

Library Policy No. 27

Subject: Public Relations

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees May 10, 2006

Revised: November 9, 2022

The Library Board of Trustees and staff represent the library in every public contact. The Board recognizes that each interaction between the library and a community member is an opportunity for positive public relations. The Board urges its members and library staff to help maintain a positive image for the library through continually delivering a high level of service in all contacts with the community.

Purpose and Mission

To ensure that the public and media receives consistent and accurate information about library policy, procedures, resources, programs and services; to ensure that the best possible image of the library is presented to the public; to promote community awareness and participation in the wide-range of library services; to maintain communication with present and potential library users; and to develop public understanding and support of the role and the value of the library in the community, the following public relations policy has been developed.

In all cases, public relations efforts will focus on library, library co-sponsored, or community partner activities and information. Library public relations efforts will not be used to promote unrelated activities.

Media Spokesperson

The Director serves as the media spokesperson for the Library. All incoming media (television, radio, newspaper, etc.) requests should be referred to the administration office in a timely fashion, since the media is usually working to deadline. The Director may designate a staff member to respond to the request as appropriate. If the Director is unavailable, the Assistant Director or Marketing Communications Specialist may serve as spokesperson.

In the event of an emergency, official statements to the public and media will be made by the Library Director, Assistant Director, or Marketing Communications Specialist.

All press releases, video footage, letters to the editor designed to officially speak for the library, etc. must be approved by the Director or Assistant Director prior to distribution.

Media Access

Members of the media are asked to contact the library to arrange for interviews or background conversations with library staff members or users. Advance notice of on-site interviews is necessary so that the library can arrange for the interviews or shoots and line up the appropriate staff or users to interview. A library staff member will accompany reporters, video crews and photographers while they are in the library.

Media representatives are asked to seek parental permission before interviewing a minor child (under the age of 18) at the library so that the child and parent or guardian understand that the child may be part of an article or broadcast.

Media representatives are asked to respect a library user's request to not be interviewed, taped and/or photographed.

Staff members should inform the person in charge when members of the media are present on library property.

When it's necessary for the library to respond to issues or situations that generate widespread community interest or have broad community impact, the communications team (Director, Assistant Director, Marketing Communications Specialist, and related department managers) will provide staff with key messages and talking points that staff are expected to use when answering questions from the public. This will help ensure that the public receives accurate and appropriate information that is clearly stated to help avoid misunderstanding.

Speaking Engagements

Speaking engagements, other than standard outreach activities, made by library staff on behalf of the library to local, regional, statewide, or national groups, organizations and professional associations must be approved by the Director or Assistant Director in the Director's absence. A staff member should receive approval prior to accepting the speaking engagement.

Library Photography and Videography

Attendance at programs sponsored by the Library may be digitally recorded through photographs, video, or audio recordings. These images may appear in the Library's newsletter, website, social media, brochures, local newspapers, or other promotional materials. If you do not wish images to be published, please notify a member of the library staff before the start of the program. The Library may crop, treat, or alter photo, audio, or video content at its discretion. To ensure the privacy of individuals and

children, subjects of Library images will not be identified using full names without approval from the subject, parent or legal guardian.

Handling of Complaints, Suggestions for Improvement, and Compliments from the Public

The Library provides a comment form and encourages its use. Every complaint, suggestion for improvement or compliment received from a member of the community on a comment card, by email, telephone, letter or other type of communication will be acknowledged by an appropriate member of the staff, if the user has supplied a name **and** contact information.