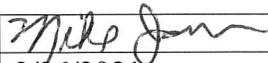


Public Affairs Personnel Policy/Procedure

No: CO0007		Type:	Citywide Policy/Procedure
Department:	Communications		
Original Effective Date:	04/21/2000	Approval Signature:	
Revision Date:	2/26/2026	Revise by Date:	2/26/2031

Purpose

To provide information to the public via the news media about the city of Las Vegas to enhance open government. To ensure consistency and quality in the delivery of accurate and timely information about city government to the news media.

Scope

All city employees and elected officials.

History

The city of Las Vegas has for decades had employees designated with the responsibility of providing information to the public via the news media and other means. Employees of the city's Office of Communications, Department of Public Safety and Las Vegas Fire and Rescue have been designated as employees who deal primarily with the media, including journalists, writers and photographers from newspapers, magazines, wire services, television stations, radio stations, internet companies, blogs and newsletters. The city's public information officers respond to more than 200 inquiries each month from the media alone. As Las Vegas grows and the number of media outlets locally and across the globe proliferates, there is greater demand from the public and the media for accurate and timely information about the activities, programs and services offered by the city of Las Vegas. The city aims to meet that demand by being responsive and providing improved access to government through various forms of media.

External Media Policy

The external media policy shall be to provide accurate and timely information to journalists and other members of the media concerning the operations and deliberations of city government. The intent is to provide information about the city of Las Vegas to enhance open government. As outlined below, the city will provide information to the public via the news media by way of news releases, news conferences, interviews, etc.

Permitted Activities

A. City-Produced News Releases - The Office of Communications writes and approves all news releases written internally and by external partners relating to city news and city officials. Exceptions are made only in cases of emergencies or when time constraints preclude prior approval. News releases are designed to inform the public of services and activities of various departments and provide coverage of issues, news, announcements and quality of life in the city. All news releases created by city staff will be related to city of Las Vegas business or functions. Non-city events, such as personal appearances by the mayor, members of the council or city staff at non-city functions, will not be included in city produced news releases.

B. City-Produced Video News Releases – Video news releases (VNRs) may be provided by the city to assist the television/visual media in disseminating information to the public. These may be requested by the media or city staff. The policies and procedures that apply to written news releases also apply to VNRs. These are designed to inform the public of services and activities of various departments and provide coverage of issues, news, announcements and quality of life in the city. All VNRs will be related to city of Las Vegas business or functions. Non-city events, such as personal appearances by the mayor, members of the council or city staff at non-city functions, will not be included in individual city VNRs. When VNRs are provided to members of the media, they will be asked to credit the city of Las Vegas.

C. News Conferences – News conferences may be employed as a means of disseminating information to the public. All city-related news conferences should be coordinated through the Public Affairs Office. News conferences are designed to inform the public of services and activities of various departments and provide coverage of issues, news, announcements and quality of life in the city. All news conferences will be related to city of Las Vegas business or functions.

D. Special Events - Special events such as groundbreakings, ribbon cuttings and town hall meetings are of interest to the community and the neighborhoods they impact. The Public Affairs Office and public information officers will be involved in the coordination of these events to facilitate dissemination of information directly to the public and via the news media. This applies to city-sponsored events and to city-related events that involve city officials and/or programs.

E. News Media Interviews – The appropriate department director should approve all media interviews involving city of Las Vegas employees within his/her respective department. The Office of Communications will be notified of all interviews and requests for interviews involving city employees and officials. Media interviews are designed to inform the public via the media of services and activities of various departments and provide coverage of issues, news, announcement and quality of life in the city.

F. Photographs – Photographs may be taken by employees of the Office of Communications and public information officers. These are designed to provide a visual means of informing the public of services and activities of various departments and of providing coverage of issues, news, announcements and quality of life in the city. Such photos may be furnished to the news media and may be used in city publications. All photos taken by the Office of Communications and city public information officers will be related to city of Las Vegas business or functions. Non-city events, such as personal appearances by the mayor, members of the council or city staff at non-city functions, will not be photographed by employees of the Office of Communications and public information officers.

Restricted Activities

A. The Office of Communications and public information officers are not intended as mechanisms for building support for a particular political policy, program, issue, party or individual.

B. The Office of Communications and public information officers have no obligation to support non-city events.

C. The Office of Communications' Public Affairs Office and public information officers are not to be used as campaign tools. Their offices, however, may provide objective information about election procedures, ballot instructions, polling locations, candidate forums or issues debates. Campaign laws and city policies governing elected-official activities shall be followed. For example, current-term elected officials may receive coverage only to the extent that such coverage is coincident with the performance of their official duties as elected officials.

In an Advisory Opinion No. 23-143A (March 18, 2024), the Nevada Commission on Ethics advised that NRS 281A.520 does not prohibit the appearance of a sitting elected official running for office to appear in or on, as applicable, a pamphlet, brochure, publication, advertisement or television programming that...

- a. Is created or disseminated in the course of carrying out a duty of:
 - i. The public officer who is the candidate; or
 - ii. The governmental entity by which the public officer who is the candidate is employed

Per this advisory opinion, once a sitting elected official files for office, Office of Communications staff may continue to provide assistance to those officials in their normal capacity including:

- Creating city-related graphics that feature the name and photo of the official such as pamphlets, brochures, publications, fliers, mailers and other routine graphic requests handled by the city's graphic artists.
- Creating and editing ward newsletters and city of Las Vegas news releases so long as the content is city-related, considered "routine", consistent with regular occurring duties that happen outside of the campaign period.

Other examples include:

- Producing segments for Access City Council on CLVTV every 6 weeks;
- Creation and distribution of council e-newsletters sent at typical frequency (weekly to monthly);

- Providing public relations promotion for grand openings/ribbon cuttings for new businesses, groundbreakings, etc, including coordinating interviews on city topics, and writing speaking points for city events.

D. The Office of Communications or public information officers will produce no campaign advertising or promotional materials for campaigns.

E. The Office of Communications and public information officers will not produce:

- a. Any advertising that promotes the sale of any commercial product or services.
- b. Any information concerning a commercial lottery, gift enterprise or similar promotion offering prizes in whole or part upon lot or chance.
- c. Any direct solicitation of funds for non-municipal services.
- d. Any material in violation of federal, state or local statute or law.
- e. Any material endorsing religious beliefs or religious philosophies.

F. The equipment and facilities of the Office of Communications and public information officers are to be used only by staff for the purpose of disseminating information for the city of Las Vegas or internal use. No other use is authorized without a rental or intergovernmental agreement.

References

- **Advisory Opinion No. 23-143A (March 18, 2024)**