

Section 28 – Public Information

New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Program

28.1 Public Information Function and Media

ADMINISTRATION

STANDARD 28.1 The agency has a written directive concerning the public information function within the department. At minimum, the directive will include:

- A. The position(s) in the agency responsible for the public information function including who may release information to the news media:
 - At the scene of an incident;
 - From agency files;
 - Concerning an ongoing criminal investigation, and;
 - Any time the public information officer is not available.
- B. The access of media representatives, including photographers, to all scenes of incidents which may draw media attention;
- C. The requirement that all information released pertaining to ongoing criminal investigations conforms to the New York State Fair Trial/Free Press Guidelines¹ and specifies the type of information that may and may not be released, and;
- D. The response to freedom of information requests.

Compliance Verification Strategies

Assessors may seek to verify compliance with this standard by using one or more of the strategies listed below. There may be other strategies identified by the agency which could also be acceptable.

1. A copy of the written directive is available for review.
2. Interview(s) with personnel responsible for this function may be conducted to verify their knowledge of and compliance with the directive.
3. Interview(s) with agency personnel not responsible for this function may be conducted to verify their understanding of and compliance with the directive.
4. A review of examples of news/press releases to verify that they are consistent with the agency directive.
5. A review of agency procedures with the Fair Trial/Free Press guidelines may ensure the procedures are complete.
6. Copies of press releases attached to agency case files may help verify compliance.

¹ The Fair Trial/Free Press Guidelines may be obtained through the following link:
<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/112880NCJRS.pdf>.