



2-36 POLICE PRESS RELATIONS AND RELEASE OF POLICE IDENTIFICATION PHOTOGRAPHS

2-36-1 Policy

The police department is committed to informing the community and the news media of events within the public domain that are handled by or involve the department.

2-36-2 Purpose

Department policy is to support the fundamental principles of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, as it pertains to the rights of the news media and the public.

2-36-3 Definitions

A. Public Information Officer (PIO)

1. The department PIO is to provide an information liaison between the department and the general public.
 - a. The on-call PIO can be contacted through radio control or by calling the PIO line (505) 768-3339.
 - b. The PIO is available, if requested, to handle the news media for comment. The PIO may release comment via telephone or email.
 - c. Public Information Officers shall contact incident commander/investigative supervisor prior to releasing any information pertaining to an on-going police investigation.

2-36-4 Rules and Responsibilities

A. Supervisors

[7]

1. Initial and routine news media contacts will be handled by the **on scene supervisor highest ranking or designated supervisor/investigator at the scene of an incident**, when possible.
2. The supervisor will furnish statements to the PIO and news media to inform them of **initial factual** information about the incident.

[N/A]



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- Supervisors will immediately notify the PIO or on-call PIO on their release of information to the media and on all newsworthy events.

[N/A]

- Supervisors will be responsible for immediately reporting all media contacts to the PIO through their Chain of Command up to their respective Deputy Chief.
- Routine news media information such as traffic accidents, simple assaults, and batteries can be handled by the on-scene supervisor.
- Pre-arranged law enforcement activities and the media/photographers:
 - With the permission of the Chief, members of the media will be allowed to participate in ride-alongs.
 - A Department Ride-Along Request must be completed.
- Supervisors All APD employees (Sworn and Civilian) will not discuss or disseminate information to the media on incidents that they have no direct knowledge of or when their personnel are not involved. If the incident is of a serious nature, the matter will be referred to the PIO or Chief's Office appropriate Commander or Deputy Chief.
- Inquiries involving Department Policy will be referred to the appropriate Deputy Chief.

B. Personnel

- Personnel will not discuss or disseminate information to the media without specific authorization from a supervisor and/or PIO.
- All civilian supervisors will refer news media contacts to their division commander.

C. Release of Police Identification Photographs

Release of any department employee photo will be at the discretion of the Police Chief.

D. Media (and Public) Access to Crime Scenes and Critical Incidents

- Personnel shall ensure the media respects the established perimeters of the scene and shall not prohibit news gathering practices outside the established perimeters.
 - If a conflict arises regarding the location of the media, personnel will notify an on-duty supervisor, who will be responsible for resolving the conflict with the media representative on scene.



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- b. If the responding supervisor is unable to resolve the conflict, the on scene supervisor will contact the PIO, who will be responsible for resolving the conflict with the news director of the affected media outlet.
2. The incident commander or PIO (with approval of the incident Commander) may grant closer access to the media to the degree that it does not interfere with law enforcement operations.
3. The incident commander shall establish a media briefing area and inform the PIO.
4. The PIO will work in cooperation with the media to ensure live broadcasts do not disclose information that could endanger law enforcement personnel, police tactics, or the general public.

5. Media Ride-a-longs

- a. Members of the media will only be allowed to participate in ride-a-longs at the permission of the Chief of Police.
- b. A department Ride-a-long Request form must be completed.

E. Multi-Agency/Multi-Jurisdictional Investigations

1. The lead investigative agency is responsible for providing or coordinating the release of public information.
2. The PIO or designee for the lead agency will share information with all involved agencies prior to release.