
 <p style="text-align: center;">State of Connecticut Department of Correction</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTIVE</p>	Directive Number 1.5	Effective Date 12/16/2022	Page 1 of 6
	Supersedes Public Information and News Media Relations, Dated 5/10/2017		
Approved by:  Commissioner Angel Quiros	Title Public Information and News Media Relations		

1. Policy. The Department of Correction shall maintain ongoing and proactive communications with the public, news media, legislature and other interested groups and individuals. The Department shall produce, maintain and disseminate information to interested parties concerning its operations, programs and services. Limitations of access shall be to minimize the risk to security and order, protect the safety of individuals, ensure privacy objectives protected by law, observe the rights of victims and maintain legitimate penological interests.
2. Authority and Reference.
 - a. Connecticut General Statutes, Sections 1-210, 18-81 and 54-761.
 - b. Administrative Directives 1.1, Mission Statement and Vision; 4.5, Victim Services; 6.7, Searches Conducted in Correctional Facilities; and 10.6, Inmate Visits.
3. Definitions and Acronyms. For the purposes stated herein, the following definitions and acronyms apply:
 - a. CAPI. Computer-Assisted Positive Identification.
 - b. Media. Any agency that gathers and reports news for a general circulation newspaper, news magazine, national or international news service, or radio/television station holding a Federal Communications Commission license or any other such agency or organization as the Director of External Affairs deems appropriate.
4. Office of Public Information. The Office of Public Information shall support the Department's mission by ensuring that information concerning Department activities is presented in a timely, proactive and professional manner. The Office of Public Information shall coordinate all news media and public relations to include: news media inquiries, requests for reports and information on programs and services; requests for tours by news media and government officials; gathering and reporting Department data and information; and any other public interest related topics. The Office of Public Information shall have two (2) categories of responsibility, external and internal communications.
 - a. External Communications. External communications shall include: news media inquiries; public relations; coordination of news media and public tours; interviews; and on-site critical incident communication. In addition, the Office of Public Information shall maintain direct contact with Unit Public Information Officers.
 - b. Internal Communications. Internal Communications shall include: instructing staff about the news media; designing, writing, editing, composing and producing printed materials; and designing, composing and updating information presented on the Department's website.
5. News Media Visitations. All requests by news media representatives to visit correctional facilities to report on programs or activities shall be referred to and approved by the Office of Public Information.
6. Video recording/Photographs. Based on concerns for the safety, security and order of the facility, the taking of video/photographs by photographers/videographers inside a correctional facility shall require advance approval from the Unit Administrator and the Office of Public Information. The taking of video/photographs by

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photographers/videographers which identify an inmate shall require the Departments and inmate's prior approval. If an inmate has a registered victim(s), the Office of Victim Services shall contact the victim(s) to determine if they object to the inmate being recorded/photographed. If a victim objects, the inmate shall not be allowed to be recorded/photographed. If approval is granted, prior to capturing any video recording or photographs, photographers/videographers shall consult with the Director of External Affairs and/or designee regarding any potential security issues and/or restrictions. The photographers/videographers shall refrain from recording/photographing any areas/individuals which have been identified as restricted by the Director of External Affairs, and/or designee. Clear guidelines as to what can or cannot be photographed/videotaped shall be discussed with the videographer/photographer prior to entering a facility on a case by case basis

- a. Every reasonable effort shall be taken by the videographer/photographer to adhere to the photography/videography restrictions outlined by the Director of External Affairs and/or designee.
- b. Failure to abide by these restrictions may result in the immediate suspension of recording/photographing privileges, the confiscation of the photographed/recorded images, and/or cancelation of any written memorandum of agreement/understanding.
- c. Department-issued photo images/CAPI photographs of currently incarcerated inmates may be provided in lieu of the taking of an inmate photograph.

7. Personal Interview of Incarcerated Inmate. A personal interview may be authorized between an incarcerated inmate and a representative of a news organization subject to the following conditions:

- a. Consent by Inmate. It shall be the responsibility of the media representative to initiate the request for the interview through mailed written communication with the inmate. The media representative shall forward a completed CN 1501, Inmate Consent to Interview, available on the Department's website, for the inmate to sign and submit to the Unit Administrator. An inmate may consent or decline a request for an interview. The signed form shall then be forwarded to the Office of Public Information. The Office of Public Information shall then evaluate the request. If the interview is approved, the Office of Public Information shall then coordinate the scheduling of the interview with the appropriate facility.
- b. Background Checks. Members of the news media seeking to enter a correctional facility shall be required to undergo the same criminal record background checks as a member of the public and shall submit their full name and date of birth so that the check may be performed.
- c. Restrictions. Requests for in-person interviews with inmates shall be considered on a case-by-case basis and weighed against the interests of safety and security. An in-person interview by news media shall not be permitted for any inmate whose visiting privileges have been suspended. Such an inmate shall not be denied access to the news media, but may communicate only through written correspondence or outgoing collect telephone calls where permitted by the Unit Administrator. In-person interviews between an inmate and a representative of the news media may only be conducted with an inmate who would otherwise be permitted to visit with members of the general public and shall be conducted under the security level requirements for that inmate. Based on concerns for the safety, security and order of the facility and the potential for re-victimization, on-camera interviews with a specific inmate shall not be permitted.
- d. Victim Notification. When an interview between the news media and an inmate is approved, the Office of Public Information shall notify the Victim Services

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Unit so that it may provide notification to registered victims in accordance with Administrative Directive 4.5, Victim Services.

- e. Safety and Security. Interview content that places in jeopardy the safety of the community, the staff, the inmate, other inmates, or the correctional facility may be reason for termination of the interview.
 - f. Department Presence at Interview. A representative from the Office of Public Information or designated employee of the Department shall be present during an interview whenever possible.
 - g. Interview Termination. A scheduled interview may be cancelled or an interview in progress may be terminated based on the needs of the facility or if the provisions of this Directive are not followed.
 - h. Inmate Compensation for Interview. Inmates shall not receive monetary compensation, or anything of value, in exchange for, or as result of, participating in an interview. Media Representatives who violate this stipulation may be restricted from further access to inmate interviews.
 - i. Inmate News Conference Prohibited. An inmate shall not be allowed to participate in a news conference, unless granted permission by the Director of External Affairs or designee.
8. Correctional Facility Access. Each request for news media access to a correctional facility shall be directed to the Office of Public Information. Such request shall be in writing and shall include:
- a. The name of the publication or electronic broadcast.
 - b. The nature and subject matter of the proposed news item.
 - c. The method of coverage and the type of equipment requested for the proposed coverage.
 - d. The names of all those requesting access to the facility shall be provided to the Office of Public Information at least 24 hours prior to the anticipated visit.
9. Evaluation of Media Access Request. Each request for news media access to a correctional facility shall be evaluated by the Office of Public Information. A decision on whether to approve or deny the request shall be based on the following criteria:
- a. Safety and Security. The potential impact on the safety, security and order of the facility as well as the potential effect on the rehabilitation of the inmate.
 - b. News Interest. The request for access shall represent a legitimate news interest, and shall not be solely for entertainment purposes.
 - c. Limitations. The Department of Correction reserves the right to place limitations on the number of news media personnel, time, equipment, duration, type, and circumstances of the access request. An individual may be denied access if the individual's presence poses a security risk.
 - d. Impact. The request for access shall be based upon a legitimate penological interest.
 - e. Audio/Video Recordings and Photographs. Requests to create audio or video recordings or take photographs inside a correctional facility shall be considered on a case-by-case basis taking into consideration re-victimization and the safety, security and order of the facility. Such requests shall require advance approval from the Unit Administrator and the Office of Public Information.
 - f. Interstate Compact Inmates. The Office of Public Information shall review all requests for interviews and/or information regarding inmates incarcerated in Connecticut from other jurisdictions. The Office of Public Information shall contact the sending jurisdiction, prior to the interview, advising of the media request. The sending jurisdiction shall have the ability to prohibit an interview in accordance with its media guidelines.
10. Unit Public Information Officer. The Unit Administrator or designee shall function as the Unit's Public Information Officer subject to the limitations of this Directive. Each Unit Public Information Officer shall direct inquiries from media representatives to the Office of Public Information. A secondary Unit Public Information Officer shall be designated in the event of the primary Unit Public Information Officer's absence. All

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secondary Unit Public Information Officers shall be trained on the Critical Incident Communication Plan. The Unit Public Information Officer shall:

- a. Complete and submit a Unit Public Information Officer Monthly Report, CN 1502, Unit Public Information Officer Monthly Report, to the Office of Public Information.
- b. Coordinate, document and report all facility originated activities with the general public including tours and speaking engagements. Submit all news media-generated print pertaining to the assigned facility to the Office of Public Information.
- c. Provide timely contributions to the Department's newsletter regarding facility activities and staff related initiatives at the facility.
- d. In an emergency or significant news media generated event, initiate the facility news media staging area as directed in the Critical Incident Communication Plan and assist the on-site Department Public Information Officer.

11. Critical Incident Communications. As per the Department's Critical Incident Communication Plan, in a crisis situation all communication between Department staff and news media representatives shall be accomplished through the Office of Public Information. News media access to correctional facilities may be restricted during emergency conditions or as circumstances require. The Department's Public Information Officer(s), under the direction of the Director of External Affairs, shall report to the affected facility and conduct periodic updates with news media representatives in a timely manner to balance the public's right to know, with the personal safety of all individuals, the restoration of order and security, and the protection of property. The Unit Public Information Officers shall assist the responding Public Information Officer or may act as the primary Public Information Officer, if designated.

12. Inmate Information.

- a. Routine Release of Information. Routine information about currently incarcerated inmates may be provided to the news media and the public by the Office of Public Information, Unit Administrator, or designee, as follows:
 - i. Inmate's name;
 - ii. Inmate's age;
 - iii. Offense(s) for which charged or convicted (subject to non-disclosure laws);
 - iv. Date of admission and length of sentence, if any;
 - v. Parole eligibility date or projected release date;
 - vi. Inmate home town of record;
 - vii. Facility or supervision location, excluding specific housing unit;
 - viii. Photo image/CAPI photograph;
 - ix. Bond amount; and
 - x. Disciplinary history.
- b. Excluded Information. Information excluded from routine release shall include:
 - i. Medical/mental health information, which shall be kept confidential;
 - ii. inmates held under Youthful Offender status unless such release is to individuals and agencies (including employees of such agencies) providing services directly to the youth pursuant to Section 54-761 of the Connecticut General Statutes; or,
 - iii. Inmates held solely on a detainer lodged by the United States Department of Homeland Security (Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement), unless authorization is granted from the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement Public Information Office.
 1. Requests for information about previously incarcerated inmates shall be provided in writing to the Office of Public Information. The Administrator of the Freedom of Information Office shall respond to such requests by reviewing the documents requested and redacting all

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information exempt under the Freedom of Information Act or other state statutes.

13. Department of Correction Websites.

- a. Internet Site. The Department shall maintain an Internet website containing timely information that the public may utilize in the interest of governmental transparency. The website shall include among other information:
- i. The Department's mission statement;
 - ii. The Department's administrative directives with the exception of Chapter 7;
 - iii. Information regarding services available to victims;
 - iv. An inmate information search function; and,
 - v. All current inmates shall be listed on the website with the exception of:
 1. Inmates on Youthful Offender status;
 2. Inmates incarcerated within the Department of Correction whose public information display may pose a safety and security concern;
 - a. In order for an exclusion to be approved, a written request detailing the safety and security concerns related to the inmate shall be submitted to the Commissioner of Correction and/or designee; who shall decide whether to approve the request
 - i. When an exclusion is authorized, the inmate's public information screen shall reflect such exclusions. Individuals requesting information related to the inmate shall be referred to the Public Information Office.
 3. Inmates being held under the Interstate Compact if it is determined that an exclusion is warranted based on safety and security concerns.
 - a. In order for an exclusion to be approved, the sending state must submit a written request outlining the safety and security concerns related to the inmate to the Interstate Administrator.
 - b. Based on the sending state's request for exclusion, the Interstate Administrator shall make a recommendation to the Commissioner of Correction or designee, who shall decide whether to approve the request.
 - i. When an exclusion is authorized, the inmate's public information screen shall reflect such exclusion. Individuals requesting information related to the inmate shall be referred to the Interstate Compact Office.
- b. Intranet Site. The Department shall also maintain an Intranet website to serve the informational needs of Department staff.
- c. Social Media. The Department may also maintain internet based social media accounts.

14. Tours. Individuals and groups shall complete CN 1504, Facility Tour Data Sheet upon requesting a facility tour, and shall have prior authorization from the Unit Administrator before touring a correctional facility.

- a. Identification and Inspection. Prior to entering a facility, all tour group members shall provide proper identification, which shall include a photo identification card or driver's license. Any article in a tour group member's possession shall be examined prior to admission and non-essential items, including overcoats, pagers and cell phones shall be required to be left outside the secured area of the facility.
- b. Security Checks. All tour groups shall be notified in advance of the requirement to successfully pass through the metal detector in accordance with Administrative Directives 6.7, Searches Conducted in Correctional Facilities and 10.6, Inmate Visits. Failure to successfully pass through the metal detector may result in denial of access to the correctional facility.
- c. Age Limits. An individual age 16 or older may tour a correctional facility when properly authorized and supervised. Individuals aged 16 and 17 must have written consent from a parent or legal guardian AND authorization from the Unit Administrator of the facility as well as from the appropriate District Administrator prior to the commencement of the requested tour. Parental/Legal

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guardian consent and Unit and District Administrator authorization must be documented on the Parental Consent Form (CN 1503).

- d. Tour Conduct. All tour groups shall be accompanied by an adult representative at all times. Such representative shall be responsible for ensuring that members of the tour are fully apprised of the security and conduct requirements of the correctional facility prior to such tour in accordance with the provisions, forms and attachments of Administrative Directive 10.6, Inmate Visits. In addition, the facility shall assign an employee as a tour liaison who shall be present to coordinate access throughout the facility and to facilitate the tour.
- e. Tour Termination. Any tour may be denied, cancelled or terminated for security reasons or for failure to follow conditions established in this Directive.

15. Annual Facility Tours. On an annual basis, each correctional facility shall provide an opportunity to tour for local and state governmental officials, as well as law enforcement, fire safety and public safety committee members, with the opportunity to gain information about a correctional institution/center within their community or one which is of interest to them. The facility shall provide a briefing on the operations and programmatic opportunities of the institution/center as well as a statistical overview, followed by a tour of a representative portion of the facility. Notification of the tour dates shall be provided to state officials as well as to the chief executive of each host community at the beginning of each year. The Unit Administrators of each facility will then send invitations one (1) month prior to their facility's scheduled tour.

- a. Admission to a correctional institution/center by a governmental official, on a date other than that of the annual open house, shall be submitted to the Unit Administrator for consideration on a case-by-case basis.

16. Public Speaking, Legislative and Public Hearings. No Department employee, contract vendor or Department volunteer shall be allowed to speak on behalf of the Department of Correction in a public forum or during any legislative or public hearing without the authorization of the employee's Unit Administrator and the Director of External Affairs.

17. Freedom of Information. Copies of requests for records under the Freedom of Information Act shall be forwarded to the Freedom of Information Liaison, which shall coordinate tracking and ensure timely and appropriate responses.

18. Forms and Attachments. The following forms are applicable to this Administrative Directive and shall be utilized for the intended function:

- a. CN 1501, Inmate Consent to Interview;
- b. CN 1502, Unit Public Information Officer Monthly Report;
- c. CN 1503, Parental Consent Form; and,
- d. CN 1504, Facility Tour Data Sheet.

19. Exceptions. Any exceptions to the procedures in this Administrative Directive shall require prior written approval from the Commissioner of Correction.