



REGIONAL PARK AND OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Policy and Procedure Manual



Policy 3.3

Media Contact

I. POLICY

It is vital to the mission of the Riverside County Park and Open-Space District to maintain relationships with, and help members of the media. It also is the policy of the Riverside County Board of Supervisors (A-44) “that open, productive and responsible media relations serve the best interests of the county and its residents. Delivering complete, timely, accurate and balanced information regarding the policies and actions of the county government is vital to promoting informed public participation in representative government.”

II. PURPOSE

This policy establishes the parameters for media contact in order to deliver complete, timely, accurate and balanced information.

III. PROCEDURE

- A. The District has assigned the Bureau Chief charged with marketing as the representative authorized to comment for the media and encourages open lines of communication with the County public information officer. Other district staff may be authorized to comment to the media based upon the nature of the information and will be determined on a case by case basis. In the absence of the assigned Bureau Chief, available Bureau Chiefs shall be designated as public information officers.
- B. All district employees must adhere to the following guidelines during any media contact:
 - 1. If a member of the media contacts a district employee who is authorized to comment to the media, that employee should ask for the reporter’s name, phone number, email address and media organization.



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- a. An authorized employee may respond to questions directly if an immediate response is appropriate. Responses shall be factual in nature and not based upon personal opinion.
 - b. If information must be verified, or if questions should be discussed with other district administrators first, the spokesperson should explain the need to verify information and provide a time by which the district will respond with the requested information.
 - c. The district should always contact the reporter by the time stated, either to provide the information or explain that more time is required. Information should never be provided to the media unless a spokesperson is certain it is accurate.
2. If the media contacts a district employee who is not authorized to comment to the media, the employee should politely explain that he/she cannot answer the reporter's question but will be glad to contact someone who can help them.
- a. The employee shall ask the reporter for his or her name with proper spelling, phone number, email address and media organization. The employee also shall ask the reporter to briefly summarize the information being requested and the deadline for receiving the information.
 - b. After collecting the information, the district employee shall contact the district administrative offices and relay the information about the media contact.
 - c. Contact with media representatives must not be ignored and responses should not be delayed.



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- d. Employees in the administrative offices should immediately contact the designated public information officer. If the Bureau Chief is not available, refer the call to the General Managers office.
3. To help ensure proper response to media contacts, district administrators may employ a log sheet that details contacts and responses to the media.

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