

## PROCEDURE

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**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  
**Revision #/Date:** 06/09/15, 03/12/18, 7/8/21  
**Effective Date:** 01/01/09

**Applicable to:** All Brevard Family Partnership, Brevard C.A.R.E.S., Family Allies, and The National Center for Innovation and Excellence Staff, Board Members and Contract Providers

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

### PROCEDURE:

**References:** BFP Policies/Procedures: GOV 018, OP 1089; Brevard C.A.R.E.S. Policies/Procedures: GOV BC 1011

Florida Statutes: 39.202 (2) (o)

**Definitions:** The purpose of the crisis communications policy is to inform staff 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 general public seeking comment regarding an incident or crisis.

1. Procedure for handling inquiries. This procedure applies to all internal and external staff of Brevard Family Partnership, Brevard C.A.R.E.S., Family Allies, and The National Center for Innovation and Excellence and its Board of Directors members, partners and Providers. BFP will abide by all terms and conditions of its DCF contract in the reporting of critical incidents and alerting DCF to media inquiries.
  - A. Please refer all calls, emails or visits to the CEO of the Agency. If the CEO is not available, refer to the Alternate Designee. The Alternate Designee will make every effort to contact the appropriate personnel.

Primary Contact: James Carlson  
Senior Director of Public Affairs  
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(\*Use this contact number first)

- B. If the aforementioned 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 response.
  - d. Advise the inquirer that the appropriate person will return their call or respond to their email in a timely manner.
  - e. Contact Brevard Family Partnership, Brevard C.A.R.E.S., Family Allies or the National Center for Innovation and Excellence. If the Director is not available, contact the alternate designee.
- 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, you are not able to reach the primary or alternate contacts, please contact the Human Resources Director (HRD) who will attempt to locate the designated BFP media response designees. In the event of urgency, the HRD will return the inquirers 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 Senior Director of Public Affairs who will evaluate the situation and determine the appropriate course of action.
- II. Procedures for Crisis Communication. These procedures will be followed by the executive team of Brevard Family Partnership, Brevard C.A.R.E.S., Family Allies, or the National Center for Innovation and Excellence 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 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 general 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 they are 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 from effective communication and any lessons learned. Document these items and refer to them for future communication situations.

BY DIRECTION OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER:

PHILIP J. SCARPELLI  
Chief Executive Officer  
Brevard Family Partnership / Family of Agencies

APPROVAL DATE: 7/12/21