



ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE

Title: Media Relations
Issuing Department: Town Manager
Effective Date: October 12, 2018
Approved: Jamsheed Mehta, Town Manager
Type of Action: Revision

1.0 PURPOSE

This directive addresses Town employees' relations with the media, including but not limited to news anchors, reporters, correspondents, producers and editors. It is in the Town's best interest to maintain a cooperative relationship with the news media. Positive news coverage assists the Town in development, special event publicity, fund-raising, mission attainment, and recruitment, and helps create an overall positive image of the Town. This directive is intended to assist Town personnel to prevent miscommunication with the news media and to protect the health, safety and welfare of Town constituents and personnel by reducing the chances of inaccurate or misunderstood statements.

2.0 DEPARTMENTS AFFECTED

All Town of Marana departments and employees

3.0 REFERENCES

- 3.1 A.R.S. §§ 39-121 *et seq*: Public records law
- 3.2 Town of Marana Personnel Policies and Procedures, Policy 1-2, Code of Ethics
- 3.3 Town of Marana Administrative Directive: Public Records Request Procedures

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 Media relations: Working with various media to inform the public of the Town's mission, policies and practices in a positive, consistent and credible manner.

5.0 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 5.1 General. Employees are encouraged, but not required, to speak with the media about matters concerning their areas of expertise and knowledge.
- 5.2 Notification to Communications Division. When employees receive a request to speak to a member of the media regarding Town business, they should attempt to notify the Communications Division prior to speaking to the media, if possible.

5.2.1.1 If an employee is unable to notify the Communications Division before speaking to the media, the employee shall advise the Communications Manager of the media contact promptly so that the Communications Manager can provide any additional information or follow-up, and can alert the Town Manager's Office about upcoming stories.

5.2.1.2 This section does not apply to the Police Department's Public Information Officer (PIO) or designee when communicating with the media regarding routine Police Department matters or business.

5.3 Police Department Procedures

5.3.1 All requests from the media for comment or interviews regarding routine Police Department matters or business shall be directed to the PD's Public Information Officer (PIO) or the Police Chief.

5.3.2 If a Police Department matter or business involves a Town-wide incident or event, Town policy, or other Town departments and their actions, the PIO will notify the Communications Division prior to speaking to the media, if possible, and will work with the Communications Division to coordinate a response.

5.4 Miscellaneous

5.4.1 When speaking with the media, employees shall provide accurate information in a professional manner, remembering their responsibilities as public servants.

5.4.2 If an employee does not have current and timely information or believes that another employee can better respond to a media request, the employee should refer the media representative to the proper Town contact and notify the Communications Manager.

5.4.3 Employees who do not wish to talk with the media may direct inquiries to the Communications Manager or another person as designated by the Town Manager's Office.

5.4.4 All media inquiries must be handled in a timely manner due to media deadlines. However, employees should have all relevant facts before doing interviews and should not rush their answers.

5.5 Confidentiality. Employees who handle confidential information shall maintain any required confidentiality when speaking with the media.

5.6 Public Records Requests

5.6.1 All public records requests from the media, except for requests for Police Department records or Marana Municipal Court records, shall be forwarded to the Town Clerk's Office for processing and response.

5.6.2 Public records requests for Police Department records or Marana Municipal Court records may be handled by the Police Department and the Marana Municipal Court, respectively.

5.6.3 The Communications Manager shall be notified of all public records requests from the media, except for those involving routine Police Department matters or business.

6.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 All employees are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures as outlined in this directive.
- 6.2 The Communications Manager is primarily responsible for the overall management and coordination of the Town's media relations, under the direction of and in consultation with the Town Manager. The Communications Manager shall provide timely information and updates to the Town Manager regarding media relations.
- 6.3 The Town Clerk's Office is primarily responsible for processing and responding to public records requests.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS

[Reserved]

REVISION HISTORY

	<i>DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE</i>	<i>DATE</i>
OR	Original Release	1/31/2011
REV	Revision	10/12/2018

Caution: A copy of this Administrative Directive is an uncontrolled document. It is your responsibility to ensure you are using the current version. The electronic version is the only acceptable and controlled Administrative Directive.