

COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION - H

MISCELLANEOUS

SUBJECT: Media Relations Policy

POLICY NUMBER: H-22

APPROVAL DATE: April 13, 2011

AMENDED DATE: September 16, 2026

PURPOSE: The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear and consistent process for responding to media inquiries on behalf of the Municipality of the District of Guysborough.

This policy is intended to ensure that information provided to the media is accurate, timely, and consistent with the official position of the Municipality.

POLICY STATEMENT: The Municipality is committed to open, respectful, and accurate communication with the media.

To ensure a consistent municipal message, only authorized spokespersons may speak on behalf of the Municipality on official matters.

SCOPE: This policy applies to all members of Council, employees, volunteers, contractors, and any other individual acting on behalf of the Municipality.

This policy applies to media inquiries related to municipal business, services, operations, decisions, policies, programs, facilities, events, or other matters involving the Municipality.

DEFINITIONS: Media means any person, organization, publication, broadcaster, digital platform, or other outlet requesting information, comment, interview, statement, or response for the purpose of public reporting or publication.

Media inquiry means any request from the media for information, comment, an interview, a statement, or confirmation related to municipal business.

Authorized spokesperson means an individual authorized to speak

on behalf of the Municipality in accordance with this policy.

AUTHORIZED SPOKESPERSON

The Municipality of the District of Guysborough's official spokespersons are:

- the Warden;
- the Chief Administrative Officer;
- the Manager of Special Initiatives & Communications

The Warden and Chief Administrative Officer are authorized to speak on behalf of the Municipality regarding official municipal matters.

The Chief Administrative Officer shall authorize the Manager of Special Initiatives & Communications to respond to media inquiries when appropriate.

The Chief Administrative Officer may authorize another employee to respond to a media inquiry where the matter is operational, technical, program-specific, or otherwise appropriate.

The Warden may authorize another member of Council to speak on behalf of the Municipality where appropriate.

Where both the Warden and Chief Administrative Officer are unavailable, media inquiries may be directed to the Deputy Warden or Deputy Chief Administrative Officer, as applicable.

COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS

When speaking in an individual capacity, members of Council shall not represent personal comments as the official position of the Municipality unless authorized to do so.

The official position of the Municipality shall be communicated by the Warden or Chief Administrative Officer.

EMPLOYEE COMMUNICATIONS

Employees shall not speak to the media on behalf of the Municipality unless authorized to do so.

Employees who receive a media inquiry shall:

- Refer the inquiry to the Chief Administrative Officer, Warden, or designated spokesperson;
- Avoid providing personal opinions or unofficial comments on municipal matters;
- Notify the Chief Administrative Officer as soon as possible; and
- Provide any relevant details, including the reporter's name, media outlet, contact information, topic, deadline, and nature of the request.

Employees may provide routine factual information to the public as part of their regular duties. However, requests from the media for comment, interpretation, opinion, or official response

must be referred in accordance with this policy.

RESPONDING TO MEDIA INQUIRIES

The Municipality will make reasonable efforts to respond to media inquiries in a timely manner.

Responses shall be accurate, professional, and consistent with the Municipality's official position.

Employees may be asked to provide background information to assist the authorized spokesperson in preparing a response. Such requests should be treated as a priority where a media deadline is involved.

CONFIDENTIALITY & PRIVACY

No person shall disclose confidential, personal, privileged, or closed-session information to the media.

All media responses must comply with applicable legislation, municipal policies, and confidentiality obligations.

SOCIAL MEDIA & INFORMAL COMMENTS

Employees, Council members, volunteers, and others acting on behalf of the Municipality should be mindful that comments made in public, online, or through social media may be viewed as representing the Municipality.

Only authorized spokespersons may make official statements on behalf of the Municipality.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Administrative Officer is responsible for the administration of this policy.

Department Directors and Managers are responsible for ensuring employees are aware of and follow this policy.

Council members and employees are responsible for referring media inquiries in accordance with this policy.