



Juvenile Justice (JJ)

R&P/JJ 3 Media Communications



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Document and Signature History

R&P/JJ 3 Media Communications: Document and Signature History

| Action | Date |
|--|-----------|
| R&P/JJ 3 replaces DJJDP 3, Media Communications signed 5/10/04, 2/1/03 | 1/25/2017 |
| | |

Approved by:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William Lassiter".

1/25/2017

William L. Lassiter, Deputy Commissioner

Date



Related Standards, Citation, and/or Legislation

Risk and Needs Assessments: Standards (S), Citation (C), Legislation (L), Other (O)

| Type | Number | Name |
|------|---------------------------|---|
| C | 14B NCAC 11C .0304 | <i>Solicitation of Funds and Juvenile Publicity.</i> |
| L | N.C. Gen. Stat. § 7B-2901 | <i>Confidentiality of records.</i> |
| L | N.C. Gen. Stat. § 7B-3000 | <i>Juvenile court records.</i> |
| L | N.C. Gen. Stat. § 7B-3001 | <i>Other records relating to juveniles.</i> |
| L | N.C. Gen. Stat. § 7B-3100 | <i>Disclosure of information about juveniles.</i> |
| L | N.C. Gen. Stat. § 126-23 | <i>Certain records to be kept by State agencies open to inspection.</i> |
| L | N.C. Gen. Stat. § 132-1.4 | <i>Criminal investigations; intelligence information records.</i> |
| L | N.C. Gen. Stat. § 132-1 | <i>Public records defined.</i> |
| L | N.C. Gen. Stat. § 132-6.2 | <i>Provisions for copies of public records; fees.</i> |
| L | N.C. Gen. Stat. § 132-9 | <i>Access to records.</i> |



1 R&P/JJ 3: Media Communications

1.1 Rationale

Reference: Related Standards, Citation, and/or Legislation

1.2 Measuring Success of Media Communications

Figure 0-1. R&P/JJ 3 Compliance Measures and Success Determined By

| Compliance Measures | Success Determined By |
|---|---|
| Ensure media attests to protecting the identity of juveniles in our care prior to any interview with a juvenile. | A signed and witnessed <i>Media Consent Form, JJ3 001</i> , is present in a facility file. |
| The juvenile, the juvenile’s attorney, and the juvenile’s parent and when applicable legal guardian have all provided written consent prior to a media interview with a juvenile in secure custody. | The Media Release Consent Form (Form JJ3 002) is completed prior to the interview, and the attorney’s written approval is attached to <i>Form JJ3 002</i> . |

1.3 Purpose

To educate and inform the public; to provide departmental staff with guidelines on responding to media requests; to provide guidelines for media interviews; and to establish guidelines for informing the public without compromising facility security or juvenile confidentiality and privacy.

1.4 Policy Statement

North Carolina’s Juvenile Justice System operates at public expense. The public has a right to know about the conditions and operations of juvenile justice state-funded facilities and programs. North Carolina Juvenile Justice desires to promote interest in and knowledge of the juvenile justice system and its treatment practices. The Juvenile Justice policy is to facilitate access of the general public and media representatives to such knowledge by every reasonable means. In doing so, however, due consideration must be given to factors that might compromise security, disrupt orderly administration, compromise juvenile confidentiality, damage morale, and/or impede the effectiveness of treatment.

The news media serve as an important conduit for information to the public. A relationship of cooperation and mutual respect between Juvenile Justice and the news media is essential to informing the public without compromising facility security or juvenile confidentiality and privacy. It is in the public’s interest to promote an understanding of the causes and consequences of delinquent behavior. Occasionally, such causes and

consequences can be of significant public interest and can be communicated more effectively through the experiences of individual juveniles and/or staff.

1.5 Persons Authorized to Communicate with the Media

- A. The Juvenile Justice Communications Officer within the DPS Communications Office serves as the official Juvenile Justice spokesperson, and is authorized to give information to the media regarding official Juvenile Justice business. All media contacts should be referred to the Juvenile Justice Communications Officer, who will assist the media in finding the appropriate staff member for assistance/response.
- B. If the Juvenile Justice Communications Officer is unavailable, then media contacts shall be referred to the Department's Communications Office for assignment.
- C. If a media representative contacts a manager/supervisor/staff member directly for Juvenile Justice information or a news interview, the staff member shall notify the Juvenile Justice Communications Officer, through supervisory channels, before speaking with the media.
- D. Communications Office staff and/or the Deputy Commissioner of Juvenile Justice will respond to issues of departmental/division policy and all state budget related inquiries.
- E. If the staff member feels comfortable speaking with the media, then that staff member shall limit their comments to those areas of their immediate responsibilities and refrain from speculative comments and philosophical discussions.
- F. If a manager/director/supervisor is conducting official state business and is approached by the media for an interview, then the manager/director/supervisor shall use good judgment while conducting the interview and notify the Juvenile Justice Communications Officer at the conclusion of the interview.
- G. Management may work to develop media interest in their programs. The Juvenile Justice Communications Officer or Communications Director shall be notified through supervisory channels before media contact is made.

1.6 Media Requests for Interviews and Tours

- A. General - A person seeking admittance into state juvenile facilities as a media representative must be able to show identification as a representative of one of the following: a national or international news service; a newspaper, magazine, or periodical; a radio or television network or station licensed by the Federal Communications Commission; or an online news publication. Facility heads who are unsure of the credentials of a person requesting access as a member of the media should consult the Communications Office. Freelancers must be able to provide verification from the news organization they are representing. Students who request access as members of the

media are to be referred to the Communications Office. Students may be granted media access if they are reporting for a student or campus newspaper, radio or TV station. Student requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The Department reserves the right to deny any request for reasons specified or unspecified.

- B. Requests from the news media to visit a Juvenile Justice facility/program/campus, to interview juveniles in secure custody, or to access public information documents must:
 - a. be in writing;
 - b. include any interview questions, and scope of story/purpose (*for juvenile interviews only*);
 - c. include appropriate contact person and telephone number for additional information or clarification; and
 - d. be referred to the DPS Communications Office.
- C. Visits: Requests from the news media to visit Juvenile Justice facilities/programs/campus will be handled on a case-by-case basis, with approval authority resting with the Deputy Commissioner of Juvenile Justice, after consultation with the Department's General Counsel and the Juvenile Justice Communications Officer or designee of the DPS Communications Director.
- D. Interviews of Juveniles: Media representatives will be required to submit in advance a request to interview an individual juvenile in a secure facility to the Juvenile Justice Communications Officer or designee of the Communications Director. In addition to the written request, media representatives are required to submit approval from the juvenile's attorney, as well as the juvenile's parental (and when applicable, legal guardian's) consent for the interview. Requests for interviews with individual juveniles held in Juvenile Justice facilities will be handled on a case-by-case basis, with approval authority resting with the Deputy Commissioner of Juvenile Justice, after consultation with the Department's General Counsel and the DPS Communications Director. Before any media interview takes place, the *Juvenile Justice Media Release Consent Form (Form JJ3 002)* must be signed prior to speaking with any media representatives and placed in the juvenile's records. All interviews of juveniles in secure custody must have at least one (1) Communications Office staff member present, and at least one (1) criminal justice certified, Juvenile Justice staff member present.
- E. Requests will be accepted by facsimile or electronic mail.

1.7 Public Information Requests

All public information requests shall be submitted to the Communications Office [per Department policy](#).

1.8 Special Events or Activities Involving Juvenile Offenders

- A. On occasion, Juvenile Justice may invite media representatives to special events or programs in a secure facility in order to inform and educate the public about departmental activities. During these visits, facility security and client confidentiality and privacy shall be maintained. Photography and videography must mask the identity of a juvenile in custody. All published materials or broadcast reports must use initials to maintain confidentiality and privacy of the juvenile. Disregard for security safeguards will result in termination of the visit. Media access to any Department facility or program may be suspended during an emergency situation.
- B. All media representatives shall sign the *Media Consent Form (Form JJ3 001)*, acknowledging their agreement to protect the identity of youth in our care. The Center Director or his/her designee must witness this form, which must be retained by the Center Director in facility files.

1.9 News Releases, Media Advisories, and News Conferences

- A. The Communications Office may issue news releases to focus attention on the Department's significant events, accomplishments, or trends. The DPS Communications Director must approve all news releases.
- B. Media representatives will be notified of news conferences at least one (1) hour in advance.
- C. The Communications Office should be advised of scheduled, planned upcoming events at least one (1) week in advance so that a media advisory or news release may be issued.
- D. All news articles or videotapes related to the Juvenile Justice's programs, facilities, staff or youth will be duplicated and a copy forwarded to the Juvenile Justice Communications Officer as soon as possible, so a central file may be maintained.

1.10 Release of Information in Crisis Situations

- A. Response during crisis situations – The Communications Office will be available to advise Unit Directors, Center Directors and Area Administrators/Chief Court Counselors and can respond to the scene of an emergency if needed to assist with media and public relations. Unit Directors, Center Directors and Area Administrators/Chief Court Counselors should have a media plan in place and a designated spokesperson to deal with media inquiries in the first few hours of a crisis situation, until a member of the Communications staff can reach the scene.
- B. Media Access During Crisis Situations - Admittance of media representatives to a juvenile justice facility may be denied or limited during a disturbance or crisis situation, but such restrictions shall be lifted as soon as this may be done without compromising security or the safety of any person. The news media shall be kept advised of developments by news briefings/releases. As soon as is practicable in light of security and safety considerations, media representatives will be allowed

access to the facility in a manner to be determined by the Center Director and/or appropriate Juvenile Justice leadership staff, in consultation with the Juvenile Justice Communications Officer or designee of the Communications Director. When operations have returned to normal, the standard policies regarding access will apply.

2 Attachments

Media Consent Form (Form JJ3 001)

Media Release Consent Form (Form JJ3 002)

3 Definitions

DPS Communications Office: The Communications Office operates in the Secretary's Office, and is comprised of the DPS Communications Director and staff.

Media/News Media: Any recognized news organization, including radio and television stations and networks, wire services, cable TV operations, newspapers, and magazines.

News Conference: A called meeting with invited media representatives to provide information on significant Juvenile Justice accomplishments, events, trends, or activities. A press conference will be called only after consultation with the DPS Communications Director and Deputy Commissioner of Juvenile Justice.

News Release: A document distributed by the DPS Communications Office to inform the media of departmental news and issues of interest.

Publications: Booklets, brochures, newsletters, pamphlets, leaflets, posters, reports, and websites.
