



Media Relations

Media Types:

Print Media:

Newspapers and magazines are usually able to include more information than other mediums. Be prepared with data, several sources for quotes, company profiles, and other information.

Television:

Television is a very visual medium and most stories will be short – two to three minutes, at the most. When speaking with a reporter, use short phrases or sound-bites. Make sure you have good visuals for the photographers.

Radio:

Radio is an aural medium and most stories are very short – 15 to 30 seconds. Prepare very short sound-bites for radio interviews.

Internet:

The internet reaches a global audience and social media also is a good method to share your stories

News Releases:

News releases are an effective way to communicate information about upcoming events or important news. Releases allow you to communicate directly with the community, show your perspective on events or recent developments, and gain publicity for your cause.

Craft a clear and concise news release and it is possible to get media coverage for your agency or special event.

When writing a release remember to include the “five Ws” taught in journalism school – Who, What, When, Where, and Why.

As you write your story for a news release, put yourself in the mind of a reporter or editor. What is interesting to the audience the medium serves? Keep in mind that editors may see hundreds of news releases a week. Emphasize what makes your release important and why it is important to the community.

[Sample News Release](#)

[Sample Media Advisory](#)

Additional tips:

- Make the headline and lead paragraph as clear as possible.
- Make your release look professional.

- Ensure there are no typographical errors in the copy.
- Keep your release relatively short – two to three pages maximum.
- Include full quotes with individuals identified with their title.
- Avoid using jargon or acronyms – if using an acronym, spell it out on first reference. For example: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Media Interviews

Following are some tips for a media interview:

- Prepare “talking points” prior to the interview and commit them to memory. Talking points are the key points you want to get across. Try to work them in every chance you have during the interview.
- Have a prepared statement ready in case the reporter asks for one.
- If the reporter has never done a story with your organization before, ask the reporter if you can take a step back and provide a quick overview of your organization and services. This may give the reporter a better feel for the organization and help set the stage for the interview.
- Do not say “no comment” to a question, instead steer the conversation back to the key points you want to make.
- Many reporters end interviews by asking if they have covered everything or if there is anything else you would like to add. Take this opportunity to reinforce key points. This is a chance to end the conversation with the main topic or idea you really want the reporter to remember.
- Remember, don’t say anything you don’t want to hear on the news or read in the paper. Quotes can be taken out of context, jokes can end up in the headline, and a badly placed word can tarnish your organization. Do not assume if you ask that a statement to “be off the record” that it will be. Off-the-record statements may be used, although not attributed to you. Assume that everything you say is on the record and could be used by the media.

As an organization, you need to determine if a media/photo release form is needed if any of your clients are to be interviewed.

[Sample Media/Photo Release Form](#)