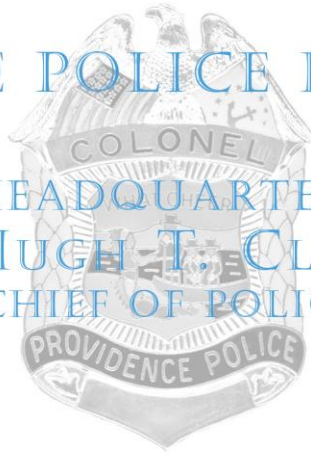


# PROVIDENCE POLICE DEPARTMENT

HEADQUARTERS  
COLONEL HUGH T. CLEMENTS, JR.  
CHIEF OF POLICE



TYPE OF ORDER	NUMBER/SERIES	ISSUE DATE	EFFECTIVE DATE
General Order	520.01	10/23/2018	10/23/2018
SUBJECT TITLE		PREVIOUSLY ISSUED DATES	
News Media Access		3/31/2017; 3/28/2014; Supersedes: G.O. #3 Series 2002; G.O. #25 Series 2000	
REFERENCE		RE-EVALUATION DATE	
CALEA 54.1.3		3/31/2020	
SUBJECT AREA		DISTRIBUTION	
Community Relations & Services		All Personnel	

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a set of parameters pertaining to interaction with the news media.

## POLICY

It is the policy of the Providence Police Department to ensure the right of the public to be informed and to facilitate the accurate, timely, and proper dissemination of information pertaining to the official business of the Department.

## DISCUSSION

All members of the Department shall make every effort to assist news media representatives who request information or access to an incident scene whenever the news media has a legal right to obtain such information or access. These rights should be observed when the release of information DOES NOT:

- Pose undue risk to the personal safety of members of the Department, news media representatives, or others.
- Interfere with law enforcement operations.
- Adversely affect the rights of an accused or the investigation or prosecution of a crime.
- Infringe upon the privacy rights of others.

For the purpose of this directive, the following definitions shall apply:

Law Enforcement Operations: Any activities involving an on-duty member of law enforcement.

Record/Recording: The act of capturing still images and/or audio and/or video by means of a camera, video camera, cell phone, audio recorder, or other analog or digital recording device.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **I. COOPERATION**

- A. This Department will cooperate with the news media by not interfering or allowing others to interfere with the news media's ability to perform its duties.
  - 1. Members of the Department shall not interfere with or obstruct the news media from videotaping or photographing incidents in areas protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution as long as their actions do not interfere with law enforcement operations and/or jeopardize the safety of officers or others.
  - 2. Under no circumstances shall the news media be provided with either more access or less access to an area than that afforded to the general public.
  - 3. News media personnel do not have a right to enter crime scenes or to enter any areas that are excluded for security or investigative reasons.

### **II. FREEDOM OF SPEECH**

- A. It is not the policy of the Providence Police Department to restrict its members from exercising their right to free speech. However, the dissemination of any information that may hinder, interfere with, or otherwise compromise the integrity of any investigation, is prohibited.
- B. It is imperative that no information be released that would violate the privacy rights of either the victim or the accused.

### **III. NEWS MEDIA REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION**

- A. It is not uncommon for local investigations, arrests, operations, etc., to overlap into other agencies, bureaus, or jurisdictions. Therefore, it is imperative that ALL news media requests for information be referred to the Commissioner's Office or the Office of the Chief of Police.

**IV. PROVISIONS**

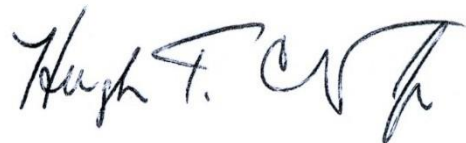
- A. When encountering situations where a member of the news media is recording official law enforcement activities or other activities, BWCs shall be activated and/or deactivated during the incident in accordance with the parameters set forth in General Order 320.02 *Body-Worn Camera (BWC) Program*.
  
- B. This directive shall be considered in conjunction with General Order 520.01 *Public Recording Activities*.

**APPROVED:**



STEVEN M. PARÉ  
COMMISSIONER  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

**APPROVED:**



HUGH T. CLEMENTS, JR.  
COLONEL  
CHIEF OF POLICE