

PROCEDURE

Series:	Public Relations	COA: ETH 1, HR 5.02, RPM 2 CFOP: 175-40
Procedure Name:	Crisis and Media Communications	
Procedure Number:	PBR-3007	
Reviewed Date:	02/19/13, 08/05/14, 10/13/16, 3/12/18, 10/04/19, 5/31/22, 4/10/23, 4/16/2024	
Revision #/Date:	06/09/15, 03/12/18, 7/8/21, 4/10/23, 7/21/25	
Effective Date:	01/01/09	
Applicable to:	Family Partnerships of Central Florida (FPOCF), The National Center for Innovation and Excellence, Family Partnerships of Central Florida, and FPOCF Family of Agencies Board Members, Staff and Contract Providers	

PURPOSE: To ensure that communication with the media or public, either in normal or crisis situations, is conducted by the appropriate personnel within the organizations, following identified protocols.

PROCEDURE:

References: FPOCF Policies/Procedures: GOV018, OP1089;

Florida Statutes: 39.202 (2) (o)

Definitions: The purpose of the crisis communications procedure is to inform FPOCF staff, FPOCF Board of Directors Members and contract providers on the importance of open communication with the public and the media, and to establish protocol for any incident or crisis in which communication with the media and/or general public is necessary.

The following procedures apply to inquiries or requests from any media such as newspaper, radio, television, cable access, web site, magazine, social media organizations, etc. or from any person in the public seeking comment regarding an incident or crisis.

1. Procedure for handling inquiries. This procedure applies to all internal and external staff of Family Partnerships of Central Florida, and The National Center for Innovation and Excellence and its Family of Agencies Board of Directors members, partners and providers. FPOCF will abide by all terms and conditions of its Department of Children and Families (DCF) contract in the reporting of critical incidents and alerting DCF to media inquiries.
 - A. Please refer all calls, emails or visits to the President and Chief Executive Officer of the Agency. If the President and Chief Executive Officer is not available, refer to the Alternate Designee. The Alternate Designee will make every effort to contact the appropriate personnel.

- B. If the President and Chief Executive Officer and alternate designee are not available, please take the following steps:
 - a. Obtain the inquirer's name, phone number, email address and deadline (if applicable to media inquiry).
 - b. Attempt to determine the nature of the story being developed or question(s) posed.
 - c. Ask if there is a deadline for a response.
 - d. Advise the inquirer that the appropriate person will return their call or respond to their email in a timely manner.
 - e. Contact the alternate designee selected by the CEO.
 - C. To ensure confidentiality, compliance with criminal investigations and all issues pertaining to confidentiality, staff is to refrain from providing any information or statement to the inquirer. It is imperative that all contacts and communication be handled and documented by the designated personnel.
 - D. Staff will refrain from using the phrase, "no comment" as it may constitute a form of an answer that may be perceived negatively by the media.
 - E. If, under an extraordinary circumstance, staff are unable to reach the primary or alternate contacts, contact the Human Resources Director who will attempt to locate the designated FPOCF media response designee. In the event of urgency, the Human Resources Director will return the inquirer's call and inform them of the status of a formal response.
 - F. Should any concern arise regarding the appropriateness of a communication situation, please contact the President and Chief Executive Officer or the alternate designee who will evaluate the situation to the Human Resources Director (in consultation with the Communications Director) who will collectively provide a recommendation to the CEO for resolution.
2. Procedures for Crisis Communication. These procedures will be followed by the executive team of Family Partnerships of Central Florida, The National Center for Innovation and Excellence, or the Family Partnerships of Central Florida Foundation when any incident or crisis occurs that would garner media attention or intense public scrutiny.
- A. Gather all available facts and assess the situation to determine if a crisis exists and the level of its severity.
 - B. Brief executive-level staff including, if necessary, the FPOCF Governance Board Chair and legal counsel. Brief supervisory staff that may be responsible for managing personnel involved and any other partners or providers, and their appropriate personnel, as necessary.
 - C. Communicate with local, state and/or federal officials and agencies, as necessary or required (e.g., DCF, law enforcement, etc.)
 - D. Log all calls, emails and personal inquiries, and monitor and document media coverage.
 - E. If the crisis involves a physical site, control media and public access as is legally permitted.
 - F. Identify a location where media briefings and updates will be conducted.
 - G. Identify a spokesperson. This person should be experienced in media communications or, at the least, comfortable addressing the public.

- H. Provide the spokesperson with information and speaking points that will address the situation and answer any anticipated questions that may be posed. Only provide facts as they are known. Do not speculate. Be brief and direct in responding to questions.
- I. Provide situational updates and information as appropriate. Advise media of scheduled updates or contact them prior to press conferences.
- J. Following the incident or crisis, debrief all personnel involved to determine which actions/activities were appropriate, which may have deterred effective communication and any lessons learned. Document these items and refer to them for future communication situations.

BY DIRECTION OF THE PRESIDENT AND
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:



PHILIP J. SCARPELLI
President and Chief Executive Officer
Family Partnerships of Central Florida

APPROVAL DATE: 10/27/2025