

**CITY OF OCONOMOWOC POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICIES & PROCEDURES**

DATE: December 8, 2020

HISTORY: August 15, 2002

SUBJECT: Media Relations

POLICY NUMBER: 02-047

I. GOAL

To provide Police Department employees with guidelines to ensure a cooperative effort when working with the news media.

II. DISPATCH PRIORITIES

During an emergency situation, the department's primary focus is on the preservation of life and property. The department will not compromise public safety by addressing extraneous matters during the extent of an emergency.

A. In order to accomplish this, it may be necessary and appropriate for a dispatcher to shorten an extraneous call (media) with a degree of abruptness.

1. Whereas, abruptness may be acceptable, employees must still remain professional and courteous.

III. AUTHORITY TO RELEASE INFORMATION

The City of Oconomowoc Police Department and Dispatch Center will be responsible for providing information relative to an incident that either occurred in or was initiated by the City of Oconomowoc Police Department. Except deadly force incidents: see policy 02-032.

A. The Western Lakes Fire Department will be responsible for formulating a press release for fire related incidents. The Oconomowoc Dispatch Center will be responsible for the prompt distribution of the press release.

B. If an incident neither occurred nor was initiated by the City of Oconomowoc Police or Western Lakes Fire Departments, the news media shall be directed to the proper agency for information.

1. To eliminate extraneous telephone calls, a brief statement should be prepared indicating that the incident does not involve the City of Oconomowoc, and, if known, name the appropriate jurisdiction.

- a. This statement should be promptly faxed to the media on the media list.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

A. The Sergeant or Officer-in-charge will, at the earliest opportunity, return to the police station and formulate a Press Release.

B. If the emergency is of an extended duration or is extremely serious, a member of the command staff will assume the responsibility to formulate the press release.

1. The authority to formulate a press release may also be delegated to a subordinate.

C. A public information officer will also be appointed for the duration of the incident.

V. CONTENT OF THE PRESS RELEASE

A. A press release should contain the following general information.

1. What had occurred?

2. Where did it happen?
 3. When did it happen?
 4. Why did it happen?
 5. Who was involved?
 6. How did it happen?
- B. Actual names of victims, suspects, arrestees and others are not to be provided in the press release. However, generalities, such as age and gender, may be included
- C. If at all possible, a quote from the supervisor or officer-in-charge should be included in the press release.

VI. DISSEMINATION

- A. The press release will be promptly faxed to the news agencies.

VII. EXCEPTIONS TO THIS POLICY MAY BE AUTHORIZED ONLY BY THE CHIEF OF POLICE

This policy is effective immediately
and will supersede any directives or understandings in conflict