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LIBRARY PROGRAMS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

03.07.03 Communications

The CRO, with guidance from the Executive Director, has primary responsibility for communicating all information pertaining to the operations and activities of PCCLD. This is accomplished through the variety of communications tools currently available, as well as new communications technologies as they are developed.

Communications meeting any of the following criteria must have approval from the Director of Community Relations or his/her designee:

- communications bearing the name or logo of PCCLD;
- communications paid for with PCCLD funds;
- communications publicizing PCCLD activities intended for distribution to the public.

This includes:

- publications (print and electronic, including online publication through social media and other websites),
- print and broadcast advertising,
- photos, audio and video used to represent PCCLD to a mass audience or in any materials covered by the communication policy,
- press releases.

This does not include:

- regular internal communications,
- general correspondence (written or electronic).

The Executive Director may waive these requirements for certain projects.

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03.07.03.G1 Guiding Principles of Communication

PCCLD recognizes that effective communication is essential to providing high-quality customer service and publicizing the library’s programs and services. The purpose of the Communications Policy is to affirm and promote the library’s commitment to effective communication with its stakeholders. Communications with library customers, community members, governmental organizations and news media will be based on the library’s Communications Plan and Guide. The Community Relations Office (CRO) will develop and implement the plan, as approved by the Executive Director, and work with PCCLD staff throughout the district to make sure the procedures are understood. Official communication of library positions, services, routine issues, activities, or events is the responsibility of the Director of Community Relations under the Executive Director’s direction.

The CRO has a staff of professionals whose expertise includes: writing, graphic art, fundraising, video production, event planning and coordination, design and printing. These professionals are able to advise staff and produce materials that meet this policy. Other departments are strongly encouraged to work with CRO in planning communications to meet the communications policy, as well as to ensure that library resources are used in the most cost-effective manner.

The CRO only publicizes library events or partnership events. Events by other organizations can be posted on PCCLD’s community bulletin boards with approval from the CRO, as well as in the community literature racks per the library’s posting and literature distribution policies.
The Community Relations Office (CRO) follows these principles established by the International Association of Business Communicators:

1. Professional communicators uphold the credibility and dignity of their profession by practicing honest, candid and timely communication, and by fostering the free flow of essential information in accord with the public interest.
2. Professional communicators disseminate accurate information and promptly correct any erroneous communication for which they may be responsible.
3. Professional communicators understand and support the principles of free speech, freedom of assembly, and access to an open marketplace of ideas; and, act accordingly.
4. Professional communicators are sensitive to cultural values and beliefs and engage in fair and balanced communication activities that foster and encourage mutual understanding.
5. Professional communicators refrain from taking part in any undertaking which the communicator considers to be unethical.

6. Professional communicators obey laws and public policies governing their professional activities and are sensitive to the spirit of all laws and regulations and, should any law or public policy be violated, for whatever reason, act promptly to correct the situation.

7. Professional communicators give credit for unique expressions borrowed from others and identify the sources and purposes of all information disseminated to the public.

8. Professional communicators protect confidential information and, at the same time, comply with all legal requirements for the disclosure of information affecting the welfare of others.

9. Professional communicators do not use confidential information gained as a result of professional activities for personal benefit and do not represent conflicting or competing interests without written consent of those involved.

10. Professional communicators do no accept undisclosed gifts or payments for professional services from anyone other than a client or employer.

11. Professional communicators do not guarantee results that are beyond the power of the practitioner to deliver.

12. Professional communicators are honest not only with others but also, and most importantly, with themselves as individuals; for a professional communicator seeks the truth and speaks that truth first to the self.

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03.07.03.G2 Communications Guidelines

When you have a service or program that you want to promote to customers, it is important to decide how best to convey your information. The Community Relations Office (CRO) is here to help you with a variety of different methods and suggestions to make your promotion as successful as possible. Our mutual goal is to promote the library in a positive way and get people to attend your event or use your new service.

A general rule of thumb is to make your electronic request at least 10 business days prior to the day you would like the promotional materials, NOT 10 days before the event or service-launch date. This allows the CRO to produce print pieces that have been through a proper design process, and allows us to use your event/service information in other library publications and on the web. Our goal is to complete all requests within 10 business days of the initial request. On the rare occasion, there might be circumstances that require a greater length of time to complete a request. There is also flexibility to have a template approved for handouts that are used (e.g., a storytime handout) with minimal textual updates (e.g., dates, times, titles). To have your template approved, please submit it using the same process as requesting other types of publicity.

Please remember that you are *requesting* these printed promotional pieces. To make a request, please include details, such as the time, date, location (including name of the room if appropriate), presenter information, a brief description of the program and also the date you would like your promotional materials to be available for the public. Submit suggestions for graphics or photos if you have something specific in mind that you would like to see included in your promotion. The CRO will take a look at the content provided, and if necessary, discuss with you changes that would benefit the promotion of your service or program.

As a general rule, the CRO makes printed promotional material available two weeks in advance of the program/service launch, which is in line with best practices for promotions. Additionally, the advance notice helps the CRO add your event/service launch to a district-wide priority list, allowing the CRO to complete the greatest number of requests in the timeliest fashion possible.

STEP 1: Start the request process via the library’s electronic helpdesk.

A request may be made via the library’s ManageEngine Helpdesk. If you are unsure how to access this electronic request system, please ask your supervisor to show you how your team accesses it. When making a request via the helpdesk, select the Community Relations Department under the “Group” tab. As you are filling out the request form, it is important to include all of the relevant details to ensure Community Relations will be able to successfully promote your program or service efficiently. A clear project description, time, date, age group, contact information and location are just some of the details you might want to include in your request.

STEP 2: Decide what type of print publicity pieces to request.

POSTER (Please specify which size. Sizes include large format up to 27x39, 11x17, and 8x11)

Description: Used to promote a library event or new service to people who are at the library. This is a great way to target people coming through the library's doors.

Can be displayed:
- On public information or library information bulletin boards at all libraries
- On easels at all libraries
- On desk countertops and in information racks at all libraries.
- In areas of all libraries where target audience is most likely to see it (e.g., Teen Central or business collection area)
- In poster holders throughout Rawlings Library, including by the elevators and in the kiosks
- In various other appropriate locations including Books Again and other community locations

Disadvantages:
- The size of the large-format posters can prohibit a display in libraries that need room
- Enough content must be provided to "fill" a large poster
- Large posters can be costly.

HANDOUT (1/2 page or 1/4 page)

Description: Used to promote special programs or new services in conjunction with larger print promotional pieces as a take-away reminder.

Can be displayed:
- In area of library where target audience is most like to pick one up
- On the information station with display of coordinating flyer or poster
- At booths during community events (e.g., Children's Festival, Spring Fest)

BOOKMARK

Description: Used to promote special programs or new services.

Can be displayed: At library desks, particularly where materials are being checked out.

BROCHURE

Description: Most commonly a tri-fold or bi-fold piece used to promote a service or resource.

Can be displayed:
- In information racks in all libraries
- In free-standing holders located in areas of library most likely to be frequented by target audience

Advantages:
- Spacious enough for large amounts of content (database information, book descriptions)
- Can be a complimentary piece for a program or workshop highlighting a service or list of books available at the library
- Can be used at external events where the library has a table set up and the target audience is present

Disadvantages:
- Content must be constantly monitored for updates

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STEP 3: Decide what type of electronic publicity to request.

HOMEPAGE SPOTLIGHT

Description: Used to promote a library event or new service to people who access the library's website. This is a great way to target customers online.

EMAIL BLAST

Description: Used to promote specific-interest programs and services to a list of email subscribers. As too many email blasts can become counter effective, the Director of Community Relations will prioritize these requests by public interest/timeliness and PCCLD's investment in the program or service.

SOCIAL MEDIA PROMOTIONS

Description: Events and services can currently be promoted on the library's Facebook page and Twitter. These channels are good for communicating information to an audience that is comfortable with technology. These services are both free. The library's Electronic Marketing Coordinator is in charge of posting on these sites. The library's Electronic Marketing Coordinator is in charge of posting on these sites. As more social media sites are added to the library's official communication strategy, this section will be updated.

WEBCASTING / VIDEO PRODUCTION

Description: On a limited basis, the CRO will webcast and/or produce a video of a program. Additionally, videos may be produced to show customers how to use new services or to introduce the public to issues of importance to the library. These requests will be evaluated and prioritized by the Director of Community Relations based on public interest in the program/service.

STEP 4: Determine if your event might be newsworthy or of high interest to the public.

PRESS RELEASE

Description: A Press Release should be requested for major events that impact the district as a whole, attract a wide audience, or feature an author or presenter that adds value to the program.

Special Note: If requesting a Press Release, you must provide detailed information about the program or event including what will take place, biographical information about the presenter, how the program will benefit the participants, and any other information that will make this newsworthy to the media. (Newsworthy means your programs or service is about a current issue or hot topic that's relevant to the community.) This information can be submitted in bullet points, in complete sentences or as a narrative.

PAID ADVERTISING

Description: Used to promote specific-interest programs and services to a list of email subscribers. As too many email blasts can become counter effective, the Director of Community Relations will prioritize these requests by public interest/timeliness and PCCLD's investment in the program or service.

STEP 5: Complete your electronic request and work with a Community Relations staff member in subsequent days to complete your request.

You will typically be contacted within a day or two of the CRO receiving your request. Once contacted, your specific plan can be finalized and implemented. Community Relations staff wants your feedback and makes every effort to incorporate your ideas into the final publicity pieces. We thank you for your input and the opportunity to promote your efforts!

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The CRO is housed in the Administration Wing on the 3rd floor of the Rawlings Library, located at 100 East Abriendo Avenue. The hours of the department are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and evenings and weekends when called for by special events and other library programs. All PCCLD staff are encouraged to email, call or make an appointment for face-to-face meetings to discuss any issues or provide feedback.

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Section 6 ▪ CUSTOMER CONDUCT

- 03.06.01 Acceptable Library Use and Safety
    - 03.06.01.F1 Incident Report Form
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- 03.06.02 Child Conduct and Safety
- 03.06.03 Customer Code of Conduct
    - 03.06.03.F1 Suspension of Library Privileges Form
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- 03.06.04 Video Surveillance

Section 7 ▪ LIBRARY PROGRAMS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

- 03.07.01 Library Programs and Events
    - 03.07.01.P1 Visits and Tours
- 03.07.02 Public Relations
    - 03.07.02.P1 Website Homepage Spotlight
- 03.07.03 Communications
    - 03.07.03.G1 Guiding Principles of Communication
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Section 8 ▪ RESOURCES

- 03.08.01.R1 Resource Documents
- 03.08.01.R2 Legal Citations

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