

# County of Monterey Board Policy Manual

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| <b>Policy Name</b><br>Communications & Public Relations Guidelines | <b>Policy Number</b><br>G-145 | <b>Page</b><br>1 of 10 |
| <b>Policy Category</b><br>Government and Administration            |                               |                        |

**I. Purpose**

**II. Background**

**III. Policy**

**IV. Procedure**

- a. See next pages.

**V. Review Date**

- i. This Policy will be reviewed for continuance by September 26, 2027.

**VI. Board Action**

- a. Legistar File Number 22-859, September 27, 2022.





# County of Monterey

## Communications & Public Relations Guidelines

Version September 27, 2022

- Internal document -



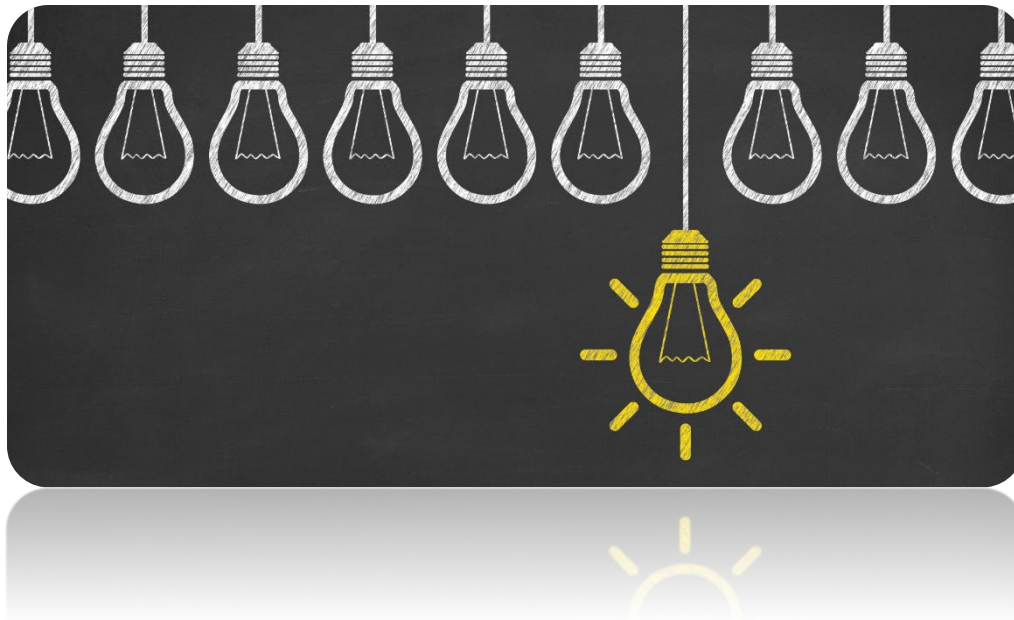


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(This document will be available online in searchable PDF form)





## **The County of Monterey - County Communications Program – At Your Service**

The County of Monterey, County Communications Team (CT) manages the brand and image of the County of Monterey government entity utilizing internal, local, regional, and national avenues through news and information dissemination, media relations, publication production, advertising, publicity, marketing and the County of Monterey website and mobile app. The program creates strategy and messaging in English, Spanish and is ADA compliant to best position the County, utilizing multilingual - traditional and emerging media, building key relationships, and anticipating stakeholders' needs. The CT also establishes media policy, and public relations protocol. The CT also provides creative and content input where it concerns the County Government Channel and County web assets.

This document is designed to help our internal stakeholders form a strong alliance with the County Communications Program to coordinate our efforts and present an organized, consistent, professional approach to promotion of the County's mission and accomplishments.

We refer to the County of Monterey Board of Supervisors, County Administrative Office, Department Heads, County staff, and the residents of the county as the primary stakeholders. Stakeholders are those who have a relationship with or interest in the success of the County of Monterey government entity.

The first step in that alliance with your County Communications Team is to involve us, keep us informed and utilize our services appropriately in the advancement of County of Monterey's mission and reputation.

All marketing materials that might impact County operations or the image of the County should be shared with the County Communications Team (CT). (\*For example, official materials for public distribution such as departmental / program brochures, printed ads, publications, and service guides. This does not include simple flyers, social media graphics\*, or newsletters). \*See Social Media Policy for specific guidelines.



## Help Us to Help You:

- To have your information or public event posted on the County of Monterey website and/or distributed to the media follow the processes previously in place and established by County ITD. If you need assistance entering a public event on the County Calendar, contact ITD Webmasters directly.
- For help with advertising, marketing or promotions, follow the processes listed in our Public Relations Procedures web page. Email the County Communications Team at [pr@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:pr@co.monterey.ca.us) to inform us of and/or arrange media appearances and interviews.
- Coordinate all press conferences/press events in advance with the County Communications Team.
- If approached by media representatives, always refer them to the department head, the designated department PIO or the County Communications Team. An after-action report must be submitted to the County Communications Director after such contact or interviews are made with the media.
- Let us know if you would like to make statements to the press about your projects or critical issues and if you would like to work with the media on news or feature stories.
- The branding of all County of Monterey publications and/or promotional materials for dissemination should be approved by the County Communications Director or their designee\*.

\*County Communications Management Analyst or Media Analyst

- Consult with the County Communications Team regarding all letters to the editor (written by any department head or manager), flyers, posters and publications prior to publication and/or distribution.
- Any promotional video taping of County of Monterey activities for media purposes (non-broadcast news), rebroadcast or public screenings should be coordinated through (or shared with) the County Communications Program Office.
- County Communications team shall be notified of all department/program public special events.
- In an effort to avoid inconsistent or conflicting directives, priorities or messaging, it is recommended that the members of the Board of Supervisors and their staff copy the CAO or designee with requests for services from County Communications made through the program Director. This will ensure that all requests are properly prioritized in relationship to the strategic objectives of the County and to give ample time to successfully complete requests with the highest degree of professionalism. There may be the need, on occasion, to place departmental needs ahead of specific Board member requests to meet specific deadlines or critical needs.
- County employees should follow the approved County Media Guidelines and/or the guidelines developed specifically designed for their department. Refer to the Board Policy Manual Section G-145.

Units within the Health Department, Natividad Medical Center, Clinic Services, Office of Emergency Services, 911, Public Works, Agricultural Commissioner, Elections, District Attorney, County Counsel and Public Safety (Sherriff's Department/County Jail) may have direct media contact because of the nature



and volume of their work or the frequency of recurring messages. When possible, those department's PIO's should collaborate with the County Communications Team, follow established PR guidelines and copy County Communications Director on any information they forward to the media.

In some cases, County of Monterey personnel may have standing professional or personal relationships with reporters, photographers or media personalities. In such instances, notify the County Communications Team before asking the media to cover or report on an event or issue, so that marketing and image enhancement can be well coordinated.

## **STATEMENT ON BILINGUAL MESSAGING**

The County's Public Relations Policy gives equal status to English and Spanish in communicating with the public at large.

In our written materials meant for the general public, including those related to Government functions, signs and notices posted in Government premises, official forms etc., are to be bilingual.

It is only in very exceptional circumstances where there are strong operational or financial reasons would communications with the public be done monolingually. However, replies to individual members of the public are always in the language that is appropriate to the recipients

It is important to be sensitive to the language needs of the community and ensure that all forms and correspondence meant for the public are bilingual so as to avoid unnecessary confusion and inconvenience.

## **CRISIS MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

When bad news happens, the press will be on your doorstep, literally.

Examples of crises include: An accident resulting in death or serious injury; the arrest of an employee, or administrator; a murder, rape, arson, assault or felony that occurs on county property; a natural disaster, an investigation or the potential of litigation. It is important in times of crisis to follow a standard operating procedure to preserve institutional image.

1. Immediately call and/or forward crisis-related information to the County Communications Program Office at (831) 755-5115 or [pr@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:pr@co.monterey.ca.us). (See page 9 for all emergency contact information)

→ This includes what happened, when, where, to whom and who else is involved.

2. Immediately refer all media calls to the County Counsel or designated delegate (in cases of [non-natural disaster] crisis especially, it is important to have a single source of information.) Stay calm and be courteous.



## NEWS RELEASES

A news release is the most immediate way to get information through the media to the community.

Need to send a release? Here's how to do it:

Information for news releases should be received at least 10 business days before the expected date of distribution.

The CT will advise (or decide) the best time and strategy for release of your story. The CT can get your information from County of Monterey to the media in a timely manner but cannot guarantee when the media will use it. Trust our professional expertise as to how best to approach the media.

The CT routinely e-mails and faxes news releases to all local (and regional) media. The CT also distributes news and information of wider appeal to regional and national media.

Send information to [pr@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:pr@co.monterey.ca.us).

## ADVERTISING

The County Communications Program is available to assist you with the development and placement of print, radio, television, digital and multi-media advertising. To make a request for advertising, send details to [pr@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:pr@co.monterey.ca.us). Information for radio advertising should be received one month prior to expected air date. Information for print advertising should be received one month before publication. Information for television advertising should be received two months before broadcast. Information for digital placement should be received one month before expected deployment.

## MEDIA APPEARANCES

Appearing on radio and television talk shows and speaking to service or civic organizations and church groups, is an excellent way to disseminate information. The CT should be notified when making such appearances. To inform the CT on media appearances, send specific details to [pr@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:pr@co.monterey.ca.us).

If you have made an appearance or provided information to the media, please also let the CT know.



## PHOTOGRAPHY

The County Communications Program (with at least one week notice) can arrange to take photos for media and publication purposes only. The CT can suggest professional photographers to meet your needs. Departments desiring a photo archive may want to purchase a camera to catalog events. Please remember to share your photographic assets with the CT. Photo releases should be on file when photographing department customers or the general public. See the attached County Counsel approved Release form.



## CONCERNS

If you have concerns about the way a story was handled or if there was an error in the coverage of your story or event, call the County Communications Team. Please don't contact the media directly.

## GUIDELINES FOR COUNTY OF MONTEREY PUBLICATIONS

For purposes of quality control, the County Communications Program will review all County of Monterey publications to ensure that they adhere to the County of Monterey Brand Identity Style Guide. The CT will also be available to advise on editorial content. All County of Monterey publications should be properly branded to include the County wordmark, "County of Monterey" and an approved County of Monterey emblem, available from the CT Graphics Page.

### Each publication should include

- \_\_\_ Address (if directing the public to a physical location)
- \_\_\_ Phone number
- \_\_\_ QR Code
- \_\_\_ E-mail address
- \_\_\_ and, if appropriate, a website URL ([www.co.monterey.ca.us](http://www.co.monterey.ca.us)) for more information.





**The mailing address should be either of the standard county addresses:**

County of Monterey Government Center  
168 W. Alisal Street  
Salinas, CA 93901

**OR**

County of Monterey (appropriate Department address)

The telephone numbers should also be the standard County telephone number – (831) 755-5115 or department’s phone number, unless the document needs a specific contact number. When specifics are required, include the contact information for the department.

**ORGANIZATION AFFILIATION STATEMENT:**

“The County of Monterey is accredited by .....  
Equal Opportunity Statement.....  
WEB SITE...web pages [www.co.monterey.ca.us](http://www.co.monterey.ca.us)



## COUNTY WEBSITE UPDATES

The County Communications Program shares oversight responsibility for the website. The County’s webmaster is a member of the ITD team. The County of Monterey website is designed to allow individuals who are professional “Content Contributors” and experienced in their areas to update their respective pages on the site. Contact the webmaster at [193-WebServices@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:193-WebServices@co.monterey.ca.us) to arrange for training to become a content contributor. For more information, contact the County of Monterey Website Management Team at ITD

## SPECIAL EVENTS

The Communications Team should be informed of any special event as far in advance as possible. A special event is an activity that does not occur on a regular basis, which is intended to promote or provide information on a particular program or service or serve as a vehicle for establishing a relationship between the host and a specific audience.

Special events include, receptions, seminars, conferences, lectures, and a myriad of other activities, depending upon the creativity of the coordinating group. Planning times vary according to the event.



Want to Learn More About Marketing, Media Strategy and Image Enhancement? The County Communications Program will be glad to provide your office with a consulting explaining the basics. Call for an appointment.

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## **COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM CONTACT INFO:**

### **County Communications Director**

Nicholas M. Pasculli – (831) 796-3094, [PasculliN@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:PasculliN@co.monterey.ca.us)

### **County Counsel Office**

Leslie J. Girard – (831) 755-5365, [GirardLJ@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:GirardLJ@co.monterey.ca.us)

Susan Blitch – (831) 755-5161, [BlitchSK@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:BlitchSK@co.monterey.ca.us)

### **Management Analyst III (Comms Coord.)**

Maia Carroll – (831) 796-3092, [CarrollM@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:CarrollM@co.monterey.ca.us)

### **Media Analyst (Bilingual Spanish)**

Nelly B. Otsu – (831) 755-5506, [OtsuNB@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:OtsuNB@co.monterey.ca.us)

### **Administrative Assistant Confidential**

Maegan Ruiz-Ignacio – (831) 755-5508, [Ruiz-IgnacioM@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:Ruiz-IgnacioM@co.monterey.ca.us)

### **Senior Secretary**

Berlina Nunez – (831) 755-5417, [NunezB@co.monterey.ca.us](mailto:NunezB@co.monterey.ca.us)

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