



POLICY – 512
Rev. Level: A
January 13, 2012

MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that information disclosed by RCWE and/or the PA CareerLink® system is timely, accurate and factual. Adherence to this policy is intended to provide an effective and efficient framework to facilitate the timely dissemination of information. This policy will establish guidelines and assign responsibilities for the media relations function of the RCWE and the PA CareerLink® system. The Media Relations Procedures document (attached) provides guidance on dealing with the media and who should respond to queries from the media. In relation to this policy, the term media includes all journalists, news reporters and researchers from radio stations, TV, website/digital companies, newspapers (or groups of newspapers) and magazines.

2.0 REQUIREMENTS

The PA CareerLink® system has regular dealings with the media and issues news releases and provides responses to media inquiries received. It is important that timely, accurate and up-to-date information is provided to the media so that public, staff, stakeholders and partners are kept informed about workforce issues, while adhering to prescribed guidelines and procedures for releasing such information. It is also important to provide continual internal communications to ensure that local workforce investment area leadership is apprised of events that will be in the media prior to release. This policy addresses both routine media relations and crisis/emergency planning media relations. Violations of this policy are subject to discipline.

3.0 SCOPE.

This policy applies to all staff at RCWE as well as Business Service Representatives, contractors, grantees, sub-grantees, and partners of PA CareerLink® as it relates to RCWE and the PA CareerLink® system.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY.

The responsibility for implementation and oversight of this policy shall reside with the RCWE CEO and the Director of Operations for the PA CareerLink®.



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5.0 HISTORY.

Name	Date	Rev. Level	Description of Change	Effective Date
Deb O'Neil	12/7/2011	A	New Policy	01/13/2012



MEDIA RELATIONS
GENERAL PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH THE
MEDIA

Effective Date: January 13, 2012

Media Relations

Positive relationships with the media are developed and maintained by providing accurate and helpful information to reporters in a timely manner. To ensure that information provided to the media is accurate and to ensure that reporters have appropriate access to the best sources of information, these procedures have been established.

Spokespersons

The RCWE CEO serves as the primary spokesperson for the RCWE and the Workforce Investment Board on all matters of community interest. The local Director of Operations for the PA CareerLink® serves as the primary spokesperson for the local PA CareerLink® system on all matters of community interest. The RCWE CEO and the Director of Operations may, from time to time, delegate other individuals to serve as primary spokespersons for their areas of knowledge, responsibility or expertise.

Responsibility

Staff of RCWE, contractors, grantees, sub-grantees and partners of the RCWE and/or the local PA CareerLink® system shall not release any information whether private or confidential as identified by law and board policy or administrative regulation. RCWE staff shall notify the RCWE CEO and local PA CareerLink® staff shall notify the local Director of Operations for the PA CareerLink® respectively whenever they are contacted by the media. If the topic is sensitive or significant, staff must notify their respective Spokesperson directly and immediately.

All staff is encouraged to cooperate with media representatives, yet they will need to direct inquiries through the appropriate Spokesperson as noted above. When staff is contacted by a representative of the media for a comment or interview on a subject related to the employee's area of expertise, the employee, after authorization from the appropriate Spokesperson, shall respond in a manner that is courteous and professional.

All levels of PA CareerLink® communication require approval from the Director of Operations or the Site Administrator with the exception of Site Administrator community and media relations efforts. Programmatic media announcements for NWPA CareerLink® initiatives, regular media requests, crisis media coverage or any other type



of media coverage for the local PA CareerLink® should be cleared through the Director of Operations.

Site Administrators may be given authority by the Director of Operations to discuss some or all media communications at their discretion. No PA CareerLink® contractor or grantee shall publish news media releases or press releases before approved by the Director of Operations or Site Administrator when PA CareerLink® is the entity for which their program or grant requirements require PA CareerLink® duties or services.

Before clients are interviewed, taped, or photographed, the respective staff, contractor, grantee, sub-grantee and/or partner shall obtain the appropriate permissions for each individual situation. A signed form giving permission for the use of the client's image in video print or broadcast must be kept on file, as appropriate. Such forms will be developed and maintained by each respective partner in the system, as they know best the client and the information that is being requested. Clients have the right to request that they not be interviewed or photographed for video, print or broadcast.

Guidelines for Talking with the Media

A reporter, producer or other news media may contact you for a number of reasons, for example:

- To get information about the local PA CareerLink® system or Workforce Investment Area and/or its board
- To get information about recent unexpected events such as plant closings, mass layoffs, funding cuts, new company start-ups, customer or employee complaints, federal, state or local regulatory actions, etc.
- To get information or comment about an action or event that could impact the workforce development industry, new products, businesses, changes in government or system policies, problems or issues specific to the local community you serve, etc.

Refer all media calls to the respective Spokesperson. Please do not say you are not allowed to talk to a reporter or have to get permission to do so. Instead, tell the reporter: "local PA CareerLink® policy is to refer all media inquiries to the Spokesperson. You can reach them at (provide phone number)."

Whenever taking a call from the media, the same courtesy and professionalism in which we approach customers should be displayed toward the media. Please act quickly when approached by the media to ensure that the reporter's deadline is met. This is important because the way this call is handled may be the reporter's first impression of the local system and that first impression may end up in the story published or the news segment



broadcast. In order to promote our customer service image, it is important to respond quickly, courteously and professionally to all media calls.

Please remember to contact the respective Spokesperson if and when you have been approached by the media. Even though you have referred the media, the Spokesperson may need your help in preparing a response. Do not let a reporter compel you to answer questions on the spot. It is always beneficial to prepare in advance in order to provide accurate and relevant information.

Guidelines for Photographs and Film

A similar process as described above will be used when someone from the media is requesting permission to take photographs or to film inside our facilities. Refer the caller to the respective Spokesperson. No one should be given access to any PA CareerLink® facility for a photo or filming without approval from the Spokesperson. Equally important, the Spokesperson will not give approval without talking in advance with the Site Administrator of the PA CareerLink® facility. This is a joint decision between the facility and appropriate Spokesperson. Decisions will be based upon a number of considerations including but not limited to what the facility has to gain from the photo and filming, how much disruption will be caused to operations, and if the facility is “picture perfect” for the photo and filming.

A reporter or camera crew may show up unannounced at a facility. This is most likely to occur in crisis situations at one of our facilities or within one of the communities we serve. Or, it could occur if the media learned about an event at the facility from an external source who has organized a demonstration or boycott.

Please know that the respective Spokesperson will not send the media to any PA CareerLink® location without prior notification to the Site Administrator. When dealing with reporters and camera crews who may show up unannounced, the Site Administrator and staff should act with the same courtesy and professionalism as we approach customers. Contact the respective Spokesperson immediately and let them know which news source is there. The respective Spokesperson will contact the camera crew’s news room or the print photographer’s editor for clarification, if necessary.

We cannot prevent the filming or photographing of common areas outside of our facilities which we do not operate. Examples would include public parking lots, courtyards and walk ways.

The following guidelines should be used when television camera crews or print photographers show up unannounced at your facility.

- Although we cannot prevent the media from photographing or filming the exterior of the facilities, we may contact their news room and/or editors for clarification
- The media cannot enter the facility to photograph or film without permission



- The media cannot block the entrance to the facility or prevent people from entering the facility or conducting business as usual
- We can inform the media if our customers complain about the inconvenience caused in the parking lot or walk ways

Be courteous and friendly, but also remember that no matter how congenial or affirming the reporter, photographer or camera crew are, everything you say and do may be observed and reported by the media representative who is trying to make the facility come alive for his/her audience.

Guidelines for Seeking Media Coverage

In circumstances in which you believe you have a positive news story to share with the public, contact the respective Spokesperson. They are the only individuals authorized to distribute news releases, pitch coverage of particular events or hold news conferences, unless they delegate another individual to do so.

- Do not call a reporter directly without first consulting the respective Spokesperson
- The respective Spokesperson will work with you to gather information and determine if and how the news media should be contacted and if the story is newsworthy.
- Some news items may be more appropriate for publicity through a newsletter or other form of communication

Guidelines for Communicating with Media for Non-controversial Issues With Spokesperson Approval

- Obtain the name of the person calling, the media organization and, if available, the anticipated time of release of information in print or broadcast.
- The best approach with the media is to be prompt, helpful and honest. All contacts from the media should be returned as soon as possible, in deference to reporters' deadlines. At the most, a call should be returned within a half-day. If that is not possible, an alternate employee (if appropriate and approved by the Spokesperson) should be asked to handle the call.
- Make sure you understand each question from the media before answering. If you cannot answer the question or are uncomfortable providing a response, take the reporter's number and advise him/her that someone who can provide the information will contact him/her as soon as possible. Then follow-up by contacting the respective Spokesperson.
- Do not offer speculations or gossip. Do not answer a reporter's question with "no comment." Do not be condescending or underestimate the reporter's intelligence, but make sure the reporter understands your responses. Provide your phone number and/or email address for follow-up questions.



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- Remember that in responding to the media, you can be seen as representing and speaking for the local workforce investment area and/or the local PA CareerLink® system. Personal opinions should never be identified to the media when approached as a local PA CareerLink® representative. Be direct and factual.
- Issues that should not be discussed with reporters are 1) legal issues, 2) personal issues, 3) questions that involve the system's integrity, such as ethics or issues that may result in harm to others, or 4) a system crisis or emergency. Refer all such inquiries to the respective Spokesperson.
- Any media inquiries that involve information about specific customers should be directed to the respective Spokesperson. Such inquiries will be handled in strict compliance with federal or state laws or guidance.