



<p>Pueblo County Sheriff's Office General Order Policies and Procedures Manual Pueblo County Law Enforcement Bureau Section 4</p>	
Chapter: Part 8	Subject: Public Information Procedure/News Media
Related CALEA Law Standards: 54.1.1, 54.1.2, 54.1.3, 54.1.4, 46.1.3 Related CALEA Communications Standards: 2.6.6, 2.6.7, 6.1.4	Related ACA Standards: 5-ALDF-7F-01

Authority

This policy is issued pursuant to Sheriff David J. Lucero's directive in which authority to manage and direct all activities connected with public information are delegated to the Undersheriff.

Purpose

The purpose of this public information procedure is to have a structured news media response to ensure agency obtained information will be released in a timely fashion, with accuracy, and the appropriate information, when available, is released.

Policy

Given the potential for criminal activity within Pueblo County, and the newsworthy information inherent to law enforcement agencies, it is necessary to have an established news media policy outlining the public information practices of the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office.

Procedure

Pueblo County Sheriff's Office will identify key personnel who will make every effort to cooperate with news media personnel or agencies. The pre-determined Public Information Officer(s) or PIO(s) and/or Administrators (Captains and above), shall work to be available for routine and emergency situations. **<COM 6.1.4 b>**

Public Information Responsibilities

1. Assist media personnel in covering news stories at the incident scene **<COM 2.6.6 a>, <54.1.1 a>**
2. Be available for on-call responses to the news media. **<COM 2.6.6 b>**
3. Prepare and distribute agency news releases and advisories **<COM 2.6.6 c>, <54.1.1 b> <5-ALDF-7F-01>**
4. Arrange and facilitate agency news conferences **<COM 2.6.6 d>, <54.1.1 c>**
5. Coordinate and authorize the release of information regarding victims, witnesses, and suspects. **<COM 2.6.6 e>, <54.1.1 d>**
6. Assist in appropriate internal and public communications during crisis situations internal to the agency. **<COM 2.6.6 f>**
7. Coordinate the authorization for the release of information concerning confidential agency investigations and operations, and victim and witness information. **<COM 2.6.6 g> <54.1.1 e>**
8. Identify opportunities for coordinating releasable information when other public service agencies are involved in a mutual effort **<COM 2.6.6 h>, <54.1.1 f>**
9. Providing guidelines for the use of social media by the agency. **<54.1.1 g>**
10. Publish news releases and relevant public information to electronic sites as appropriate. (i.e. Agency website, Agency Social Media sites, Pueblo Emergency Status Board –www.puebloemergency.info)

11. Oversee Emergency Support Function #15 in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during EOC operations.
12. Be responsible for Pueblo Emergency Operations Plan revisions of this function Post relevant community events, safety tips, public interest pieces, and other general topics specific to our agency to PCSO Social Media Sites.
13. Notify the news media of changes in policies, procedures, and personnel relating to the public information function, and accept suggestions from media sources for policy and procedure changes to the media policy. <COM 2.6.7>, <54.1.2>
14. Maintain the administrative duties of the Social Media sites and Websites of the Pueblo County Sheriff's Office. No less than two current employees shall have access to any/all sites at any given time.

Public Information Restrictions

1. Information released to the media should be devoid of prejudicial pretrial publicity and not interfere with ongoing criminal investigation.
2. The public information officer will not, in any way, favor any particular news media, news representative, or news agency.
3. The release of criminal history information will be consistent with the Criminal Justice Records Act, Colorado Open Records Act, and Sunshine Laws. <5-ALDF-7F-01>
4. No details of an office internal investigation will be released to the news media without express permission of the sheriff
5. News media can be escorted into the scene only after the scene is under control; after the scene investigation has been completed; and when accompanied by agency personnel authorized to do so. During major crimes, large fires, natural disasters, or other catastrophic events, Incident Commander may request the Public Information Officer for media staging, pool camera coordination, and on-camera briefings. <54.1.3>

Media Access to Agency

1. Facility tours will be approved provided no other intervening factors are in force. During the tour, photo/video may not be taken of security equipment (i.e. CCTV cameras, locking devices, personal identification information, etc.) The public information representative will coordinate with the media what images can and cannot be taken, to ensure the safety and security of the facility. <5-ALDF-7F-01>
2. Ride-a-longs will be approved provided the media representative meets all the requirements of the ride-a-long procedures and an application has been approved. The patrol deputy or his/her supervisor will coordinate with the media what images can and cannot be taken, to ensure the privacy and safety of the citizens and deputies.
3. Interview requests will be approved provided a member of the appropriate bureau is available for comment and the interview will benefit the public interest. The Public Information Officer may speak to a particular situation on camera with the permission of a Bureau Chief, Undersheriff, or the Sheriff. <5-ALDF-7F-01>

Media Staging <46.1.3 g>

Should the responsible officer determine media may arrive at a scene to report on the incident; a Media Staging area will be immediately established. Upon arrival, members of the media will be advised of the pre-determined Media Staging area and specifically told what areas are off limits are due to safety and/or investigation concerns.

It is the responsibility of the on-duty sergeant to decide if the media needs can be met by units on scene or if a Public Information presence is needed.

It is to be expected that the media will still capture video in areas open to the public and relevant to the incident. Staging is not designed to limit access to a scene, but to engage the media in a safe location away from potential interference with any investigation.

Social Media Use, Monitoring, and Restrictions

The PCSO maintains a presence on several social media sites in order to keep the public informed of the

activities of the PCSO and news relating to public safety. Social media can also be used to increase citizen engagement with the agency.

Management of Sites

The overall management of the PCSO social media sites will be the responsibility of the PIO. A list of all current social media accounts and authorized users will be maintained in the PIO Office.

There will also be other assigned "Authorized Users" who have access to post items and to review content.

All requests to join new social media sites or to create additional profiles on existing sites, must be made in writing and submitted to the PIO. This includes any social media site/profile that is to be considered an official PCSO account. The request will be reviewed with the Emergency Services Captain and/or the respective bureau captain for approval/denial.

Acceptable Use of Social Media Sites

The content posted to an official PCSO social media outlet should be related to the functions of the PCSO bureaus and their missions. The posts may fit into one of the following categories:

- Official Media Release
- Public Safety Concerns
- Public Safety Announcements
- Items highlighting PCSO Community Engagement and Outreach
- Items of special interest to the community
- Community Event Announcements
- Recognition of achievements of agency employees and community members
- Live broadcast events

Whenever possible, posts to official PCSO social media sites should be reviewed by the PIO. In general, this review will ensure compliance with this policy, and for minor editing to spelling and grammar.

Security

Should one of the social media accounts managed through the PIO office become security compromised, the account should be suspended until such time that the potential security breach can be investigated and stopped by the Pueblo County IT Department.

Colorado Open Records Act

Content published on official PCSO Social Media sites is considered an official record and subject to retention and requests by the public under CORA.

Citizen Conduct

Citizens may add comments in specific areas of PCSO social media sites. These comments are subject to review by the PIO and other authorized users to ensure they do not breach any of the following guidelines. The guidelines are posted for public review on the social media sites maintained by the PCSO.

THE PUEBLO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE RECOGNIZES THAT SOCIAL MEDIA SITES INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO FACEBOOK, TWITTER, YOUTUBE AND INSTAGRAM HAVE BECOME IMPORTANT COMMUNICATION CHANNELS FOR THE COMMUNITY. TO ASSIST IN POSTING CONTENT AND MANAGING THESE SITES, THE PUEBLO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE HAS DEVELOPED GUIDELINES FOR OFFICIAL AND PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA. THESE GUIDELINES APPLY TO PUEBLO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE EMPLOYEES AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WHO COMMENT, POST, OR RESPOND TO ANY OF THE PUEBLO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE SOCIAL MEDIA OUTLETS.

PUBLIC COMMENTS REFLECT THE VIEWS OF THE AUTHOR AND DO NOT REFLECT THE VIEW OF THE PUEBLO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE OR ITS EMPLOYEES.

THE PUEBLO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE INTENDS FOR THIS FORUM TO BE FAMILY FRIENDLY, SO PLEASE MAKE YOUR COMMENTS AND POSTS CONSISTENT WITH THAT STANDARD. ALL COMMENTS AND POSTS WILL BE REVIEWED, AND THE PUEBLO COUNTY

SHERIFF'S OFFICE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DELETE, HIDE, OR NOT PUBLISH ANY POST THAT DOES NOT MEET THESE GUIDELINES.

WE DO NOT ALLOW COMMENTS THAT WE DEEM TO:

- *CONTAIN OBSCENE OR INDECENT LANGUAGE.*
- *CONTAIN THREATS, DEFAMATORY OR HARASSING STATEMENTS.*
- *CONTAIN HATE SPEECH DIRECTED AT RACE, COLOR, SEX, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, NATIONAL ORIGIN, ETHNICITY, AGE, RELIGION OR DISABILITY.*
- *CONTAIN OBSCENE SEXUAL CONTENT OR LINKS TO OBSCENE SEXUAL CONTENT.*
- *CONTAIN INFORMATION THAT MAY COMPROMISE THE SAFETY OR SECURITY OF THE PUBLIC OR PUBLIC SYSTEMS.*
- *PROMOTE VIOLENCE OR THE VIOLATION OF ANY FEDERAL, STATE, OR LOCAL LAW, REGULATION OR ORDINANCE.*
- *DISCLOSE INFORMATION WHICH AN AGENCY AND ITS EMPLOYEES/REPRESENTATIVES ARE REQUIRED TO KEEP CONFIDENTIAL BY LAW OR REGULATION.*
- *PROMOTE OR ENDORSE SERVICES OR PRODUCTS.*
- *PROMOTE OR ENDORSE BALLOT ISSUES, CANDIDATES FOR PUBLIC OFFICE OR OTHER CAMPAIGN-RELATED MATERIAL, OR NON-COUNTY RELATED EVENTS AND PROGRAMS.*
- *CONTAIN ANY LINK OR APPLICATION THAT WOULD DAMAGE OR HARM ANYONE'S COMPUTER OR SOFTWARE.*
- *ADVOCATE ILLEGAL ACTIVITY OR VIOLENCE.*
- *INFRINGE ON COPYRIGHTS OR TRADEMARKS.*
- *MISLEAD*

INDIVIDUALS WHO VIOLATE THIS POLICY MAY HAVE THE COMMENT IN QUESTION REMOVED FROM THE SOCIAL MEDIA PAGE WITHOUT NOTIFICATION.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IS UNBOUND BY REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS AND COMMENTS ARE WELCOME AT ANY TIME. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE NEED TO MANAGE RESOURCES, REVIEWING AND RESPONDING TO COMMENTS GENERALLY OCCUR DURING REGULAR BUSINESS HOURS MONDAY-FRIDAY. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS SUBMITTED AT OTHER TIMES WILL BE REVIEWED AND REPLIED TO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE THE NEXT BUSINESS DAY.

Blocking users – Removal of Comments – Hiding Comments

Some social media sites provide filtering that blocks or rejects certain key words that are defined under the code of conduct. This function is automatic and requires no approval.

Any comment that is, in the opinion of the PIO or other authorized users, in violation of the stated Citizen Comment Code of Conduct will be copied and referred to the Emergency Services Captain for review.

If the determination is made to block the comment, a copy of the comment in question, as well as the associated/relevant post and the time/date and identity of the poster, will be captured and maintained in an electronic format and stored in a network file maintained by the PIO.

In most cases only comments will be blocked or hidden, and not the user. In only the most extreme cases would a user be banned from posting all together and this would only be done after careful review by a bureau captain, and under the authority of the Undersheriff.

A citizen can appeal the blocking/hiding of a comment or for banishment from commenting, by filing a written appeal to the Sheriff.

The appeal must contain a reference to or an electronic capture of the comment(s) in question, and the basis for the requested relief. The appeal must also include contact information for the person filing the appeal. The Sheriff will have up to 10 days to respond to the appeal.

Training

Personnel assigned as a Public Information Officer or designated to perform the function of the PIO shall receive training for their position. This training should provide a solid foundation for the PIO to represent the agency in an effective way and establish cooperative relationships. <54.1.4>



By Order of the Sheriff

APPENDIX A <54.1.1 d>

BEFORE ARREST

Information released

- A description of the exact offense including a brief summary of events.
- Location and time of the offense.
- Amount taken, injuries sustained, or damages resulting from action.
- Whether or not there are suspects.
- Information about unidentified suspects, such as physical description and vehicle description.
- Identification of fugitive suspects for whom a warrant has been issued.
- Criminal background of fugitive when the public should be alerted to danger.
- Method of complaint (officer observation, citizen, warrant, indictment).
- Length of investigation and name of officer in charge of investigation.

Information *not* released (unless authorized by the sheriff or his designee)

- Identity of suspects who are interviewed but not charged.
- Identity of witnesses, including a victim who can positively identify a suspect.
- Identity of sex crime victims. (The information should be general - race, sex, age.)
- Identity of juveniles when specifically restricted by state law.
- Exact identifying information about the weapon or other physical evidence.
- Any information that could be known only to the guilty party.
- Information about valuable items not stolen.
- Conjecture about suspects or fugitives.

AFTER ARREST

Information Released

- Time and place of arrest.
- Defendant's name, age, residence, employment, marital status, and similar background.
- The exact charge.
- Facts and circumstances relating to the arrest, such as resistance, pursuit, possession or use of a weapon, description of contraband discovered.
- Identity of the agency or unit responsible for the arrest, including the name of the arresting officer.
- The name of the arresting officer, unless there are unusual circumstances where it is felt the officer would be jeopardized.
- Duration of the investigation.
- Pre-trial release or detention arrangements (including amount of and, location or detention).
- Scheduled dates for various stages in the judicial process.

Information *not* released.

- Comments about the character or reputation of the defendant.
- Information about the existence or content of a confession, admission or statement by the accused. The refusal of an accused to make a statement. The refusal of an accused to submit tests or examinations. Results of any examinations or tests.

- Description or results of laboratory examination of physical evidence.
- Re-enactment of the crime.
- Revelation that the defendant directed investigators to the location of a weapon, contraband or other evidence.
- Any remarks about the assumed guilt or innocence of the defendant.
- Comments about the credibility of testimony. If the information for the arrest was derived from an informant.