



Media Liaison Policy

Original Effective Date:

August 25, 2016

Review / Revision Date:

September 26, 2019

Board of Health Resolution:

Pending Codification

Subject Matter Expert: Public Information Officer

History: ☐ New ☒ Revised ☐ Archived

Organizational Scope:

- ☒ Full Agency ☐ Administration ☐ Community & Environmental Health ☐ Health Services
☐ Health Promotion/Policy Integration

Frequency of Review:

- ☒ Annually ☐ Biennially ☐ 5 Years ☐ Other:

Location:

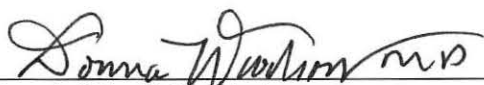
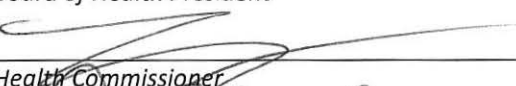
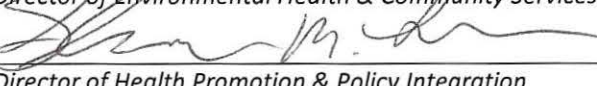
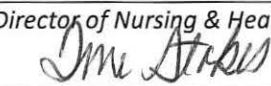
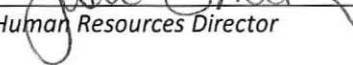
S-Drive: S: → Common → Policies, Plans & Procedures

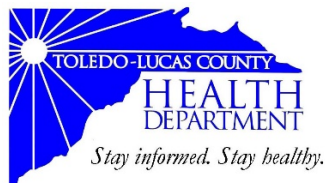
Website: www.lucascountyhealth.com/employee-login/

Hardcopy: TLCHD Policies & Procedures Manual in HR Office

Archived Version(s): Policy 2016.08.102

Requisite Signatures

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Board of Health President	<u>9/26/2019</u> Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Health Commissioner	<u>9/26/19</u> Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Director of Environmental Health & Community Services	<u>9-26-2019</u> Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Director of Health Promotion & Policy Integration	<u>9-26-19</u> Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vacant	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Director of Nursing & Health Services	<u>09/26/19</u> Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Fiscal Director	<u>9/26/2019</u> Date
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	 Human Resources Director	



Media Liaison Policy

I. Policy

It is the policy of the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department (TLCHD) that any interaction between TLCHD staff and the media be arranged and/or approved through the Public Information Officer or designee to ensure consistent and appropriate messaging is disseminated.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all TLCHD staff.

III. Purpose

The *Media Liaison Policy* is designed to ensure that all interactions with the news media are conducted in a professional, coordinated manner. TLCHD is the public health authority for all of Lucas County and it is the responsibility of TLCHD to provide information during emergency and non-emergency events to the general public, media, and stakeholders.

IV. Background

For the purposes of this policy, media contact includes: providing information via media releases or statements; responding to routine or emergency media inquiries through any means (phone, email, text, social media, etc.); interviews or briefings; and any other event where media may be present.

V. Policy Provisions/Procedures

A. All media relations activities will be conducted with the recognition that the media plays an important role in influencing social attitudes towards public and population health. All media relations activities will aim to educate, raise awareness, and inform the public while improving the understanding of the issues impacting the health of our community.

B. Responsibilities:

1. Health Commissioner

- a. The Health Commissioner is responsible for approving all external content for media including press releases and media statements. The Health Commissioner may be a spokesperson or subject matter expert (SME) and will coordinate contact with the media through the Public Information Officer.

2. *Public Information Officer*

- a. The Public Information Officer (PIO) will cultivate professional relationships with journalists, filter media inquiries, and keep media contact records. The PIO may be the spokesperson or SME for the department. Other responsibilities include drafting and/or coordinating media releases and statements, and the coordination of media interviews. This may include the development of media kits and background materials; liaising with appropriate staff to coordinate responses to media issues; and alerting senior management to sensitive or controversial media issues relevant to TLCHD.

3. *TLCHD Staff*

- a. TLCHD staff will not initiate media contact or respond directly to media inquiries, unless prior approval has been granted. Staff will advise the PIO of any upcoming events, announcements, or issues that may attract media interest. If TLCHD staff are approached by the media, they must inform the PIO immediately about the nature of the request or interview.
- b. In the event that TLCHD staff are contacted directly by a journalist, they will request/record the journalist's name, contact details, publication or program deadline (date and time), topic, and what they are requesting (i.e., an attributable quote, statement, or background briefing). This information should be passed promptly to the PIO or designee, and the journalist informed of the process.

4. *Board of Health*

- a. It is advised that board members also follow this procedure. This allows the PIO to better coordinate the exchange of information between Board Members and media outlets.

C. Media Contact

1. All media inquiries must be referred to the PIO or acting designee as soon as possible.
2. For routine communications, inquiries must be responded to within 4 hours.
3. In the event of an emergency, inquiries must be returned within an hour.
4. All media inquiries and responses are to be logged by the PIO on the Media Inquiries List.
5. For additional guidelines on routine and emergency communications procedures, refer to the *Media Manual*.

D. Confidentiality

1. The personal information or contact details of staff, clients, other representatives, or Board of Health (BOH) members will not be provided to the media without prior consent. The release of any information will remain consistent with TLCHD confidentiality policies and only be given out by the PIO or designee, or by the BOH Executive Committee.

E. Press Releases

1. Routine and emergency press releases will only be issued through the PIO or acting designee. If staff require the release of information to the media, they will contact the PIO to assist in drafting a media release or statement. All press releases shall be approved by the Health Commissioner.
2. For a pre-planned event, the PIO must receive requests for press releases **2 weeks prior to the release date**. The release date refers to the date the press release is to be distributed. A *Press Release Request* form must be filled out in its entirety and submitted to the PIO.

F. Issues Management

1. All staff will report emerging issues of public health significance to their director and the PIO immediately.
2. The PIO will consult the *Media Manual* and work with the Health Commissioner and appropriate staff to develop a response that is consistent with TLCHD's mission, vision, and values.

G. Public Information Continuity

1. In the event that the PIO or designated backup is unavailable or otherwise unable to fulfill the responsibilities of the office, the PIO succession chart in **Appendix A** will be followed.

VI. Maintenance

A. Review

1. The *Media Liaison Policy* is to be reviewed annually to ensure compliance with both agency and accreditation standards.

B. Revision

1. All changes made to this policy are to be noted on the **Record of Change**. Substantial changes will require renewed signatures from all applicable parties. This includes changes to the intent, scope, procedures, or policy statement.
2. When substantial changes are made to this policy, the *Media Manual* must also be updated to reflect the most current version.
3. Changes in style, format, grammar, or minor error correction will not require renewed signatures but must be indicated on the Record of Change.

Record of Change

(Required for all policies)

Date of Change	Changes Made By	Changes Made/Notes	Approved By
1/24/2018	BP	Policy was reviewed by the Director of Health Promotion & Policy Integration and found to be current. Appendix A has been updated.	Director of HPPI
09/26/2019	SL	Media Contact and issue management areas were updated to include the use of the media manual.	BOH

Appendix A

Public Information Officer Succession Plan			
	Name	Division	Current Position
Primary	Brandon Palinski	Health Promotion/ Policy Integration	Planning & Quality Improvement Administrator
Secondary	Lauren Wagener	Environmental Health & Community Services	Epidemiologist
Tertiary	Mahj Steffin	Health Promotion/ Policy Integration	Health Educator
Quaternary	Barbara Jordan	Environmental Health & Community Services	Epidemiologist

***Members of the succession plan team have received PIO training, disaster preparedness training and have exercised extensively within the ICS model.**