DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Policy Number: 101.310
Title: Media Contacts
Effective Date: 4/17/18

PURPOSE: To ensure prompt and thorough responses to media requests for information concerning the department's programs or activities and to identify the process for responding. The department responds to media requests in accordance with department policy and statutory provisions.

APPLICABILITY: Department-wide

DEFINITIONS: None

PROCEDURES:

A. The department communications office serves as a liaison with the media, either responding to requests for information or facilitating contact with the appropriate department manager for response. The communications office retains electronic files of daily media contacts.

B. All media requests must be referred to the communications office. The communications office determines who will respond to the request.

C. The communications office must respond according to the provisions of federal law and the Minnesota Data Practices Act and must procure the requested information from the department's data practices administrator/designee when responding to media requests. Communications staff must complete data practices training with DOC policy and legal unit staff.

D. A manager must discuss any proposal to initiate contact with the media for public information purposes with the communications office.

E. A manager must consult with and advise the manager's supervisor of all contacts with the media.

F. Facility offender access to the media is governed by Policy 303.110, "Offender Access to the Public News Media."

G. Each facility must have a designated media liaison, who works with the communications office to respond to media inquiries.
   1. Facility staff must forward all media inquiries to the facility media liaison for follow-up.
   2. Liaisons must follow direction provided by the communications office and must also make facility administration aware of media contacts and responses.
   3. Assigned media liaisons are listed on the internal DOC communications web page.

H. The facility warden/superintendent, in consultation with the department communications office, must designate areas of the facility for media access based on the purposes of the media visit and any special considerations or situations (e.g., offender disturbance in progress, etc.).

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

A. Communications office retains electronic files of daily media contacts;

B. Assigned media liaisons are listed on the internal DOC communications web page.

ACA STANDARDS: 4-4019, 4-4020, 4-4021, 2-CO-1A-25 through 2-CO-1A-27-1, 4-APPFS-1C-01

REFERENCES: Minn. Stat. §241.01
Minnesota Data Practices Act
Policy 101.010, "Information Program and Dissemination"
Policy 303.110, "Offender Access to the Public News Media"

REPLACES: Policy 101.310, "Media Contacts," 8/2/16.
All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS: Media Release Authorization for Staff (on Communications iShare Media Release forms site)

APPROVALS:
Deputy Commissioner, Facility Services
Deputy Commissioner, Community Services
Assistant Commissioner, Facility Services
Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support