



**JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY
CABINET
DEPARTMENT OF
JUVENILE JUSTICE
POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

REFERENCES:
3-JTS-1A-25, 27
3-JDF-1A-30, 31; 3D-05
3-JCRF-1A-16-18
1-JDTP-1A-22, 24
1-JBC-1A-20, 22, 23
4-JCF-6G-02-4
2-JPAS-2-7020, 7020-1
2-CO-1A-27, 27-1

CHAPTER: Administration

AUTHORITY: KRS 15A.065

SUBJECT: News Media Contacts

POLICY NUMBER: DJJ 119

TOTAL PAGES: 3

EFFECTIVE DATE: 12/01/2014

APPROVAL: Bob D. Hayter

,COMMISSIONER

I. POLICY

The Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) shall be committed to keeping the public and media informed of events and information that occur within the Department. Information shall be released in an organized, professional manner that ensures the public's right to have certain information and also protects the confidentiality of youth under DJJ supervision.

II. APPLICABILITY

This policy shall apply to DJJ staff, offices, and programs and shall govern the policy of contract programs and agencies with regard to news media contacts regarding DJJ youth.

III. DEFINITIONS

Refer to Chapter 100.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. The Commissioner shall designate a Public Information Officer (PIO) for the Department who shall have authority for all public information and media relations. The Commissioner's Office shall inform all staff of who the PIO is on at least an annual basis or any time the PIO changes.
- B. Dissemination of Information
1. The PIO shall be informed of all correspondence from representatives of the media directly after the correspondence is received.
 2. Except as discussed in Section IV.E below, the PIO shall be informed of all correspondence to representatives of the media and shall approve all outgoing correspondence prior to its release.

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3. Notifications may be done via email or phone contact, with the appropriate members of the staff's supervisory chain copied or verbally briefed regarding the notification and any direction received from the PIO.
4. Interview requests from the media shall be made in writing and consent to interview DJJ youth shall be provided to the requestor in writing including, parent or legal guardian consent where applicable.
5. The PIO may, upon approval of the Commissioner, designate individual staff whom are authorized to speak to the media without prior approval or notification to the PIO. These individuals shall be notified in writing by the PIO of this status, with the notification copied to all members of their supervisory chain up to and including the Commissioner.
6. All staff with permission to speak to the media shall restrict their comments to DJJ representation only, omitting personal views or opinions. Staff shall direct any questions or information requests that go beyond their area of expertise or authority to the PIO.
7. Staff without permission to speak to the media shall refer representatives of the media to the PIO. Staff shall inform their immediate supervisor of any media contact.

C. Media Visits to Facilities or DJJ Offices

1. Requests for interviews and facility or office visits by representatives of the media shall be referred to the PIO for approval. A request shall be required to be made in advance and have a specific goal in mind. The PIO shall notify the appropriate Regional Division Director, Facilities Regional Administrator (FRA) or Community Regional Manager, and Superintendent or Juvenile Services District Supervisor (JSDS) of all facility or community office visits that are approved.
2. Each facility and office shall identify areas of the facility or office that are accessible to media representatives.
3. Each facility and office shall protect the confidentiality of youth according to DJJ Policy during media visits.
4. Each facility and office shall notify the PIO in advance of any special events that could result in media coverage. The PIO shall evaluate the situation and determine the appropriate strategy for dealing with the media coverage.
5. If the FRA or Branch Manager, after consultation with the Superintendent or JSDS, determines that a media visit may constitute a disruption of the treatment program or violate the rights of the residents, the PIO, Deputy Commissioners, and the Commissioner shall be advised through the appropriate chain of

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command. The final decision on denying the visit shall be made by the Commissioner.

- D. Press releases shall only be released by the PIO. Staff may request a press release by contacting the PIO directly.
- E. All data or information that is requested by the media pursuant to the Kentucky Open Records Act shall be processed pursuant to DJJPP Chapter 1 to insure that information protected by federal or state privacy and freedom of information statutes is released in the appropriate manner. In this case, the Ombudsman shall allow the PIO to review and have input into the agency response to the record request.
- F. The PIO shall communicate with the Ombudsman on any media requests for records that is not submitted as an Open Records Request to determine if the records request falls under the Kentucky Open Records Act. If so, the response shall be handled pursuant to DJJPP Chapter 1.

V. MONITORING MECHANISM

Compliance with this policy shall be monitored by all supervisory personnel on an ongoing basis.