

**BLACK HILLS STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Policy and Procedures Manual**

SUBJECT: Public Relations and News Media  
NUMBER: 10.5

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Office: University Marketing and Communications

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to help ensure the image of Black Hills State University, including its administrators, faculty, staff and students, is portrayed as accurately as possible in the public and news media, and to develop public understanding of BHSU programs, activities and events using mass communications.

2. Definitions

- a. Critical PR Event: Any event or information that could result in major news coverage, either positive or negative, for the University. Examples include but are not limited to a new program being announced, gifts of a significant amount, misconduct of staff or students that may become publicly known, large campus events, and controversial gatherings/forums.

3. Policy

The Office of Marketing and Communications serves as the central resource and primary point of contact for all news media outlets. As the primary liaison between BHSU and the media, the Office of Marketing and Communications shall:

- a. Provide the BHSU community with the standards and direction associated with:
  - i. External news
  - ii. Major news stories
  - iii. Protocol in responding to news media inquiries
  - iv. Monitoring news media on campus and public information requests
- b. Provide information of public and media interest in a professionally prepared format to the news media and via social media, including: BHSU news releases, the BHSU Alumni Magazine, BHSU faculty/staff announcements, and media

advisories regarding significant events and activities that enhance the image of BHSU, and are of interest to the BHSU community and general public, as determined by the Office of Marketing and Communications.

- c. Advise and assist in media issues management, including news releases, media advisories, talking points, news conferences, and media strategies.
  - d. Ensure all written communications with media conform to Associate Press (AP) style and accepted journalistic standards.
  - e. Arrange interviews, as appropriate, with administrators, faculty, staff, and students with representatives of news media.
  - f. Serve as Public Information Officer for BHSU.
4. Procedures
- a. The Office of Marketing and Communications' editorial team is responsible for disseminating institutional news releases, media advisories, and other university information to media outlets and will otherwise make all media contacts for BHSU. Any questions regarding media contacts or coverage must be directed to the Office of Marketing and Communications.
  - b. The Senior Director of Marketing and Communications must be notified of any Critical PR Events as soon as possible so that senior administrators can be included, informed, and quoted as needed, and any announcements planned for major impact.
  - c. All externally targeted news releases, excluding those distributed by BHSU Athletics, must be routed through the Office of Marketing and Communications.
    - i. BHSU faculty and staff may request a press release be written by submitting a Publicity Request form at [BHSU.edu/PublicityRequest](https://www.bhsu.edu/PublicityRequest).
  - d. The Office of Marketing and Communications may issue a media advisory at the request of a BHSU administrator, faculty, staff, or student to announce an upcoming event or happening (including but not limited to news conferences, conferences, seminars) consistent with BHSU positioning, branding, and strategic priorities as determined by the Office of Marketing and Communications. Media advisories are sent via email to the news media and are not generally highlighted on the BHSU website until the appropriate time.

- e. The Office of Marketing and Communications must be notified of all news media representatives visiting BHSU by the BHSU employee(s) involved as early as possible.
  - f. The Senior Director of Marketing and Communications serves as the official spokesperson for Black Hills State University. In addition, the Senior Director of Marketing and Communications may designate an official media spokesperson for BHSU on a case-by-case basis, as approved by the President.
5. Responsible Administrator
- The Senior Director of Marketing and Communications is responsible for the annual review of this policy and its procedures. The University President is responsible for approval of this policy.

SOURCE: Adopted by President 2024.02.12; Revised 2026.03.03