

Chapter: Conditions of Employment
Title: External Communications

Effective Date: 12/1/11
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New

ACA Standard(s): 4-JCF-5F-08, 6F-07, 6G-04, 6G-05

(a) **Policy.**

Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) employees shall conduct external communications in a professional manner that is consistent with applicable state law and the provisions of this policy.

(b) **Resources.**

The following are additional resources relating to communications and interactions with external entities.

- (1) GAP.05.17 encourages appropriate public and media access to institutions, programs, and information to increase public understanding about juvenile crime and rehabilitation.
- (2) GAP.81.53 establishes procedures for the performance of formal research projects related to juvenile delinquency and the sharing of research information with other agencies.
- (3) PRS.31.07 establishes procedures for releasing information relating to current TJJD employees and former TJJD, Texas Youth Commission, and Texas Juvenile Probation Commission employees.
- (4) INS.01.55 contains additional guidelines for facility employees when contacting other agencies for assistance or responding to a request for information or assistance from another agency.
- (5) The TJJD Intranet contains guidelines regarding the use of TJJD letterhead templates.

(c) **Definitions.**

For definitions of certain terms used in this policy, see the PRS Glossary.

Guest Speaker – An individual who is presenting a formal speech to a group in a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform and/or influence the listeners.

(d) **Procedures.**

(1) **Requests from a Government Official.**

Requests for information from any individual identified as a government official or staff member/aide for a government official must be referred or forwarded immediately to the Central Office director responsible for intergovernmental relations for response.

(2) **Requests from a Media Representative.**

Requests for information from any individual identified as a news media representative must be referred or forwarded immediately to the Central Office director responsible for public affairs and/or communications for response.

(3) **Publication or Broadcast Relating to TJJD.**

The community relations coordinator must immediately notify the Central Office director responsible for public affairs and/or communications upon becoming aware of a publication, news broadcast, or article regarding his/her assigned facility.

(4) **Communication with Professional Organizations and Other Agencies.**

- (A) TJJJ employees are encouraged to:
 - (i) communicate with special interest groups and other professional organizations;
 - (ii) collaborate and consult with universities, colleges, and other institutions of higher learning in programs of mutual concern;
 - (iii) pursue career development through attendance at approved work-related professional meetings and seminars; and
 - (iv) maintain a cooperative working relationship with public and private service agencies.
- (B) TJJJ administrators and other approved staff may represent TJJJ to collaborate and consult with other criminal justice systems, law enforcement agencies, and human service agencies in gathering, exchanging, and standardizing information.
- (C) Administrators may collaborate and consult with other agencies and community interest groups to provide opportunities for input into the formulation and evaluation of agency policies and procedures.

(5) **Speaking Engagements.**

An employee must not agree to be the guest speaker at a function in which the employee would be speaking on behalf of TJJJ without obtaining prior written approval from his/her CLA or a higher level of authority if the CLA is unavailable. When an employee is a guest speaker representing TJJJ, he/she is responsible for ensuring that:

- (A) the presentation accurately reflects agency policy and procedures; and
 - (B) any personal opinions expressed during the presentation are appropriate and clearly identified as being personal opinions.
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