



MEDIA RELATIONS  
**GENERAL ORDER #24.00**

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Persons Affected: All personnel

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IACLEA Standards:

**Revision History**

Replaces SUDPS General Order #24.00 (08/04/06)

**PURPOSE**

*The purpose of this Order is to define the roles, responsibilities and expectations of Stanford University Department of Public Safety personnel when interacting or communicating with, or the release or dissemination of information to the media.*

**POLICY**

*Stanford University Department of Public Safety personnel will cooperate with all members of the news media to the extent that such cooperation is consistent with laws, proper law enforcement protocols and procedures, this General Order, and when not detrimental to the interest or welfare of the public. Requests by the media for information or interviews should be referred to the Stanford University Department of Public Safety Public Information Officer.*

*Consideration should be given as to when to notify the Sheriff's Office Press Information Officer, the Sheriff's Office-Stanford Liaison Captain and/or Stanford University Communications for approval or assistance when determining how to respond to media inquiries and what information should, can or must be released.*



## PROCEDURE

### A. PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

1. *The Stanford University Department of Public Safety (SUDPS) Public Information Officer (PIO) reports directly to the SUDPS Director of Public Safety regarding all matters pertaining to media relations. The PIO will process all media inquiries and requests made to SUDPS.*
2. *All press releases will be the responsibility of the SUDPS Public Information Officer, or the person designated by the SUDPS Director of Public Safety. He or she will be available to assist other members of the SUDPS in preparing press releases if needed. Description or content of all media contact made by other members of SUDPS shall be forwarded to the Public Information Officer who will then notify the Director of Public Safety. The PIO will obtain approval from the Director of Public Safety or his/her designee prior to issuing a press release.*
3. *When issuing a press release and to ensure that all appropriate information is made available to the media, the SUDPS PIO will coordinate with:*
  - *The SUDPS Director of Public Safety or his/her designee*
  - *SUDPS Investigative Services Division to safeguard any related investigation(s) or confidentialities*
  - *Stanford University Communications who coordinates the university's public and media relations, when applicable or necessary*
  - *The Sheriff's Office-Stanford Liaison Captain and/or Sheriff's Office PIO, when applicable or necessary*
  - *Other public safety agencies or University departments impacted by the press release, when applicable or necessary*
  - *The SUDPS AlertSU operator to inform or update the Stanford Community, when applicable, necessary or mandated.*
4. *The SUDPS PIO shall ensure that all requests for, and releases of, information are in compliance with the California Public Records Act, California Government Code section 6254(f), and the Santa Clara County Police Chiefs' Officer-Involved Incident Guidelines County Protocol pertaining to News Media Relations.*
5. *When applicable, the SUDPS PIO will collaborate with Stanford University Communications to coordinate notifying the media of press conferences involving a law enforcement or public safety incident.*
6. *The SUDPS PIO will provide all SUDPS Division Commanders/Managers, including the Sheriff's Office-Stanford Liaison Captain with copies of written press releases issued by SUDPS. Division Commanders/Managers will be responsible for posting press releases within their division to ensure their personnel are informed. Copies of all press releases will be maintained by the PIO.*



7. The *Sheriff's Office PIO* is responsible for the issuance of Sheriff's Office media credentials.

## **B. RELEASE OF INFORMATION**

Information shall be provided to news media representatives *upon verbal or written request and* with certain exceptions:

1. Where prohibited due to laws governing confidentiality.
2. When the information may be critical to the resolution of a criminal investigation.
3. When the information would disclose police strategy essential to criminal apprehension or crisis resolution.
4. When the information would reveal sources of information where anonymity has been requested, desired *or prohibited by law*.
5. Information regarding *SUDPS* personnel will not be released without approval of the *SUDPS* Director of Public Safety. *Any release of information* shall be consistent with the California Public Records Act and Peace Officer Confidentiality Statutes. However, approved policy changes or personnel changes within *SUDPS* may be released by the *Director of Public Safety or his/her designee, the Sheriff or Undersheriff*.
6. No information contained in a supplementary or follow-up report will be released except with the express *written* permission of the *Director of Public Safety or his/her designee*.
7. Certain investigative information not proper for immediate release or publication, such as names and descriptions of suspects, suspect vehicles, or the opinions, conclusions, or suggestions *of authorized SUDPS personnel* will not be made available unless the *Director or Public Safety* determines that release of such information will not be detrimental to the parties involved or the investigation.
8. *All media inquiries and requests for information will be referred to the Sheriff's Office PIO in situations when the Sheriff's Office, per the Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Police Services Between the County of Santa Clara and Stanford University, is the primary investigating agency.*
9. *The SUDPS PIO shall abide by relevant Administrative Codes and laws relating to the type and content of the information to be released in order to protect impacted parties and not expose them to unwanted media attention or in violation of his/her privacy.*
10. *In circumstances when there is an imminent need for an "on-call" response to the media the Director of Public Safety or his/her designee shall be notified as soon as possible. The*



*Director of Public Safety, or his/her designee, will then decide whether or not to notify the SUDPS PIO.*

### **C. MEDIA ACCESS**

*Pursuant to Penal Code 409.5, media representatives will be allowed access to locations or crime scenes under SUDPS control, except:*

1. *When protection or preservation of the crime scene is necessary. In that event, a briefing area will be established that will allow reasonable media access without risking the safety of the media or others or contamination of the crime scene.*
2. *When the presence of media representatives jeopardizes the safety of others as determined by law enforcement personnel.*
3. *When on private property and the owner/agent declines or refuses permission for media access.*
4. *When the presence of media representatives interferes with or obstructs the duties or responsibilities of law enforcement personnel.*

### **D. GENERAL MEDIA RELATIONS**

*SUDPS personnel shall use the following guidelines when interacting or communicating with media representatives:*

1. *All routine press releases shall be made by the SUDPS PIO or Director of Public Safety, or his/her designee. A routine press release may be, but not limited to, an uneventful arrest that did not result in injury to the arrestee, uninvolved bystander, or deputy as a result of the actions of SUDPS personnel, a traffic collision, or road closure.*
2. *All emergency or special press releases shall be made by the SUDPS Director of Public Safety, his or her designee, or the SUDPS PIO. An emergency or special press release may be necessitated when a deputy is involved in an incident that resulted in an injury to another person(s), when, the safety of the public is a concern, or the assistance of the public or media may be beneficial.*
3. *If two or more media organizations request media coverage of an unfolding event or critical incident in an otherwise inaccessible area, and due to safety or other concerns of law enforcement personnel on-scene, the media organizations may be requested to pool resources by selecting a reporter or photographer. If the media organizations are unable to agree, law enforcement personnel may deny them media access.*



4. *Law Enforcement personnel on-scene may determine that aerial media coverage of an unfolding event or critical incident may interfere with the safe resolution of the incident or compromise the safety of personnel in the air or on the ground. Pursuant to 14 CFR 91.137(a1) and (a3) law enforcement personnel on-scene may request temporary air space restrictions through the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA).*
5. *Media representatives may conduct interviews of a person(s) not in SUDPS custody and may freely photograph areas and suspects under SUDPS control when their actions do not directly obstruct or unreasonably interfere with the work of public safety personnel. Under no circumstances shall an arrestee or defendant be posed for photographs for the media while in SUDPS custody. Arrestee photographs shall be released only upon approval of the Director of Public Safety and the Sheriff's Office.*
6. *Information involving day-to-day operations may be released to the media by any sworn SUDPS personnel. However, all media inquiries and requests should be directed to the Director of Public Safety or PIO to ensure if the person making the request is authorized to receive the information. If any information regarding SUDPS operations is released to the media by sworn or non-sworn personnel without advance notification or approval by the Director of Public Safety or PIO, he/she will immediately notify his/her supervisor who, in turn, will notify the Director of Public Safety or PIO.*
7. *All members of SUDPS, when interviewed by or in the presence of the media, shall at all times conduct themselves in a professional manner. Members representing SUDPS shall not use such appearances for the purpose of personal gain or profit.*
8. *Members of SUDPS should be aware that some media inquiries or requests for information may be answered or already available by referring them to the SUDPS Public Log or the annual Stanford University Safety, Security, and Fire Report. The Public Log is maintained by the Investigation Services/Records Division and contains a synopsis of crimes and incidents that have been reported to SUDPS over the last sixty (60) days. The Safety, Security, and Fire Report is posted on the SUDPS website at [police.stanford.edu](http://police.stanford.edu) which is updated annually. Information requested that is not contained in either of these documents may require the media representative to be referred to the PIO and/or by him/her making a formal written request for records. A written request may be made by completing a Stanford University Department of Public Safety, Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department Records Request Form.*
9. *In the event of large scale media interest in an incident or where access to the area is restricted, the PIO, or Director of Public Safety or his/her delegate may identify a media staging area. The staging area will be away from the scene of an unfolding incident and for the purpose of holding a press conference.*