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MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

Effective Date: August 6, 2018
Last Revised: October 4, 2018
Policy Contact: communications@ocbanet.org

Having a media relation policy that is known and available to staff is an important part of the Orange County Bar Association's (OCBA) public relations efforts. There are many opportunities to promote the "good" that we do for attorneys and the public; however, unless you are highly skilled at answering a reporters' question(s), a positive interview can quickly turn disastrous.

The OCBA will maintain a contact list of local media relations individuals in the "list" folder under the \company drive. The OCBA's communications manager may, from time to time, reach out directly to the media to have them attend a luncheon or other OCBA event.

The OCBA President is the primary spokesperson for any media questions/inquires. In his/her absence, the President-elect serves as the spokesperson, and then the Executive Director. In certain circumstances regarding specific projects or services, a committee chair may also respond to media questions or inquiries. The individual shall collaborate on the message development and coordinate who will respond to the specific press inquiry.

Employees, board members (other than the president, president-elect or a committee chair), or members acting in a capacity within a committee or a caucus shall not make statements, provide information for distribution, or provide background information unless specifically directed to do so by the President.

If any OCBA staff member or other stakeholder receives a call or should the media approach them in any way, the individual should immediately contact the OCBA Executive Director in person or by phone. Do not send an email regarding the facts. If the Executive Director is not available; instead, contact the communications manager. If neither party is available, gather the following information from the party who is making the inquiry, and let them know a call will be returned. Then send the information via email, with an "URGENT – Media Inquiry" noted in the Subject Line to the Executive Director and the Communications Manager.

Please note that reporters may not provide any specific information regarding their inquiry. If the reporter pushes for an immediate response, firmly, but politely say that you are not the



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spokesperson and their call will be returned promptly. **Do not offer information to media — even if you know the answer.**

Date/Time of Inquiry	
Name/Title of Caller	
Phone Number	
Email Address	
Name of Company	
Topic of Discussion	
Interview/Question Details	
Deadline	

Here are some key points to remember when dealing with the media:

1. Be polite.
2. Be helpful.
3. Find out what the reporter needs to know and what his or her deadline is.
4. Don't let a deadline pass without a response.
5. Don't get drawn into providing information or opinions that you don't have the authority to provide.
6. Always inform the appropriate authority at the OCBA of the call for follow-up.