



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY

NUMBER: 88-03	DATE: 6/27/88
REVISIONS: 4/23/91; 9/8/95	
ISSUED BY: City Manager	SIGNED <i>10/11/88 - J. Campbell</i>

SUBJECT: MEDIA RELATIONS

PURPOSE: To facilitate the flow of information between the City, all City departments, and the media.

POLICY:

- A. All Top Management Staff will be designated as the City's official spokespeople to the media.
- B. The responsibilities of the spokespeople are as follows:
 - 1. To respond to media inquiries as quickly as possible, and to report the results of those inquiries to the City Manager immediately. Media contact forms will be provided for this purpose. Alternatively, a call to the City Manager directly or a PROFS note with the same basic information may be sent to the City Manager.
 - 2. To encourage all employees within a department to refer media inquiries to the designated spokesperson. In the event that this is not possible, the spokesperson is responsible for relaying any media contact made by employees in the department to the City Manager as quickly as possible.
 - 3. To communicate any formal statements, departmental positions, or City Manager instructions on a given issue to all employees to prepare them for response to public concerns.
 - 4. To contact the City Manager before responding to media inquiries on any unexpected or controversial issue, or on emergency issues which could impact the health, safety, or welfare of the public at large.

5. To make fellow spokespeople aware of any media inquiries that could lead to similar inquiries in other departments, and to confer with those other spokespeople to be sure responses are coordinated and clear.
6. To seek media relations counsel on all significant departmental issues as early as possible in the development of those issues.
7. To make the City Manager aware of any positive issues so these can be brought forward for media attention.
8. To approve news releases related to their operations and to submit 15 copies of all news releases to the City Manager's Office for distribution to the City Commission and other top staff.
9. To abide by the requirements set forth in the Freedom of Information Act of the State of Michigan. If there is any question about the right of the media to have access to a particular document, the issue should be referred to the City Attorney's Office for a decision.
10. To undergo periodic training in media relations.
11. The only exceptions to this policy are as follows:
 - a. The Police and Fire Departments have the right to assign Public Information Officers to become alternate spokespeople for the department. These alternate spokespeople should abide by the guidelines provided in this Policy. The City Manager should be made aware of the names of the alternate spokespeople for training and information purposes.
 - b. The spokesperson in the Public Museum may designate the Public Museum's Public Information Specialist as an alternate spokesperson and assign that person the duties described in this Policy for specific issues or assignments. The City Manager should be made aware of the issues and assignments that will be handled by an alternate spokesperson at the Museum.
 - c. The City Manager may designate specific spokespeople outside of the regular spokesperson network to handle specific media inquiries as he/she deems appropriate.

Attachment: Media Contact Sheet

CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS

MEDIA CONTACT SHEET

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AFTER EVERY MEDIA CONTACT AND FORWARD TO THE CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE IMMEDIATELY. ALTERNATELY, CALL THE CITY MANAGER DIRECTLY OR SEND A PROFS NOTE WITH THE SAME INFORMATION.

City Employee's Name: _____

Department: _____ Phone: _____

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Date: _____ Time: _____

Reporter's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Station/Publication: _____

Subject Discussed: _____

Date Story Will Be Aired/Printed (if known): _____

Department Referrals: _____

Follow-Up Needed (and by what department): _____
