

# BUFFALO

## SEWER AUTHORITY

Title	Media Relations and Communications Protocol	Effective Date	1/2019
Approved by	Oluwole A. McFoy, P.E., General Manager	Date Revised	

**Buffalo Sewer strives to advance its mission by communicating openly and honestly using consistent messages with its constituents, including but not limited to the media. This policy applies to all Buffalo Sewer employees, board members, and all outside contractors.**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear direction on how media calls and opportunities to represent Buffalo Sewer are to be handled and to ensure that media inquiries are responded to quickly, accurately and delivered properly. It also provides an opportunity to improve service to media and all audiences by coordinating responses and ensuring that appropriate spokespeople are speaking to issues.

The Press Information Officer shall be responsible for contact with the news media, including creation and distribution of information related to Buffalo Sewer or topics requiring a Buffalo Sewer response. News releases related to Buffalo Sewer, to include presentations, in person and written shall be edited and approved by the Press Information Officer.

### **Media Relations**

- The Press Information Officer will coordinate all incoming developing media calls for Buffalo Sewer.
- Upon receiving a media call, the recipient will inform their direct supervisor and contact the Press Information Officer.
- The Press Information Officer will work with individual staff to decide how to best handle the call; this may include:
  - Asking the supervisor or member of the executive team to respond with approved lines
  - Having the Press Information Officer respond
  - Refer the call to the General Manager
  - Refer the call to another Department Head and/or Supervisor
- Once the call is returned, the Press Information Officer will log the call and close the file.

### **Guiding Principles**

Buffalo Sewer management are considered subject matter experts and at times are called upon to speak directly with the media. All management personnel must consult with the Press Information Officer prior to any such interview.

- When speaking for Buffalo Sewer, employees:
  - Shall discuss only their own job within their personal areas of experience or expertise;
  - Shall respect the judicial process with respect to matters before the courts, and federal laws and policies.
- In addition, employees speaking in their official capacity, including designated subject matter experts and Press Information Officers shall not:
  - Respond to media queries that fall outside of their personal area of experience or expertise, unless authorized to do so;
  - Provide comments that could undermine the integrity of an investigation currently in progress;

- Speculate in any way, especially about events, incidents, issues, or future policy decisions;
- Offer personal opinion on Buffalo Sewer policy; or
- Discuss communication between the General Manager or their supervisors

### **Representing Buffalo Sewer**

- When employees speak or publish on behalf of Buffalo Sewer, they must do so upon approval of your direct supervisor, the General Manager, and the Press Information Officer.
  - Should an employee take a position inconsistent with our policy or practice, we ask that the employee make clear he/she does not speak or write as a company representative.
- Consultants under supervision or working on Buffalo Sewer Projects must seek the approval of the General Manager if they would like to present on Buffalo Sewer Projects or submit the projects for awards.
  - All presentations and award submissions must be reviewed by the General Manager and the Press Information Officer.

Failure to comply with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.