

Policy Number:	CAS-016
Policy Name:	Media Policy
Approved By:	Chief Administrative Officer
Approval Date:	February 28, 2024
Amendment Date:	
Department:	Corporate Services

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to facilitate effective external communications related to District issues, policy decisions and services. In addition, internal controls and communications are important to ensure that the media represents the views of the District in a consistent manner and that messaging from the District is unified.

SCOPE

The objective of this media policy is to provide support and advice to ensure that communication activities are of a high quality, effective, efficient and that messaging is factual and consistent. Social Media policy considerations are addressed in the District's Social Media Policy

MEDIA RELATIONS

The media play an important role in providing information to the public on matters of civic interest. Media inquiries, whether by phone, e-mail, letter, or in person, should be addressed promptly to accommodate publication or broadcast deadlines, wherever possible.

Communications staff must ensure that responses to media requests, particularly for interviews or technical information, are informed by the subject matter experts or staff designated as the spokesperson for the department.

As a general principle, members of Council should learn about new programs, services, disruptions, or initiatives before information about them is released to the media. It is acknowledged that unexpected incidents will not make possible in all circumstances, but best efforts to inform can be undertaken to advise Council as quickly as is practical under the circumstances.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

Media inquiries of a general or operational nature shall be directed where operationally practical to the Communications Manager to coordinate a response.

Media enquiries pertaining to pending or potential litigation or personnel matters should be referred to the Chief Administrative Officer.

For clarity, any staff member approached by media shall be referred to the Communications Manager and interviews or information shall not be provided until that has occurred, consistent with this policy.

NEWS RELEASES

News releases, when required should be drafted in consultation with the Communications Manager unless they are issued in crisis and incident situations where time is of the essence. News releases of an operational nature are approved by the Chief Administrative Officer. News Releases of a political nature are approved by the Mayor and CAO.

ADVERTISING

All Departments undertake advertising of matters within the operational purview of their departments. Departments must coordinate with the Communications Manager to book print advertisements or to create digital advertisements.

CRISIS COMMUNICATIONS

In a crisis, coordinated communication must be used to maintain or restore confidence. Departments must advise the CAO or designate and the Communications staff as soon as they identify an event or situation occurring in, or affecting, their department that may attract interest from the media and community or requires notification of the public.

Communications staff will coordinate a response in consultation with the CAO and the appropriate department.

INCIDENT COMMUNICATIONS

Emergency services respond to incidents within the municipality and establish incident command posts during these types of events, fires, accidents etc. It is acknowledged that during these types of events media contact will occur and the Incident Commander and/or Information Officer will provide interviews or information to media enquiries at certain times (24/7 x 365). The Incident Commander or Duty Officer shall use best efforts to communicate with the Communications Specialist to provide details of communications that originate from the incident that are of Corporate, Council or community interest and/or significance..

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mayor and Council

The Mayor is the District's chief spokesperson, explaining Council policies, priorities and decisions to the public.

Administration

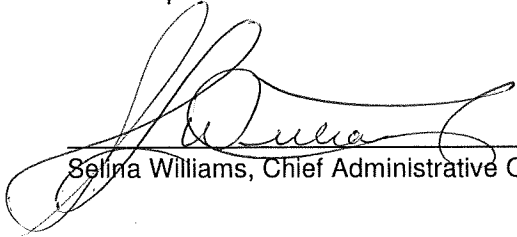
The Chief Administrative Officer or designate is the chief administrative spokesperson.

Corporate Services Department

Requests for interviews and comments should be referred to the Communications Specialist to arrange with either the Mayor, CAO or designate.

Department Heads

Department Heads or designates approved by the Chief Administrative Officer are the approved staff to provide information to the media and to participate in media interviews.



Selina Williams, Chief Administrative Officer

Feb 28, 2024
Date