

# TRUMBULL COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Policy

Section 10.21

## MEDIA RELATIONS

### Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to Board employees for the responsible release and dissemination of public information that will proactively promote the Board's mission, programs, services, initiatives, policies, and role as a public agency serving children, adults and families in Trumbull County.

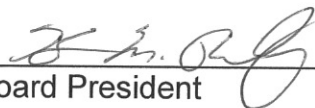
### Policy:

It is the policy of the Trumbull County Board of Developmental Disabilities Fairhaven Programs to respond to news media questions/inquiries effectively, accurately and on a timely basis to help promote public understanding of the Board's services, activities and issues.

The Board is committed to the free and open provision of information that may be of interest to the general public regarding policies, procedures, events involving the Board or other newsworthy information. Only information that is not legally protected or that would not infringe upon the rights of the individuals and families served by the Board will be provided to the media.

Information about specific cases and circumstances of specific individuals or families receiving services is governed in accordance with federal and state statutes and regulations regarding personal privacy and the confidentiality of individual records. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) federally mandates the privacy and protection of personally identifiable information about individuals served by the Board. The Board will at all times comply with these regulations regarding the release of information about individuals and families receiving services to the media and to the public. The Board will work with the media to provide accurate and timely information, while respecting the confidentiality of our individual's medical information and complying with HIPAA's privacy regulations.

The Board authorizes the Superintendent to serve as the Board's chief spokesperson and administrator of public information policies and activities.

  
Board President

  
Superintendent

Adopted:

8/26/2013

References:

CARF ASPIRE Standards

# TRUMBULL COUNTY BOARD OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

## Procedures

## Section 10.21

### **MEDIA RELATIONS**

#### **Unsolicited Media Contact:**

The following procedures apply to all employees of the Board and Board members: When an employee or Board member is unexpectedly contacted by a member of the media, please refer them to the Superintendent. Simply tell the member of the media that all official requests for information should be made to the Superintendent to ensure the information provided does not violate privacy and confidentiality laws.

Please notify the Superintendent's office immediately after talking with a reporter or other member of the media. Please provide as much information as possible regarding the information requested by the media or any other potential reason for their call.

#### **Public Relations Events/News Release:**

To effectively welcome the media and promote our programs, services, and activities, the Board has established the following guidelines for arranging interviews, videotape sessions, or photo opportunities.

- Approval for media involvement or press releases should be obtained prior to arranging for the media to be on-site or to cover a specific community awareness event.
- Please provide the reporters with accurate information about the name of our program i.e. Trumbull County Board of DD and/or Fairhaven Program.
- Advance notice of on-site interviews must be given to the appropriate department or activity coordinator in order to secure appropriate releases, and consents for the individuals or families involved with the story.
- To protect the privacy of all other individuals and/or families, a Board employee must accompany all reporters, film crews and photographers while they are on Board property.
- All news/press releases must be reviewed and approved by the Superintendent's office prior to distribution. The Superintendent's office may assist with distribution of news releases or, once approved, the employee may distribute the news release.

The Board will follow the procedures outlined below when providing information regarding individuals receiving services and their families.

- An individual's condition will only be provided if that individual or their guardian has approved the release of information. No additional information beyond what is requested and approved for release will be provided about the individual.
- If the media does not ask for the individual by name, no individual identifiable information about that person may be legally disclosed by the Board.

Adopted: 8/26/2013

References: