



Carrboro Police Department

Subject: Chapter 25: MEDIA POLICY		Number: IX. Subsections
Issued: 07-02-18	Revised: N/A	Page 1 of 8

- I. Policy
- II. Public Information Officer
- III. Media Requests and Items of Interest
- IV. Information That Is Released to the Public
- V. Information That Is NOT Released to the Public
- VI. Exemptions
- VII. Specific Information Release
- VIII. Access to Crime Scenes and Other Incident and Event Locations
- IX. News Media Interactions

I. POLICY

It is the policy of the Carrboro Police Department that the public will have timely access to information arising from the transaction of public business unless the release of such information could jeopardize a law enforcement investigation, the apprehension of a suspect, or the prosecution of an offense; or could be harmful to witnesses, victims, or others; or is prohibited by law. This policy establishes guidelines and procedures concerning the accurate and appropriate release of information to news media and establishes protocols for the release of information at crime scenes and other events.

II. PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER

- A. The Department's principal point of contact with the media is the Public Information Officer (PIO). To avoid confusion or duplication and to ensure uniformity, the PIO or designee will, under normal circumstances, provide information to the media or authorize the release of such information. The Chief of Police will decide who serves in the PIO position.
- B. News media representatives will be directed to the PIO or designee when inquiries are made. Routine media inquiries will be handled during business hours. During non-business hours, the Patrol Division Supervisor will normally serve as the designee for non-routine incidents.

III. MEDIA REQUESTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST



Carrboro Police Department

Subject: Chapter 25: MEDIA POLICY		Number: IX. Subsections
Issued: 07-02-18	Revised: N/A	Page 2 of 8

- A. During normal business hours, media requests for news information will be referred to the PIO. At other times, requests for information on occurring events will be referred to the Patrol Division Supervisor.
- B. Information concerning matters that are likely to produce media inquiries should be communicated as soon as practicable to the PIO during normal business hours and to the Patrol Division Supervisor at other times.
- C. Information about special events and occurrences that involve the Department will be provided to the PIO, as needed, for the preparation of news releases or the scheduling and coordination of media briefings.

IV. INFORMATION THAT IS RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC

- A. Routine Informational Releases
 - 1. The public copy first page with corresponding public narrative of Incident/Investigation Reports, complete Traffic Collision Reports and Arrest Reports (excluding Social Security Number information).
 - 2. Carrboro Police Department arrest records.
- B. Bulletins

Any person or organization can use the Carrboro Police Department's Police2Citizen website to access and download bulletins which contain a listing of Incident/Investigations and Arrests Reports.
- C. Media Releases
 - 1. The Chief of Police, PIO, or the Chief's designee will provide police media releases.
 - 2. Media releases will be provided in a manner to ensure that the same information is available to all news agencies.



Carrboro Police Department

Subject: Chapter 25: MEDIA POLICY		Number: IX. Subsections
Issued: 07-02-18	Revised: N/A	Page 3 of 8

3. The PIO or designee will maintain a system for providing written news releases to the media and for appropriately distributing them within the Department.

D. Photographs

1. Photographs or electronic images of persons may be released in the following situations:
 - a. Arrested person after his first appearance before a magistrate or judge generally if there is a public safety need;
 - b. Wanted person when a warrant for arrest has been issued;
 - c. A person who is missing and/endangered;
 - d. An identified person that the department is trying to locate in relation to a crime or other incident; or
 - e. An unknown person that the department is trying to identify, such as a person photographed by a security camera.
2. 911 Recordings

Only the Police Department may release recordings of Carrboro Police 911 calls and police radio communications. Recordings will be reviewed by Police Department staff, and information that is not public record as provided by NCGS 132-1.4 may be deleted prior to release.

V. INFORMATION THAT IS NOT RELEASED TO THE PUBLIC

- A. Identifying information will not be released on the following:
 1. Juveniles, except on Traffic Collision Reports;
 2. Victims of a sexual assault;
 3. Any person reporting illegal drug activity;



Carrboro Police Department

Subject: Chapter 25: MEDIA POLICY		Number: IX. Subsections
Issued: 07-02-18	Revised: N/A	Page 4 of 8

4. Any person who attempted suicide;
 5. Any person receiving emergency medical treatment;
 6. Witnesses, except on Traffic Collision Reports;
 7. Suspects;
 8. Any person, if the release of the information is reasonably likely to pose a threat to the mental health, physical health, or personal safety of the complaining witness or materially compromises a continuing or future criminal investigation or criminal intelligence operation. Such information may be released as soon as the circumstances that justify withholding it cease to exist (per North Carolina General Statute 132-1.4); or
 9. Victims or reporting persons who request that their name be withheld from the public.
- B. Information that might hamper an investigation or delay the apprehension of suspect(s). This includes, but is not limited to:
1. Officers' field notes or narratives;
 2. Investigative reports; and
 3. Driving While Impaired supplemental information.
- C. Personnel Information, except as provided by NCGS 160A-168, including but not limited to:
1. Information relating to personnel records of employees;
 2. Information concerning the investigation of an employee's performance or any actions taken as a result of such investigation; and
 3. Photographs or other information relating to undercover personnel.



Carrboro Police Department

Subject: Chapter 25: MEDIA POLICY		Number: IX. Subsections
Issued: 07-02-18	Revised: N/A	Page 5 of 8

- D. Information that would disclose the nature of one reporter's original work to another reporter, news agency, or person.

VI. EXEMPTIONS

- A. Emergency Situation
1. If there is an **immediate** threat to a person, group, or institution, potential victim(s) will be notified as soon as possible.
 2. If there is a **potential** threat to a person, group, or institution, the Chief of Police will determine what information may be released, to whom, and in what manner.
- B. Employees may share restricted information only with those necessary as part of an investigation, case management, or delivery of services.

VII. SPECIFIC INFORMATION RELEASE

- A. Agencies with legal rights to information will be given information which is part of an investigation or case. These agencies are the Department of Social Services, Juvenile Services, Orange County District Attorney, Probation and Parole, the North Carolina Victim's Compensation Program and other law enforcement agencies.
- B. Driver histories, vehicle registration, and criminal histories maintained on the Division of Criminal Information computer system are available to Carrboro Police Department law enforcement personnel, the Orange County District Attorney, and defense attorneys for pending cases. Defense attorneys must present a court order or authorization from the Orange County District Attorney.
- C. Incidents involving residents of Chapel Hill Public Housing who reside in Carrboro (name is on a lease) will be released to the Town of Chapel Hill Department of Housing.



Carrboro Police Department

Subject: Chapter 25: MEDIA POLICY		Number: IX. Subsections
Issued: 07-02-18	Revised: N/A	Page 6 of 8

- D. Schools, child care centers, medical facilities, and other public or private organizations that are responsible for the care of people will be notified if an employee, volunteer, or participant is arrested for a crime that could impact the people in the organization’s care. This notification will occur only if the arrestee’s employment or affiliation information is known by the Carrboro Police Department.

- E. The parent or guardian will be notified when a minor is charged with anything other than a moving violation for which three or fewer points are assessed under NC GS 20-16(c) per NC GS 15A-505(a).

- F. When a petition is filed alleging that a juvenile is abused, neglected, dependent, undisciplined, or delinquent, relevant information will be provided upon request to local mental health facilities, local health departments, the Department of Social Services, local law enforcement agencies, local school administrative units, the district attorney’s office, Juvenile Services, and the office of Guardian ad Litem Services per NC GS 7B-3100.

- G. A juvenile or juvenile’s parent, guardian, or custodian may examine and copy law enforcement records concerning the juvenile per NC GS 7B-3001.

- H. Information Released to Schools
 - 1. When a student, in grades kindergarten through twelfth (no matter what age), is charged with a felony, the principal of his school will be notified per NC GS 15A-505(c).

 - 2. An appropriate local school official will be notified when a student is arrested if the crime occurs during school hours or at a school-sponsored event.

- I. University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
 - 1. When a UNC-CH student, due to being seriously injured or traumatized, is unable to make an informed decision, the Supervisor in charge of the incident, or his designee, will contact the Dean of Students in order to access resources for the student. **If the student is the victim of a sexual assault, that information will not be shared.**



Carrboro Police Department

Subject: Chapter 25: MEDIA POLICY		Number: IX. Subsections
Issued: 07-02-18	Revised: N/A	Page 7 of 8

2. Illegal activity involving UNC-CH students will be available to the appropriate University official. Only public information (Section I of this policy) will be given.

VIII. ACCESS TO CRIME SCENES AND OTHER INCIDENT AND EVENT LOCATIONS

- A. The crime or incident scene area will be clearly marked to prevent all unauthorized persons from entering the area.
- B. The incident command officer will appoint a public information officer to be responsible for all information released to the public. Appropriate information will be released in a timely manner.
- C. Representatives of the media have the same access permitted to other members of the general public and will not be prohibited from entering into or photographing from any areas accessible to the general public. The limits of access granted to members of the general public will be determined by the requirements of the incident. When utilizing such access, media representatives are responsible for complying with all applicable laws, ordinances and regulations.
- D. As needed, media representatives will be informed about accessible areas, about areas that have been secured and restricted such as crime scenes, and about any particular restrictions that might apply.

E. Media Assembly Area

In some instances, to ensure that safety and necessary order are maintained, a media assembly area will be created to provide a designated location for media representatives and for the dissemination of information.

F. Barricaded Areas

In some instances, such as parades, rallies, and demonstrations, media representatives with appropriate press credentials may be admitted past police barricades and roadblocks that have been established to restrict



Carrboro Police Department



Subject: Chapter 25: MEDIA POLICY		Number: IX. Subsections
Issued: 07-02-18	Revised: N/A	Page 8 of 8

entry by the general public. Such access will not be afforded to crime scenes or areas determined to pose unreasonable risk to health or public safety.

IX. NEWS MEDIA INTERACTIONS

A. News Media Identification

Members of the Carrboro Police Department may require adequate identification of media representatives prior to permitting them access to controlled or secured areas. The Carrboro Police Department does not issue credentials to media representatives and relies on media organizations to provide appropriate identification to their representatives.

B. News Media Conduct

If a member of the Department concludes that a representative of the media has not acted professionally, this issue should be brought to the attention of the PIO. The Chief of Police and the PIO will determine whether follow-up contact with the media organization is appropriate and whether any additional actions should be taken.