



Missouri Division of Workforce Development
DWD Issuance 04-2013 Change 1

Issued: December 2, 2013
Effective: December 2, 2013

Subject: Media and Legislative Contact Policy

1. Purpose: This Issuance is written to update Media and Legislative Contact Policy.
2. Background: The Division of Workforce Development (DWD) previously established policy on media inquiries and the release of public information in 2008. Since that policy issuance, DWD's procedures and lines of accountability and available information outlets have evolved considerably. Use of social media has dramatically increased, for example, and the speed with which incorrect information can become widespread has accelerated. Policy revisions are necessary to accommodate these changes.

DWD receives many requests for information, comments, quotes, interviews, panel participation, testimonials. It is essential for effective public outreach regarding programs and services, for DWD staff to communicate with customers, organizations, the news media, state and local elected officials.

In order to be straightforward and responsive to the public, DWD also must ensure that it communicates information in a manner that ensures accuracy and consistency, while also providing coordination with interrelated activities and forward planning by DWD, the Department of Economic Development (DED), and the Executive Branch of Missouri State Government. Having a central point of contact benefits all stakeholders and ensures the authenticity and consistency of information that is distributed regarding the state workforce system.

It is essential to these goals of accuracy, consistency, and synchronization that the staffs of partner agencies, including those sharing facilities and program operations with DWD, avoid compromising these goals by representing themselves as spokespersons, or their opinions as policies of the government of the state of Missouri.

3. Substance: People and entities requesting information, and appropriate responses, are broadly described as follows:

- I. **Legitimate local, state, and national media, including newspapers, radio, television, magazines, online news sites, and news-oriented web logs (blogs)**—Requests from news-media outlets should be responded to promptly, with an appreciation of deadlines and the frequency of publication or broadcasting. Media outlets can be commercial or non-profit enterprises. They may be generally described as non-partisan and non-affiliated news sources produced on a regular basis, and for which editorial (non-advertising) content constitutes at least 25 percent of available

airtime or space. A legitimate media entity publishes or produces on a regularly recurring basis; has a known office of publication where the business, publication, or program originates; and maintains an active phone number for the transaction of business during normal business hours.

- A. DWD staff members should forward all media inquiries to the DWD Communications Coordinator, or if the Communications Coordinator is unavailable, to the DWD Communications staff (DWDCommunications@ded.mo.gov). It is important to obtain and pass along details regarding the contact for further followup by DWD or by DED. These details include the person's full name, media outlet/publication, nature of the inquiry, and a means of response, preferably by both email and phone.
- B. The DWD Communications Coordinator [or Communications staff] will refer media inquiries to the DED's Director of Communications in consultation with the DWD Director's Office and program managers, if appropriate.
- C. The DED Director of Communications will be at the forefront of all media inquiries.
- D. With prior authorization from DWD Communications section, DED's Director of Communications, or DWD Director's office, DWD staff members may answer routine media inquiries when the question is about programs and services offered by DWD or topics where descriptive printed information (DWD agency literature) or online information (jobs.mo.gov) is already readily available. This includes such things as event schedules (date, time, and location for job fairs and workshops). DWD staff members should log *all* media inquiries—whether in person, by phone, email, or any other means—and advise the DWD Communications Coordinator of the occurrence; and describe what information was given out as described above.
- E. Staff should not answer questions regarding eligibility or other programmatic information if they are not directly involved with the program being discussed. These questions should be referred to the appropriate program person. As examples, questions about Trade Act Adjustment eligibility should be referred to the Trade Program Staff; questions about Employment Transition Team Services (layoff events) should be referred to the DWD Regional Workforce Coordinators.
- F. DWD staff members should consult the DWD Communications Coordinator prior to initiating any contact with the media.
 - 1. Informational postings, including downloadable flyers, on websites or social media sites whose contents are not managed by DWD, should be cleared with the DWD Communications Coordinator prior to release.
 - 2. Prior approval should be obtained from the DWD Communications Coordinator or Communications Section for brochures, pamphlets, or general handouts about DWD products and services.

3. Use of the Department or Division logos (*viz.*),



specifically the unique **jobs.mo.gov** icon, must be approved by the Communications Section prior to use to ensure appropriateness and graphic standards for the specific medium.

4. Any communication or correspondence issued by DWD staff on Division or Department official letterhead should receive prior approval from the Division Director's office.
5. DWD staff members should obtain approval from the Communications Section, in consultation with the Division Director's Office, regarding content management or updates on any website or social-media outlet relating to activities of a specific Missouri Career Center, or the Missouri state workforce system.

II. Official requests—DWD staff members should immediately refer requests for information from municipal, county, state, or federal officials, administrators, or agencies to the DWD Communications Coordinator for relay to the DWD Director's office.

- A. As with media inquiries, DWD staff can immediately answer official requests for routine information already publicly available, logging and forwarding the contact afterward to the DWD Communications Coordinator.
- B. DWD staff members should advise their supervisor, in consultation with the DWD Director's Office, prior to appearing in an official capacity at any public or private interview, meeting, hearing, or conference of any municipal, county, state, or federal governing body.

III. Confidentiality—DWD staff members shall adhere to DWD's Confidentiality and Information Security Plan and not provide information regarding customers or clients of DWD programs or services to any person or agency in any manner that would be inconsistent with, or constitute a breach of, that plan.

IV. Other interested parties—All reasonable inquiries and requests for information by any customer of DWD or citizen of Missouri should be addressed in a timely fashion. If a redirection to DWD publications and online resources is insufficient to satisfy the request, redirect the inquiry to the DWD Communications Section. The redirection approach can be applied to all inquiries.

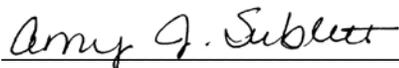
Requests may come from other information outlets that are primarily affiliated with an association, organization, cause, party, or other activity. In these cases, where news dissemination is not the primary activity or organizing purpose for that entity, or in the case of news outlets created and maintained by hobbyists or amateurs, the request should be treated as a general public inquiry.

V. **Partner Staff**—Staff and managers of partner agencies or organizations delivering products or services in concert with DWD should coordinate information requests through the supervisory process within their own organizations in a manner consistent with DWD’s procedures or forward inquiries to DWD’s attention. In public appearances and interviews, representatives from partner organizations should identify their employer of record, and reserve comments to those solely on behalf of their respective employer.

VI. **Quotes and Attributions**—Quotes from government officials must not be utilized unless official approval is obtained from DED or the DWD Communications staff. Quotes from previously released DED or DWD documents must not be reused in a new release or different context unless official approval is obtained from DED or the DWD Communications staff.

4. Action: The effective date of this Issuance is December 2, 2013.
5. Contact: Direct questions or comments regarding this Issuance to Keener Tippin, DWD Communications Coordinator, by telephone at (573) 751-7797 or by email at keener.tippin@ded.mo.gov, or alternatively, to any of the Communication Section staff at DWDCommunications@ded.mo.gov.
6. References: DWD Issuance 01-2008, Change 2, dated September 15, 2011: “Workforce Development System Confidentiality and Information Security Plan, Breach of Toolbox Data Confidentiality Update,” Attachment 1, “Workforce Development System Confidentiality and Information Security Plan,” and any subsequent revisions.
- Revised Statutes of the State of Missouri, Chapter 610, Governmental Bodies and Records, a.k.a. “The Missouri Sunshine Law,” and any subsequent revisions.
- Department of Economic Development Sunshine Law Policy Statement, as issued December 10, 2008 and revised May 15, 2012, and any subsequent revisions.
7. Rescissions: This Issuance rescinds and supersedes the DWD Issuance 04-2013 Media and Legislative Contact Policy dated August 6, 2013.
8. Attachments: none

The Missouri Division of Workforce Development is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Missouri TTY Users can call (800) 735-2966 or dial 7-1-1.



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