org

Alternate Contact: Geo A. Ropert, APR – Communications Consultant

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Phone: (321) 752-4650 ext. 2084
Offsite Office: (321) 473-4520
Cell: (321) 205-3155 (preferred number)*
Email: Geo.Roport@cpcbrevard.org
Email (Straight to Cell #): ropertcg@earthlink.net
(*Use these contacts first)

- B. If the aforementioned are not available, please take the following steps:
- a. Obtain the inquirer's name, phone number, email address and deadline (if applicable to media inquiry).
 - b. Attempt to determine the nature of the story being developed or question(s) posed.
 - c. Ask if there is a deadline for response.
 - d. Advise the inquirer that the appropriate person will return their call or respond to their email in a timely manner.
 - e. Contact CBC of Brevard. If the CEO is not available, contact the designee.
- C. Do not offer any information to the inquirer. It is imperative that all contacts and communication be handled and documented by the designated personnel.
- D. If, under an extraordinary circumstance, you are not able to reach the primary or alternate contacts, please contact the Chief Personnel and Administrative Officer who will:
- E. Attempt to locate the designated CBC of Brevard media response designees. In the event of urgency, the CPAO will return the inquirers call and inform them of the status of a formal response.
- F. Staff will refrain from using the phrase, "no comment" as it may constitute a form of an answer that may be perceived negatively by the media.
- G. Should any concern arise regarding the appropriateness of a communication situation, please contact the Communications Consultant who will evaluate the situation and determine the appropriate course of action.
- II. Procedures for Crisis Communication. These procedures should be followed by the executive team of CBC of Brevard when any incident or crisis occurs that would garner media attention or intense public scrutiny.
- A. Gather all available facts and assess the situation to determine if a crisis exists and the level of its severity.
 - B. Brief executive-level staff including, if necessary, the chairman of the board and legal counsel. Brief supervisory staff that may be involved in managing personnel involved and any other Partners or Providers and their appropriate personnel, as necessary.
 - C. Communicate with necessary local, state and/or federal officials and agencies, as necessary or required (e.g. DCF, law enforcement, etc.)
 - D. Log all calls, emails and personal inquiries, and monitor and document media coverage.
 - E. If the crisis involves a physical site, control media and general public access as is legally permitted.
 - F. Identify a location where media briefings and updates will be conducted.
 - G. Identify a spokesperson. This person should be experienced in media communications or, at the least, comfortable addressing the public.
 - H. Provide the spokesperson with information and speaking points that will address the situation and also answer any anticipated questions that may be posed. Only provide facts as they are known. Do not speculate. Be brief and direct in responding to questions.

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- I. Provide situational updates and information as they are appropriate. Advise media of scheduled updates or contact them prior to press conferences.
- J. Following the incident or crisis, debrief all personnel involved to determine which actions/activities were appropriate, which may have deterred from effective communication and any lessons learned. Document these items and refer them for future communication situations.

BY DIRECTION OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER:



DR. PATRICIA NELLIUS-GUTHRIE
Chief Executive Officer
CBC of Brevard, Inc.

APPROVAL DATE: 2/26/09