

CF OPERATING PROCEDURE
NO. 15-15

STATE OF FLORIDA
DEPARTMENT OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
TALLAHASSEE, May 9, 2014

Documentation Management

DCF MEDIA POLICY

1. Purpose. This operating procedure establishes guidelines for receiving and responding to media requests made to the Department of Children and Families.
2. Scope. This operating procedure applies to all Department employees.
3. Definitions.
 - a. Media. Includes, but may not be limited to, television, print, radio, Internet bloggers and media via social media.
 - b. Media Request. A request of any type made by a person who works for a media organization.
4. Policy. It is the policy of DCF to facilitate media inquiries and maintain working relationships with members of the media through the Office of Communications and Regional Communications Directors.
5. Responsibilities and Procedures.
 - a. No DCF staff member will discuss Department matters with the media unless the DCF staff member is directly authorized to make that specific communication by the Office of Communications, the Chief of Staff or the Department Secretary.
 - b. Media includes, but may not be limited to, television, print, radio, Internet bloggers and media via social media. If a staff member is in doubt as to whether or not the individual with whom he or she is speaking may be a member of the media, the individual will immediately be referred to the Office of Communications that can assess the situation and refer appropriately.
 - c. When a DCF staff member receives an inquiry from the media, these steps will be followed:
 - (1) The DCF staff member will immediately refer the request to the Office of Communications or Regional Communications Director by providing the member of the media with the name and contact information of the appropriate staff member. This policy is applicable to all media inquiries, including "off-the-record" or "on background" statements and personal interviews with the DCF staff member.
 - (2) Before ending the conversation with the member of the media, the DCF staff member will gather the reporter's name, the name of his or her media organization and contact information for the reporter and shall provide that information to the Office of Communications or Regional Communications Director as quickly as possible.
 - (3) The DCF staff member will advise the appropriate member(s) of his or her chain of command of the media contact.

(4) These steps will apply to all contacts made by members of the media in any and all forms, including phone calls, emails and/or direct contact.

d. Any claim made by a member of the media that approval has been obtained from Executive Staff or Communications staff to speak directly to an employee will be verified by the employee with the Office of Communications or Regional Communications Director prior to any communication with that member of the media.

e. The Communications Office will respond appropriately and, in many instances, will designate and prepare DCF staff members to respond on behalf of the department.

f. Public Records Requests from Media will be handled by the Office of Communications or Regional Communications Director.

(1) Public records request from members of the media are to be directed to the Office of Communications or Regional Communications Director.

(2) The Office of Communications or Regional Communications Director will respond and coordinate the timely production of the responsive materials.

(Signed original copy on file)

MIKE CARROLL
Interim Secretary