



Media Relations Standards for City Employees

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Overview

The purpose of the Media Relations Standard is to support the Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements Policy and to assist you, as City employees and individuals who work for the City, to understand our media relations practices. This policy defines who is authorized to interact with members of the media. It also outlines expectations and requirements of those who are authorized to interact with members of the media on The City's behalf.

Our goal as City employees is to ensure that all interactions with the media helps us advance our One City, One Voice culture and to ensure compliance with all applicable City policies and bylaws, including the following found in The City of Calgary's [Administrative Policy Library](#):

- Code of Conduct
- Conflict of Interest
- Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements policy
- Any other related or applicable Council policies

Roles and responsibilities:

Director of Customer Service and Communications

The Director of Customer Service and Communications (CSC) has been assigned as the risk champion for The City's reputation as identified on the Corporate risk register. Additionally, is responsible for managing The City of Calgary's communication function and supporting customer service delivery.

The Director, CSC provides oversight for all City media relations activities. The director is responsible for designating all official spokespersons for The City (in consultation with a general manager or business unit director). The director also reserves the right to rescind this designation from any official City spokesperson if it is determined the spokesperson has acted in violation of the policy.

Designated spokesperson

Employees may be designated by the Director, CSC (in consultation with the appropriate general manager or business unit director). In this role, the spokesperson represents their business unit, on behalf of their director and may respond to general or issue-related media inquiries specific to their area of work. All designated spokespersons must complete one of the City's media education programs.



There may be a need for an employee who has not been designated as a business unit spokesperson to speak to the media. Their job functions may fit within one or more of the categories described below. Employees who have one or more of these job functions are not automatically considered a designated spokesperson; this designation can only be granted by the employees general manager or business unit director (in consultation with the director of CSC) and will generally be required to complete one of The City's media education programs.

Subject matter experts

A subject matter expert (SME) possesses in-depth knowledge on a specific topic, a business unit and/or specific programs or initiatives. As such, SMEs may be required to present reports to Council and/or Committee or attend City events such as open houses or engagement sessions to interact with members of the public and, possibly, members of the media. Thus, all SMEs should have, at minimum, Media Awareness training. Some SMEs may also be appointed as a designated spokesperson. A SME designated as a spokesperson will need, at minimum, Media Interview Training. And, depending on the level of public and media interest in a topic or issue, a SME may require additional customized one-on-one Media Coaching sessions. Access to Media Coaching sessions will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Director of Customer Service & Communications, in consultation with Corporate Media Relations.

City of Calgary employees who present reports to Council and/or Committee

As members of the media regularly cover Council and Committee meetings, employees who present reports may become high-profile representatives of The City. Report presenters speak in front of Council and/or Committee, followed by answering questions posed by Council members. Often, the report presenters will also be asked to participate in one or more media interviews following the presentation. All report presenters must have, at minimum, Media Awareness training. Where one or more employees are presenting, at least one member should have Media Interview Training and be designated as the spokesperson on the topic at hand. On occasion, the designated spokesperson might not be a member of the report presentation team.

City of Calgary reps at public events *(open houses, engagement sessions, etc.)*

Employees representing The City at public events such as in-house or third party open houses, engagement sessions, etc., are responsible for protecting The City's corporate reputation. As public events can generate media interest, it is recommended that all employees representing The City at public events have, at minimum, Media Awareness training. All employees at public events must know who the designated spokesperson(s) in attendance is(are) and media procedures in place.



It is recommended that at least one employee representing The City at a public event is Media Interview trained as well as the designated spokesperson on the topic at hand.

City of Calgary communications professionals

City of Calgary communications professionals (communicators) support all business units throughout the Corporation and are employees of Customer Service & Communications. Communicators are responsible for developing communications strategies and plans, creating key messages and providing communications support for The City's programs, initiatives and issues. This includes working with SMEs, report presenters and those attending public events to ensure those employees receive the appropriate level of media education and are well-prepared to interact with the media or participate in events where media may be present. Communicators are required to complete The City's communications-specific City's Media Advising training.

Managers, leaders and supervisors

Managers, leaders and supervisors are responsible for making sure that their employees are:

- Informed and aware of The City's policies related to media relations.
- Are aware that, unless they are designated as an official City spokesperson by the Director of Customer Service & Communications, they are not authorized to represent themselves to the media as a City spokesperson.
- Provided with the appropriate level of media training through The City's media training program.

City of Calgary employees – All

All City of Calgary employees, whether designated as official City spokespersons or not, are responsible for protecting The City's corporate reputation.

The City trusts that if or when you are in the presence of members of the media, you will:

- Act responsibly.
- Exercise good judgment.
- Maintain the highest degree of professionalism.

If you are approached directly by a member of the media to provide information or comment on a City related matter, the first and only step you must take is to direct them to contact The City's media line (403.828.2954).



All employees should familiarize themselves with The City's Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements policy and have a general awareness about media. Media awareness resources are available on myCity. Employees are also encouraged to contact their business unit's communicators for more information.

Enforcement considerations

Please remember that The City monitors media outlets for mentions in articles or opinion pieces and for misinformation that may be damaging to The City's reputation. Violation of the Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements Policy may be treated as violating The City's Code of Conduct. Such a violation may be reviewed by the Director of Customer Service and Communications, the appropriate Business Unit Director, a Labour Relations representative and, if required, Law-Corporate Security, Human Resources. It could result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination of employment, seeking restitution or both.

Governance

The Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements Policy is part of The City's Code of Conduct, which provides a minimum standard applied to employee behaviours. For more clarification on the Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements Policy and this standard, contact your supervisor.

Customer Service and Communications

Customer Service and Communications is responsible for managing the Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements Policy and is supported by Law-Corporate Security, Human Resources and, in some cases, Information Technology, in meeting this responsibility. Customer Service and Communications will also inform and/or consult with Information Technology, Human Resources and Law-Corporate Security for clarity of understanding and/or interpretation of the Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements Policy.

Law-Corporate Security

Corporate Security is responsible for information security, and the security technology business systems, devices, and infrastructure. Corporate Security advises on:

- Information Security Classification and Acceptable Use of Technology issues.
- Data storage for confidential and highly restricted information.
- Internet blocking and auditing systems.



Human Resources

Supervisors are encouraged to work with their Human Resources business partner to help investigate breaches of the Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements Policy. Human Resources will work with Law-Corporate Security and/or Information Technology. Human Resources considers what, if any, legal documents such as collective agreements or legislation mandated by other levels of government are involved and must be followed. Not doing so may expose The City to significant risk including financial awards for damages, loss of reputation, strained relationships with unions, decreased employee engagement, and more.

Our collective brand

As City employees, our behaviour is held to a higher standard. How we conduct ourselves in the presence of members of the media has an impact on the citizens of Calgary and how we work with each other. This standard will help us fulfill our role as public servants responsibly and with integrity, and help protect our collective brand and reputation.

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Document status
V1.0	2016	B. Morgan	Created Media Relations Employee Standards document to support the Social Media, Media Relations and Public Statements