Public Information and Relations

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families
Policy: 300.0000
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The Department encourages open lines of communication with outside individuals and groups to enhance the public's understanding of the needs and strengths of the children, youth and families that we serve and an appreciation of the Department's mission and operations. All inquiries and responses and other public relations activities are coordinated through the Chief of Staff to ensure the confidentiality of children, youth and families and to ensure the consistency and accuracy of information released.

Related Procedure
Public Information and Relations

Related Policies
Tours of the RI Training School
Media Interviewing or Photographing Children and Youth in DCYF Care
Releasing DCYF Mailing Lists and Disseminating Information for Other Agencies

Public Information and Relations

Procedure from Policy 300.0000: Public Information and Relations

A. Inquiries from the Media or Legislators

1. During standard work hours (Monday - Friday, 8:30 A.M. to 4:00 P.M), all inquiries are referred to the Chief of Staff in the Office of the Director. The Director or Chief of Staff may directly respond to the inquiry or may request other appropriate Department staff to respond.
2. During non-standard work hours, all inquiries should be forwarded to the DCYF Child Protective Services (CPS) Hotline (1-800-RI CHILD).
   a. Hotline staff attempts to contact the Chief of Staff at home.
   b. If the Chief of Staff cannot be reached, the on-call administrator is immediately notified. For issues relating to the RI Training School (RITS), the RITS on-call administrator is also notified.
   c. The on-call administrator attempts to contact the Chief of Staff.
      i. If the on-call administrator is unable to contact the Chief of Staff, he/she may return the call to the media and respond on behalf of the Department if the inquiry is related to standard operating procedures of the Department.
      ii. If the on-call administrator is unable to reach the Chief of Staff, he or she will contact the Director if the inquiry is of an extremely sensitive nature or if the individual is advising the Department of an issue relating to a timely or serious nature.

B. Speaking Engagements

1. Requests for presentations by the Department are handled by the Director of the Child Welfare Institute (CWI).
2. All potential speaking engagements identified by individual staff members are channeled through the CWI Director with the date, time, location, topic, name of contact person, name of person submitting the information and whether or not person submitting request wishes to make the presentation.
3. The CWI Director determines which staff person is most appropriate to respond to the request.

C. Requests for Information and/or Tours

1. All inquiries from the general public, private or public agencies and organizations, civic groups, students and professionals relating to information on the overall programs and services of the Department are referred to the Director's Office.
2. Requests for tours of DCYF buildings or facilities, with the exception of the RI Training School (RITS), are coordinated by the Chief of Staff. All requests for tours of the RITS are conducted in accordance with DCYF Policy 1200.0007, Tours of the RI Training School.

D. Sharing Information with the CWI Director and the Chief of Staff

1. Department data is provided to the CWI Director and the Chief of Staff if the information is related to overall Department operations or is significant to a particular program. Special studies, reports, programs, activities or services should be shared as well. Routine reports are excluded.
2. News of significant events relating to DCYF staff is brought to the attention of the Chief of Staff for possible appropriate response from the Office of the Director.