



ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

SECTION:	Miscellaneous Administrative Policies	POLICY NO.:	906
TITLE:	Media Relations Policy		
BOARD ORDERS:	B.O. 25-264	LAST REVISED:	8/28/2025

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy and procedures is to:

- Provide accurate, consistent and timely information to the media.
- Provide department heads and staff with guidelines and protocols when disseminating information to the media.
- Continue building the County’s reputation as being responsive and transparent.

II. POLICY

2.01 Authorized Managers or designees may provide routine, factual information to the media, and respond to media inquiries, except as specified in section 3.03. If in doubt, or aware of pending litigation, refer inquiries to the Deputy County Administrator/PIO.

2.01.1 Any delegation of this responsibility must be made in writing and a copy provided to the Deputy County Administrator/PIO.

2.01.2 All managers and staff will immediately refer all Category I media inquiries (listed below) to the Deputy County Administrator/PIO.

2.02 County staff, aside from Authorized Manager or Designee, shall:

- Refer all media questions to their Department Head, their designee, and/or the Deputy County Administrator/PIO.
- Refrain from making a public comment on County policy and/or issues, or what appears to be an official statement, to the media during work hours or when appearing to be in acting in an official capacity; and,
- Refrain from identifying themselves as a county employee when commenting publicly outside of acting in their official capacity; and,
- Refrain from making statements to the media or public in support or opposition to any ballot measure, candidate, or petition effort during work time or while acting in an official capacity.

- 2.03 In the event of multiple requests for live recording of a meeting or event the County may limit the number of cameras present and require news agencies to pool their coverage.
- 2.04 In a declared emergency, County staff shall operate in accordance with the Yamhill County Emergency Operations Plan and under the direction of the incident commander. Inquiries regarding the specific emergency shall be referred to the incident's PIO.
- 2.04.1 In the event of an emergency situation without an incident commander or activation of the County EOP, the director of the department leading the response may release information they deem necessary to prevent imminent harm to life or property.
- 2.05 This policy does not apply to employees when acting in their capacity as a union officer or member when related to official union business or matters. Staff must make clear when they are speaking in their capacity as a union officer that the statement is on behalf of the union, not the County.
- 2.06 Although encouraged to coordinate with the County Administrator and Deputy County Administrator/PIO, elected officials are not bound by this policy, and may communicate about their departments or actions independently.

III. DEFINITIONS

Media An employee, owner, or operator of a duly licensed or registered entity or business with the stated mission of informing the public on matters of public interest.¹

Category I media inquiries include the following:

- Policies of the Board of County Commissioners
- Personnel matters (i.e. grievances, CBA negotiations, discipline, etc.)
- Requests for records not normally distributed (i.e., work product, internal drafts, etc.)
- Inquiries from state, national or international media
- Crisis situations that affect public safety and well-being
- Matters that may impact Yamhill County's reputation
- Pending or potential legal matters or suits

Authorized Managers The appointed officials or supervisors listed below may provide routine, factual information to the media as needed.

- County Administrator
- Deputy County Administrators
- Community Corrections Director
- Planning Director
- Health and Human Services Director

¹ Requests from persons or groups requesting to be considered members of the media who do not fit these criteria shall be reviewed by the Deputy County Administrator/PIO on a case-by-case basis.

PROCEDURES

1. DESIGNATING/AUTHORIZING A MANAGER AS A MEDIA CONTACT

- 1.1. A Department Director wishing to designate a subordinate manager or staff as a media contact may do so, subject to the approval of the County Administrator.
 - 1.1.1. The designation shall be made in writing with a copy to the staff personnel file and to the Deputy County Administrator/PIO.
 - 1.1.2. The Deputy County Administrator/PIO shall maintain a list of authorized media contacts and provide recommendations for training opportunities.
- 1.2. Revocation of the designation must be made in writing, with the approval of the County Administrator, and a copy placed in the personnel file and notice provided to the Deputy County Administrator/PIO.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS TO MEDIA

- 2.1. When providing a public comment to the media, the media contact should inform the Deputy County Administrator/PIO of the outlet, substance of the comment, and expected publication date as soon as possible.
- 2.2. Deputy County Administrator/PIO will keep the County Administrator, Board of Commissioners, and other relevant staff informed of items provided to the media.

3. REQUESTS FOR INTERVIEWS

- 3.1. Requests for interviews with staff or the Board of Commissioners shall be forwarded to the Deputy County Administrator/PIO.
- 3.2. Deputy County Administrator/PIO shall, in consultation with the County Administrator and relevant staff and officials, coordinate the interview and provide assistance as necessary.
- 3.3. Deputy County Administrator/PIO will coordinate any follow-up information requested by the media outlet.

Approved by the Yamhill County Board of
Commissioners on 08/28/2025
via Board Order 25-264