


GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE	Transmittal # 20-4	Policy # 1.8
Applicability: {x} All DJJ Staff { } Administration { } Community Services { } Secure Facilities	Related Standards & References: O.C.G.A. §§ 50-18-70, 49-4A-8(d)(2), 15-11-18 ACA Standards: 4-JCF-3A-15, 4-JCF-6F-07, 4-JCF-6G-02, 4-JCF-6G-03, 4-JCF-6G-04, 4-JCF-6G-05, 3-JDF-1A-26, 3-JDF-1A-30, 3-JDF-1A-31, 3-JDF-1A-31-1, 3-JDF-1F-07, 3-JDF-3D-05 DJJ 8.5, 8.22	
Chapter 1: ADMINISTRATION	Effective Date: 2/28/20	
Subject: PUBLIC INFORMATION	Scheduled Review Date: 2/28/21	
Attachments: A – DJJ Media Agreement B – DJJ Parent/Guardian Release Form C – Letterhead Template	Replaces: 3/1/19 Office of Communications	
	APPROVED:  Tyrone Oliver, Commissioner	

I. POLICY:

The Department of Juvenile Justice Office of Communications shall govern the release of public information to the media, other governmental agencies, and members of the general public.

II. DEFINITIONS:

Director of Communications: The official spokesperson for the Department who, along with the Commissioner, Chief of Staff, and Assistant Commissioner, has primary authorization to speak to the media.

Media: Newspapers, news magazines, professional newsletters, web-based publications (e.g. social media), national or international wire services, movie and television entertainment or documentary productions, cable and satellite broadcasts, or radio and television stations holding a Federal Communications Commission license.

News Conference: A called meeting with invited media representatives to make public announcements or provide information on significant Department accomplishments, events, or trends. A news conference will be called only after approval by the Commissioner or designee.

News Release: A prepared written announcement or statement issued to the media about an event or other news or publicity item related to the Department.

Publications: Booklets, brochures, newsletters, pamphlets, leaflets, posters, reports, web-based media (such as official agency website articles, student handbooks, annual reports, and on-line newsletters), and social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube).

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Public Service Announcement (PSA): Brief and informative broadcast spots, ten seconds to one minute in length, written for TV, radio, or social media, which provide information about the Department to the general public at no cost to the agency.

Public Service Advertisement: Brief and informative paid broadcast spots, ten seconds to one minute in length, for TV, radio, or social media, which provide information about the Department to the general public.

III. PROCEDURES:

- A. Requests for information from the media will be handled by the Office of Communications, which will process them as expeditiously as possible. The Director of Communications will coordinate the release of information to the media and may consult with the Commissioner, Chief of Staff, Assistant Commissioner, Deputy Commissioners, Directors, and other staff to effectively and appropriately respond.
- B. Any employee who receives a media inquiry must:
 1. Refer the inquirer to the Office of Communications; and
 2. Promptly notify the Office of Communications through his/her chain of command.
- C. Staff may not contact media, furnish information to the media, or speak on behalf of the Department without prior approval of the Director of Communications, Chief of Staff, Assistant Commissioner, or Commissioner. During all approved media interviews, employees will limit their comments to those areas of immediate responsibilities and refrain from personal opinions or speculation.
- D. Requests for information from a federal or state legislator, or any other governmental official, for information about the Department shall be immediately forwarded to the Director of the Office of Governmental Relations (OGR) to handle.
- E. The Director of the Office of Communications will consult with the Commissioner and Office of Legal Services prior to responding to media requests whenever the subject matter of the request concerns potential or pending litigation, or when it is related to any of the following incidents:
 1. Death of a youth (suicide or other);
 2. Death of an employee or visitor on DJJ property;
 3. Physical child abuse, sexual abuse/exploitation, or child neglect occurring on or off of DJJ property;

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4. Physical intervention techniques used for the purposes of administering medications involuntarily;
5. Self-harm behaviors by a youth;
6. Youth serious injury or illness requiring outside medical care;
7. Youth requiring mental health hospitalization;
8. Youth on youth sexual act or sexual assault on DJJ property;
9. Youth on youth physical altercation;
10. Youth on staff physical altercation;
11. Sexual misconduct by staff, contractor, volunteer, or intern;
12. Criminal acts;
13. Contraband discovered at a facility/program site (non-nuisance contraband);
14. Filing of formal legal charges against a youth, staff, contractor, volunteer, intern or visitor related to criminal behavior occurring on or off of DJJ property;
15. Escape from a secure facility;
16. Major group disturbance;
17. Natural disaster, fire, or other emergency; or
18. Substantial damage to state property.

F. Emergency situations:

1. Inquiries relating to an emergency situation, or an incident that has the potential for attracting media attention, will be immediately forwarded to the respective Deputy Commissioner/Direct Report, with copies to the Director of Communications, including all details related to the emergency and request for information, if applicable. In the absence of the respective Deputy Commissioner/Direct Report, the request and information will be forwarded to the Commissioner.
2. If an emergency situation occurs after normal business hours and has attracted the attention of the media, the respective Deputy Commissioner and Director of Communications will be contacted immediately by email identifying the nature of the incident and the facility location of the emergency and the name, phone number, and email address of the DJJ

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staff to contact for details. The Director of Communications or designee will provide assistance and guidance and will be prepared to assume spokesperson responsibilities. (See also DJJ 20.8, High Profile Incident Review.)

3. In the event of an emergency situation or other incident that has the potential for attracting media attention, a copy of the Special Incident Report or any relevant documentation will be sent to the Director of Communications. (See DJJ 8.5, Special Incident Reporting.)
4. If an emergency situation extends beyond 48 hours, a Communications Office Team may be assembled at the site of the emergency/incident.
 - a) The Communications Office Team will consist of:
 - i. Director of Communications;
 - ii. Respective Deputy Commissioner or designee;
 - iii. Facility/program/office Director;
 - iv. Designated facility/program/office staff; and
 - v. Any staff from the Office of Communications designated by the Director of Communications.
 - b) The Director of Communications and Deputy Commissioner (or designee) will work with local staff in gathering all pertinent information.
 - c) The Director of Communications will:
 - i. Coordinate and supervise the predetermined media center;
 - ii. Maintain regular communication with the Commissioner, Chief of Staff, Assistant Commissioner, and Deputy Commissioners in an advisory capacity, and provide and receive information;
 - iii. Handle on-site news conferences or media interviews;
 - iv. Make copies of Department policy available to the media when applicable; and
 - v. Oversee the publishing of news releases, fact sheets, and briefings to the media.

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- d) The Deputy Commissioner (or designee) of the impacted work unit will:
 - i. Serve as backup to the Director of Communications;
 - ii. Remain in contact with the Director of Communications, providing current, factual information; and
 - iii. Keep track of pertinent data regarding the emergency (e.g., injuries, casualties, damages, first responder counts, law enforcement and administrative actions, queries, and responses, sources of responses, recording news conferences, etc.).
 - e) The facility/program/office Director will:
 - i. Make available to the Director of Communications and the Deputy Commissioner (or designee) all information regarding the emergency/incident in clear, concise, and brief terms upon their arrival;
 - ii. Provide a map or floor plan of the facility/program/office;
 - iii. Identify space and alternate space for a media center. The space should have a telephone, podium, flip chart, chairs, table, power strips, and refreshments; and
 - iv. Make a golf cart or state vehicle available, if applicable, and have designated staff to function as media escorts and clerical assistants.
 - f) The Director of Communications will designate a member of the Office of Communications staff to monitor television and radio broadcasts, the internet, and newspaper articles for coverage and inaccurate information. The designated staff will forward the information to the Director of Communications as soon as possible.
- G. In non-emergency situations, Deputy Commissioners (or designees) may be designated to be the official spokespersons for their respective work units. These designations will be made in consultation with the Director of Communications. In all instances, the Director of Communications will be notified of all media contacts.
- H. Regional Administrators, District Directors, and facility/program/office Directors may work to develop media interest in their programs. The respective Deputy Commissioner and Director of Communications will be notified of any media

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contact. The Office of Communications will assist and support approved projects involving the media.

1. Media representatives will not be allowed to enter any Department facility/program/office, without prior approval from the Commissioner. Media requests for interviews or other contact with youth or employees will be communicated through Facility Directors to the respective Deputy Commissioner and Director of Communications immediately by phone and confirmed by email.
2. No media cameras, recording devices, or cellular recording devices are permitted beyond the front security lobby of a DJJ secure facility without the permission of the Commissioner.
3. At least 24 hours advance notice will be required for media visit requests to facilities/programs/offices, unless waived by the Commissioner. If a visit is approved, media representatives will be required to sign the DJJ Media Agreement (Attachment A) prior to the visit.
4. Media representatives will be subject to all applicable policies and procedures. These include all policies related to visitors, such as dress code, presenting photo identification, and the search procedures established in DJJ 8.22, Searches and Contraband Control. Disregard for an applicable policy or procedure may result in termination of the visit.
5. Media representatives approved by the Commissioner to visit Department facilities/programs/offices will be accompanied by a representative designated by the respective Deputy Commissioner (or designee) and/or Director of Communications. Designated escorts will be present during media or DJJ intern interviews, when approved, and during recordings, photography, or videotaping. DJJ interns will be subject to all applicable news media policies and procedures for approval and conduct of interviews or videotaping, photography, or recording DJJ youth or employees.
6. Media will not fly or broadcast at an altitude of less than 400 feet over a secure facility, in accordance with federal air regulations and state laws. Media aircraft will not land within the fenced guard lines of any DJJ secure facility compound. In the event of a media aircraft (i.e. manned or unmanned) violation of DJJ air space, the Facility Director or designee will immediately notify the Director of Communications. The Director will follow Federal Aviation Guidelines by filing a complaint with local law enforcement and the FAA.
7. The Commissioner, Chief of Staff or Assistant Commissioner may suspend all public visitation, public tours, or pre-approved media access in any DJJ facility for an indeterminate time for safety concerns. Reasonable

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time for media access or return access will be determined by the Commissioner, Chief of Staff or Assistant Commissioner, and will be dependent on efforts required to restore normal operations and security to ensure safety of staff, youth, and visitors.

- I. Media access is consistent with preserving youth's rights to privacy and facility order and security. The Deputy Commissioner (or designee) or Director of Communications will determine the location and length of youth interviews. Interviews may not pose an undue hardship on, nor jeopardize the safety and security of, youth or employees.
 1. Youth will not receive any compensation for media interviews.
 2. Youth will not be permitted to hold press conferences with the media.
 3. Media representatives are required to submit written requests to photograph or videotape DJJ youth to the Director of Communications for approval by the Commissioner at least 48 hours in advance.
 4. Prior to a youth being photographed, video recorded, or audio recorded in any identifiable way, the media representative must obtain a signed Parent/Guardian Release Form (Attachment B) from DJJ. The form must be witnessed by a DJJ employee.
 - a) If the youth is under age 18, both the youth and parent/guardian must sign the Form. The Commissioner has the authority to approve the Release in place of the parent/guardian.
 - b) If the youth is age 18 or older, only the youth's signature is required.
 5. The media representative and respective Deputy Commissioner or facility Director will be required to sign the DJJ Media Agreement Form (Attachment A) prior to any photographing or recording.
- J. News conferences may be held at the discretion of the Commissioner. For standard news conferences, media representatives will be notified by email, telephone, facsimile, or social media at least one hour in advance. Emergency news conferences will be conducted at the agency's discretion with as much advance notice as emergency conditions allow.
- K. The Office of Communications may issue news releases to focus attention on the Department's significant events, accomplishments, and trends. The Director of Communications will provide technical assistance to department staff for preparing news releases that help improve perception of the agency, engage its employees, and encourage volunteer opportunities.

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- L. The Office of Communications will develop a current agency website to support a continuing public information program, communicate the agency's goals, and objectives and to foster community involvement and support. The Director of Communications will employ social media to create an effective public outreach that delivers a consistent message to stakeholders and news media about DJJ's mission, success stories, and challenges to effect juvenile justice reform in Georgia.
- M. All public service advertisements and announcements for radio, TV, and print must be approved by the Director of Communications.
- N. All news articles or videotape coverage of the Department's programs, facilities, staff, or youth will be duplicated and copies forwarded to the Director of Communications as soon as possible.
- O. The Office of Communications may coordinate, publish, and distribute a regularly scheduled Department newsletter, as well as any departmental brochures as needed. The Office of Communications and Office of Technology and Information Services will coordinate the publishing of annual reports and jointly maintain the Department website. Informational changes and updates to the Department internet website (excluding statistical updates and policy) will be approved by the Office of Communications.
- P. Photographs which reveal the identity of DJJ youth in custody will not be used in DJJ videos, posters, pamphlets, or publications without a properly executed DJJ Release Form (Attachment B). (Exceptions: Photos identifying youth may be used if identities have been completely masked or blurred using electronic visual effects or for purposes of public notification required under Georgia Law in the event of an escape from DJJ custody).
- Q. Department publications will reflect an image of unity as one agency with one leader.
 - 1. As good business practice dictates, all DJJ publications will reflect the names of the Commissioner, the Board Chair, and the Governor.
 - 2. Publications may also include the agency's official logo, mission statement, and a statement reflecting the agency's commitment to best practices and quality customer service.
 - 3. An official Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) logo shall appear on every DJJ-printed publication. On brochures and newsletters, the logo must appear on the outside cover, either front or back. To maintain the DJJ brand image in the public marketplace, the distinctive colors, layout, and fonts of the DJJ logo should not be altered. All agencies and organizations other than DJJ must obtain written authorization from the

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Director of Communications before using the DJJ logo on publications, websites, marketing materials, and affiliated social media sites.

4. Individual pictures of staff in DJJ publications should be included only when relevant as part of an article being published. Group pictures of staff, programs, and services are at the discretion of the staff publisher.
5. Division and work unit letterheads will contain the Governor's name, Commissioner's name, and the name of the work unit manager/director (Attachment C, Letterhead Template).
6. Each Division and work unit must establish a procedure which assures that all publications are reviewed and screened to meet the requirements of this policy. The Office of Communications may be consulted in proofreading and screening publications.

IV. LOCAL OPERATING PROCEDURES REQUIRED: YES

- Procedure for the review and screening of all publications.
- Specify designee.