**NLN Affiliated Constituent League**

**Policy and Procedure**

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| policy number | **6.1** |
| policy name | Release of Information to the Media |
| **date of origin** | (Date) |
| purpose | * This succinct policy allows the president/chief executive to speak out on public policy issues on behalf of the organization. |
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| 1. **policy** | 1. Calls from the media received by XYZ regarding the local league shall be handled according to the XYZ board-approved media policy. 2. In the event the media contacts XYZ first, the caller’s identity and reason for calling will be ascertained. If the reason for the call is anything other than basic information that would be considered public, XYZ staff will call them back after first notifying the board that an inquiry about the organization has been made. 3. If a local issue receives media attention, or has potential to draw attention (negative or positive), XYZ shall notify NLN headquarters within two working days as to the nature of the situation and what possible impact it will have on the affiliated constituent league and NLN. |
| **MEDIA INQUIRY PROCEDURES** | Main XYZ Contact: [Name A]  **Other XYZ Contact**: [Name B and Name C]  **Description**  How to handle inquiries from any media such as newspaper, radio, TV, cable access, magazine, trade organizations, etc.  **Background**  XYZ strives to advance its mission by communicating openly and honestly using consistent messages with its constituents, including the media. It is important for all XYZ staff and board members to reinforce these messages by referring all calls from any media source to the appropriate staff.  **Procedure**   * Please refer all calls or visits to Name A; if he or she is not available, refer to Name B; or if the inquiry is specific to grants, refer to Name C. * If senior staff is not available, take the following steps: * Find out the reporter’s name, phone number, and deadline. * Find out the nature of the story (“Name A is our chief executive and spokesperson for XYZ. May I ask what kind of a story you are working on so that we can gather the information and he (or she) will have all the facts in front of him (or her) when he (or she) calls you back?”), OR, if you are sure that Name A will be available to hear a voicemail message, offer to let the reporter leave a detailed voicemail message. * Let the reporter know that Name A or another staff member will return the call by a stated time and date. * Contact Name A immediately if the deadline is imminent. His (or her) home phone \_\_\_; cell \_\_\_. * Please do not offer information to media — even if you know the answer. It is helpful for XYZ that all news contacts be handled by senior staff and documented. Also, it’s too easy to get quoted as an organization spokesperson if you volunteer something the reporter wants to use. Assure the reporter that someone will respond in time to meet the deadline.   If the reporter needs an immediate response, or if Name A will not be available in time to meet the reporter’s deadline, refer the call to Name B, home phone \_\_\_; cell \_\_\_. If it’s on the subject of grants, refer the call to Name C, home phone \_\_\_; cell \_\_\_.   * If you cannot reach Names A, B, or C (at work, home, or on cell phone) to respond in time for the deadline, call the reporter back, explain the situation, and apologize profusely, but still decline to answer the question yourself. In no case should you let the deadline come and go without any response. Then, please leave a detailed message for Name A (or B or C) so that he or she can follow up with the reporter. In general, it is not advisable to say “no comment,” since that constitutes a form of an answer that may be used against the organization in some instances.   **Key Points To Remember When Dealing with the Media**:   * Be polite. * Be helpful. * Find out what the reporter needs to know and what his or her deadline is. * Don’t let a deadline pass without a response. * Don’t get drawn into providing information or opinions that you don’t have the authority to provide. * Always inform Name A (or B or C) of the call for follow-up.   *Thank you for helping XYZ provide accurate, timely, honest, and thoughtful assistance to the media.* |

Revision Dates: