

CHAPTER: 200

Public/Public Access

DEPARTMENT ORDER:

207 – Media Relations

OFFICE OF PRIMARY  
RESPONSIBILITY:

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# Arizona Department of Corrections Rehabilitation and Reentry



Department Order Manual

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Thornell", written over a horizontal line.

Ryan Thornell, Director

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## **PURPOSE**

The Department strives to provide current, accurate, and timely information to the public and the press as appropriate.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

The Director, Deputy Director, Chief of Staff, Inspector General, Chief of Government Affairs, Media Relations Office, and individual employees designated by the Director are authorized to address the media on behalf of the Department.

All Department employees are required to comply in full with this Department Order. Employees on or off duty who receive any inquiry about the Arizona Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation and Reentry (ADCRR) from the media or public are not authorized to speak to the media or public on behalf of ADCRR. Any and all such inquiries must be promptly forwarded to ADCRR's Media Relations Office for a response.

## **PROCEDURES**

**1.0 MEDIA RELATIONS BY AUTHORIZED MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES ONLY** – The Director, Deputy Director, Chief of Staff, Inspector General, Chief of Government Affairs, and individual employees designated by the Director are authorized to address the media or public on behalf of the Department. If an employee is asked by the Director to address the media on behalf of the Department, the employee shall be dressed in accordance with Department Order #503, Employee Grooming and Dress and utilize state time.

### **2.0 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION, INTERVIEWS AND TOURS**

2.1 Department staff shall refer all requests for information about the Department concerning interview requests and requests for tours to the Chief of Government Affairs, Deputy Director or Director, except for legislative requests. (See Department Order #110, Legislative Activities, regarding legislative requests for information.)

2.1.1 Staff may not release any Department information which is not currently readily available on the Department's Webpage without the prior approval from the Director, Deputy Director or Chief of Government Affairs.

2.1.2 When staff provides currently readily available information, the employee shall immediately advise the Chief of Government Affairs in writing.

2.1.2.1 The Media Relations Office may be contacted at any time during non-business hours through the Communications Center.

2.2 Department staff shall refer all media requests to enter a Department facility or interview an inmate to the Media Relations Director and Public Information Officer. All requests from the media shall be submitted immediately.

2.2.1 All requests:

2.2.1.1 To enter a facility shall be submitted to the Media Relations Director or designee within 24 hours of receipt.

2.2.1.2 For media visits to a facility shall be subject to approval by the Director or designee.

2.3 Department staff shall refer all media requests to the Media Relations Director and the Deputy Media Relations Director.

2.3.1 Under no circumstance is information to be released that relates to a pending criminal investigation, potential criminal investigation, litigation or potential litigation.

2.3.2 No information is to be released that relates to general ADCRR security practices, or specific complex, or field office security practices.

2.4 Media representatives and/or media organizations requesting copies, printouts or photographs of public records for a non-commercial purpose may be charged a fee in accordance with Department Order #201, Legal Services – Records Release.

**3.0 PROHIBITED CONDUCT** – The Arizona Code of Administrative Regulations R2-5A-501 requires all state employees to conduct themselves in a manner which will not discredit or bring embarrassment to the state. A.R.S. §41-773 lists reasons for discipline or dismissal from state service including improper political activity.

**4.0 DEPARTMENT WEBSITE** – The Department maintains a public website on the internet for the purpose of disseminating general information about the Department, key management staff, and providing selected public information. In addition, the site may allow for limited electronic communication between members of the public and the appropriate staff member or work unit. For additional information relating to internet use and the Department’s telecommunications infrastructure see Department Order #102, Information Technology.

4.1 Primary responsibility for the maintenance of the website is assigned to the Media Relations Office. Each Assistant Director and Warden shall appoint a Web Liaison.

4.2 Examples of material which may be placed on the site include:

4.2.1 Photographs of key staff, organizational charts, and descriptions of divisions, bureaus or other organizational entities which are of interest to the public.

4.2.2 The names, work telephone numbers, and locations of selected management personnel. If appropriate, the divisional e-mail address may be included.

4.2.3 Descriptions of prisons and other Department facilities which include; contact information for key personnel, location and driving directions, visitation information, inmate capacity and programs.

4.2.4 Employment opportunities notably, information related to Correctional Officer employment opportunities, including methods for interested parties regarding how to apply for employment directly online.

4.2.5 Department statistical reports, publications and news releases.

4.2.6 Any written material which is identified as public information and is required to be available on the site by this Department Order.

4.2.7 Email access to the website Administrator as determined by the Director and other staff members.

- 4.2.8 The General Access Department Order Manual.
- 4.2.9 Information regarding the sale of prison goods (Arizona Correctional Industries).
- 4.2.10 Inmate information such as at-large fugitives, biographical material about inmates who are on "death row", and offender classification system information.
- 4.2.11 Other material deemed appropriate by the Department website Administrator and the Media Relations Office.
- 4.3 While the primary purpose of the website is to provide information, material including electronic representations of documents located on the site shall not be considered public records. A disclaimer on the website (Attachment A) shall refer the reader to the appropriate location for access to official copies of documents or records.
- 4.4 Staff may submit suggestions by accessing the ADCRR Intranet Webpage (ADCNet) and following the instructions posted there, or by contacting the Media Relations Office.
- 4.5 The website Administrator shall review material or information submitted by staff for inclusion on the website. The website Administrator may convene an ad hoc committee to determine whether or not material is appropriate for inclusion on the website or if the information is accurate.
- 4.6 Major changes to the appearance or content of the Department website shall require the approval of the Director or designee.

## **5.0 MEDIA RELATIONS**

- 5.1 The Media Relations Office shall:
  - 5.1.1 Schedule and coordinate media briefings.
  - 5.1.2 Prepare official Department media releases.
  - 5.1.3 Approve media representatives' access to institutions or other Department facilities and staff.
  - 5.1.4 Respond to media representatives' requests.
  - 5.1.5 For any scheduled inmate activity/special event which may be of media interest, be available to meet with and be interviewed by media representatives on the activity/special event.
- 5.2 The Director, Deputy Director, Media Relations Office and individual employees designated by the Director shall be available to meet with and be interviewed by media representatives on activities and programs under their jurisdiction as appropriate.

## **6.0 MEDIA ACCESS TO FACILITIES, STAFF OR INMATES**

- 6.1 Access to Facilities and Staff
  - 6.1.1 Media representatives' requests for access to facilities and/or staff must be received by the Media Relations Office at least three business days in advance of the proposed visit for consideration.

- 6.1.2 Except for scheduled events, access to facilities and staff is limited to normal business hours, Monday through Friday, excluding holidays. The Warden, Deputy Warden or Bureau Administrator shall designate a time which is least disruptive to operations. Access may be granted on weekends, holidays or other than normal business hours for the purpose of covering a scheduled event upon approval. Communication about time will be provided to the media from the Media Relations Office.
- 6.1.3 The Department retains the right to deny access to facilities and staff.
- 6.2 Access to Inmates – Media representatives may correspond with inmates:
  - 6.2.1 Through the mail as outlined in Department Order #914, Inmate Mail.
  - 6.2.2 Through e-messaging on the inmate tablet.
    - 6.2.2.1 Media representatives must first establish an account on the vendor’s website.
  - 6.2.3 In-Person through inmate visitation, in accordance with Department Order #911, Inmate Visitation.
    - 6.2.3.1 Individuals must be part of the inmate’s approved visitor list for visitation.
    - 6.2.3.2 Cameras or cell phones are not permitted during scheduled visitation visits. Media are permitted to bring in a pad, and pencil or pen.
  - 6.2.4 Media representatives who wish to schedule a telephone interview with an inmate shall contact the Media Relations Director or designee during business hours and in a reasonable period of time prior to the requested time to schedule the interview. The appropriate Department staff member shall process the request in a reasonable period of time in order to allow the requestor to conduct the interview as approved.
  - 6.2.5 One-on-one interviews between media representatives and inmates may be conducted with prior approval of the Director as outlined in this Department Order.
  - 6.2.6 Conference calls of any kind between a media representative and inmates are not permitted.
  - 6.2.7 Unless authorized by the Assistant Director for Prison Operations, inmate phone interviews with the media shall be limited to 15 minutes.
  - 6.2.8 The Department retains the right to decline inmate interviews.
  - 6.2.9 The Department retains the right to terminate an interview due to safety concerns.
- 6.3 Special Media Access Restrictions
  - 6.3.1 Requests to interview an inmate on Continuous Watch shall be denied. Media access to an execution shall be in compliance with Department Order #710, Execution Procedures and appropriate statutes.

- 6.3.2 Inmates who are in detention status pending disciplinary action when an interview request is received are not permitted to be interviewed by telephone and shall not be photographed or videotaped while in that status.
- 6.3.3 Media representatives may be denied access to prisons or other facilities if the Director, the Deputy Director or Assistant Director determines their presence may jeopardize the safety or security of the institution or facility, staff, inmate, victim or the media representative.
- 6.3.4 Inmate photographs on file are a matter of public record. Media representatives may take pictures of file photographs.
- 6.3.5 Media representatives may request and be authorized to take new photographs, to include facial views, in an institutional environment. A photo opportunity of this type shall not be staged. Furthermore, the Department shall not authorize media access when such access places an undue burden on an institution and staff or presents a safety or security concern. Requests for a photo opportunity shall be made to the Media Relations Director and approved by the Assistant Director for Prison Operations.
- 6.3.6 Inmates shall sign a Media Consent, Form 207-1, prior to contact with a media representative, except when such contact is made through the mail in accordance with Department Order #914, Inmate Mail.
  - 6.3.6.1 Additionally, a Media Consent form is not required for inmates who are filmed as part of file footage and whose names are not associated with the photograph or video.

## **7.0 NOTIFICATION OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS**

- 7.1 Significant events to be communicated with identified officeholders and the media:
  - 7.1.1 Escape of an inmate where resolution is not imminent;
  - 7.1.2 Death of an inmate by other than apparent natural causes;
  - 7.1.3 Death of an on-duty employee by other than apparent natural causes;
  - 7.1.4 Disturbance of significant size or duration where resolution is not imminent;
  - 7.1.5 Hostage-taking where resolution is not imminent; and
  - 7.1.6 Other events of consequence, as determined by the Director.
- 7.2 Notification of identified officeholders and media of significant events shall be completed within the timelines provided:
  - 7.2.1 Media by the Media Relations Office through a News Advisory via email within one business day, except when public safety warrants otherwise.
    - 7.2.1.1 Information on deceased inmates shall not be released prior to the documented notification of the next of kin and the generation of victim notifications.

- 7.2.1.2 The Media Relations Office shall verify these notifications have been made prior to the release of any information to the media.
- 7.2.2 Governor’s Office by the Director immediately by phone or email; if by phone, written notice to follow.
- 7.2.3 The Speaker of the Arizona House and President of the Arizona Senate by the Department’s Legislative Liaison by phone or email within one business day; if by phone, written notice to follow.
- 7.2.4 State Legislators in the district where the significant event occurred by the Department’s Legislative Liaison by phone or email within one business day; if by phone, written notice to follow.
- 7.3 Notification of identified officeholders and the media augments established criminal justice notifications:
  - 7.3.1 The Criminal Investigators Unit investigator shall contact:
    - 7.3.1.1 The Medical Examiner by phone immediately upon confirmation of death by a licensed physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner.
    - 7.3.1.2 The County Attorney by phone within one business day; written notice to follow for all apparent homicides.
- 7.4 With the Director’s authorization, all notifications may be delayed when security, sound correctional practices, or investigative reasons exist.

## **DEFINITIONS/GLOSSARY**

Refer to the Glossary of Terms for the following:

- Authorized Media Representatives
- Media
- Media Relations Office
- Significant Events
- Statutory Restrictions

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - Webpage Disclaimer

## **FORMS LIST**

207-1, Media Consent

## **AUTHORITY**

R2-5A-501, Standards of Conduct

A.R.S. §41-773, Causes for dismissal or discipline for employee in covered service

## **ATTACHMENT A**

### **Webpage Disclaimer**

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