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Effective Date: July 1997	Revision Date: March 2018
Amends/Supercedes: 1300.20/ July 2007	Approved by: Chief Kevin Higdon
Meets Accreditation Standard:	20.2 – 20.4

Section 1700.20 Release of Information to News Media/Public

Policy

It is the policy of the Shively Police Department to cooperate with members of the news media seeking information about investigative activities. However, some information often times cannot be made available to news media in order to protect the constitutional rights of a suspect or a victim, to avoid interfering with a department investigation, or because it is legally privileged.

Responsibility:

- News release on incidents under investigation by the Shively Police department will only be made through the Chief of Police or his Public Information Officer.
- News releases concerning Shively Police Department personnel, confidential or restricted information may only be released through the Chief of Police.

Scope and Content of Information Releases

The scope and content of each release of information must be determined according to the facts of each situation. Generally, a description of the circumstances which are not legally privileged and which will not prejudice the rights of suspects(s) or interfere with an investigation will be made.

- Investigating officer and Chief of Police will make such determination.

Media Entering Closed Area

Duly authorized representatives of any news service, newspaper, radio, or television network may enter an area that is closed because of a menace to public health or safety after proper authorization from a supervisor. The decision to assume the risk of danger remains with the individual media person.

Allowing Media to Enter Area

Police lines (actual or constructive) may be established to prevent persons from entering the area of a crime scene or other police incident. Dependent upon the tactical situation and the likelihood of jeopardizing police operations, members of the news media may only be allowed in designated areas.

While news media may be permitted in the area of a crime scene or other police incident, they do not have the authority to be within an area, which has been secured to preserve evidence, or at any location where their presence jeopardizes police operations.

The Chief of Police or the Public Information officer should be notified immediately upon the establishment of police lines or secured area which attract the news media organizations.

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Establishing a Designated Media Area

It may necessary to establish a designated area for media organizations to assemble. Commanding officers shall be alert for conditions that would necessitate the establishment of a Media Area.

Commanding officers should establish reasonable accommodations for media parameters based on the advice of the Chief of Police or Public Information Officer.

If appropriate, permission to enter a crime scene may be given by the investigating officer or supervisor, if present. Permission to enter the area of a serious police incident should be authorized by commanding officers present or by the Chief of Police.

Unauthorized Release of Information

Unless otherwise stipulated elsewhere in policy no employee of the Shively Police Department should release any information to the media, public, civic organizations, or any private group unless it has been approved by the Chief of Police or his designee.

Disaster/Crime Scene Security Guidelines for Media

It is the policy of the Shively Police Department to establish a single security perimeter at crime and disaster scenes and to maintain a positive working relationship with representatives of the news media.

Procedure

When circumstances have required that a disaster/crime scene should be secured, the commanding officer on the scene should establish the single security perimeter beyond which no individual other than personnel actually involved in the operation is permitted. The size and shape of the perimeter may vary at the discretion of the commanding officer under the immediate circumstances.

There is no authority of personnel of the Shively Police Department to confiscate or expose photographic film or property of the media or citizens. Any evidence present at a disaster or crime scene shall be handled according to established procedures and legal requirements.

Officers shall provide the radio dispatcher with sufficient information to notify the appropriate agencies that are obligated to furnish various emergency services.

Officers shall direct any news media inquiry to the Chief of Police or designee. The Chief of Police is responsible for establishing the media contact point for the department and will disseminate that information as soon as possible.

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Release of information outside the recognized media

It is the practice and philosophy of the Shively Police Department (SPD) to be as transparent as possible to the public. However, not all information held by the SPD can be given out, due to law or other restrictions. Information which may jeopardize the efficiency of the department, tactical operations, investigative processes or the identity of protected individuals may limit what can or will be released.

Often SPD members are requested to attend and/or speak at public meetings, forums, civic groups, block watch groups, religious groups, schools etc. The SPD will make every attempt to accommodate these request as manpower allows. However, no member of the SPD is to agree to, attend or speak to individuals or groups about SPD business, practices, procedures or policies without the prior knowledge and consent of the Chief of Police or his designee.

If a SPD member is presented with inquiries from a member or members of any legislative body regarding official SPD business, practices, policies or procedures, that member should direct the inquiring person(s) to the Chief of Police or his designee for an official response so that the proper information is given.

Unauthorized members of the SPD are prohibited from offering information regarding SPD business, practices, procedures or policies to any non SPD personnel outside of the scope of their assigned duties.