



LOS ANGELES
POLICE DEPARTMENT
MEDIA RELATIONS GUIDE





“Our unwavering commitment to supporting the media in their First Amendment Right to free press, is one way the Los Angeles Police Department is transparent and accountable to the public. Providing the various types of media with access to significant events has never been more critical given the multitude of platforms broadcasting newsworthy events. Media and public communication is central to 21st Century Policing.” – Chief Choi

DOMINIC H. CHOI
CHIEF OF POLICE

Contents

Introduction.....	1
Chapter 1 Media Relations Division.....	2
About Media Relations Division	
Public Information Officer Deployment	
Media Team Deployment.....	3
Crime and Arrest Reports.....	5
Releasable Information: Arrest(s)/Booking	
Chapter 2 Media Access at Incidents.....	8
Crime Scene Guidelines	
Media Access at Incidents or Crime Scenes	
Media Access at Disaster Scenes	
Media Access at Public Assemblies	
Chapter 3 Media Credentials.....	11
News Media Identification Cards (Press/Media Passes)	
Chapter 4 Ride Along Guidelines.....	13
Chapter 5 Digital Media.....	15
LAPD Online	
Social Media	
LAPD Trademark and Licensing	
Appendix Los Angeles Police Department.....	17
Preamble, Vision, Mission & Core Values	

Applicable LAPD Manual Sections.....	19
Legal Considerations.....	20
Al Crespo v City of Los Angeles, Federal Case No. CV 00-08869	
California Public Records Act Requests	
Applicable Los Angeles Municipal Codes.....	22
Applicable Senate and Assembly Bills.....	22
Commonly Used Media Terms.....	27
Statement Template.....	29

INTRODUCTION

When it comes to issues of public safety and concern, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD or Department) is committed to transparency with the media and the public. The media is a medium through which to communicate with and inform the public. It is also the responsibility of the LAPD to uphold the United States Constitution's First Amendment which establishes the foundation for a free press. We must provide the media with reasonable access and information to uphold such lawful mandates.

This Media Relations Guide (Guide) is intended to provide Department personnel and members of the media with relevant policies and procedures, best practices, and applicable laws related to duties and responsibilities when interacting with the media. This is only a reference guide, and it is not intended to cover every possible situation pertaining to the LAPD's policy on the release of information, or Department personnel's interactions with the media.

Media Relations Division (MRD) is committed to supporting the Department by responding to scenes when appropriate and communicating with members of the media on incidents that generate interest. It is the goal of MRD to allow the Commanding Officer (CO) and Investigating Officer (IO) to focus on the incident, and not be diverted by media needs.

In this Guide, you will learn about MRD capabilities to include telephonic advice, formatting a news release, and responding to an incident to speak with members of the media, as well as other services.

For information about LAPD news releases, its policies, procedures, history, statistical data, area of jurisdiction, news conference information, press/media credentials, entertainment and trademark coordination, or anything else related to media, contact Media Relations Division at (213) 486-5910, or visit the LAPD website at www.lapdonline.org, or off-hours through the Department Operations Center.

Chapter 1

Media Relations Division

ABOUT MEDIA RELATIONS DIVISION

The Media Relations Division is located at the Los Angeles Police Department's Headquarters Facility (PHF) on the 2nd Floor, Suite 257B. Below are the sections that make up MRD and some of their duties.

- Media Relations Section (MRS)
 - News Releases/News Advisories;
 - Coordinate press conferences and interviews for the Chief of Police;
 - Respond to media inquiries, telephonically, and via electronic mail;
 - Social media (LAPD HQ and LAPD PIO platforms);
 - Responds to incidents to provide public statements; and,
 - Issue press/media passes.
- Online Unit
 - Post Critical Incident Videos;
 - Post news releases;
 - Post updated crime data;
 - Post information on homicide victims; and,
 - Post Board of Police Commissioners' agenda.
- Video Unit
 - Critical Incident Videos;
 - Chief of Police Messages;
 - Other internal messaging; and,
 - Social Media Videos.
- Trademark and Location Permits

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER DEPLOYMENT

A supervisor assigned to MRD will respond to every Officer-Involved Shooting (OIS), excluding Animal Shootings, or to any incident where the Chief of Police or the Commanding Officer of MRD deems a Public Information Officer (PIO) is necessary. This may include, but is not limited to, homicides, fatal traffic collisions, or other significant events.

When an event grows large in scale, the PIO will ensure messaging is coordinated through a Joint Information Center (JIC) in collaboration with Department and City leaders, as well as other impacted departments or agencies. This will ensure coordinated and consistent messaging to the public.

During events expecting a large presence of media and potential civil unrest, an Incident Commander (IC) or the Planning Section Chief should include a PIO in the Event Action Plan. Ideally, the PIO will be present at the Command Post, along with at least one media team consisting of two PIOs who are available to respond to the field to fulfill the IC's needs related to

the media. Additionally, PIOs should post factual, timely information on social media platforms and ensure that such posts are not buried by more recent posts.

MEDIA TEAM DEPLOYMENT

Senate Bill 98 and Penal Code Section 409.7

Purpose: The below deployment recommendations are intended to guide Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) personnel responsible for creating an Event Action Plan (EAP), when responding to a spontaneous large-scale event, or who are assigned to a Media Team during such an event.

Background: On January 1, 2022, Senate Bill 98 (SB) became effective. The bill amended California Penal Code (PC) Section 409.7. Penal Code Section 409.7 allows “a duly authorized representative of the media” to enter or remain in an area closed by police at a protest, demonstration, rally, or where people are gathered primarily to engage in an activity protected by the First Amendment. The LAPD’s policy regarding 409.7 PC can be found in the Office of the Chief of Police (OCOP) Notice, *Senate Bill 98 – Media Access to Closed Areas – Assemblies, Protests and Demonstrations*, dated December 14, 2021.

To aid in implementing this change to media access, the LAPD staff shall utilize Media Teams for such events when operationally feasible, as outlined below.

Media Team Deployment: If an assembly, protest, or demonstration is known to the Department and the pre-planning allows for personnel to be requested in advance, the Incident Commander (IC) should ensure Media Relations Division (MRD) personnel are requested to staff a Media Team. When a spontaneous event takes place, MRD personnel may be limited or delayed.

Note: It is the responsibility of the IC to ensure compliance with Penal Code Section 409.7 with the resources available at the time.

When operationally feasible, MRD will staff one Media Team that includes: one MRD supervisor, one MRD officer, and one MRD social media officer. The social media officer should remain at the command post, while the supervisor and the officer should remain with the IC.

Note: A large-scale event may require 2–4 additional personnel to assist MRD. Personnel responsible for creating an EAP shall consult with MRD before the event, when possible, to identify the necessary additional personnel. If the spontaneous nature of an event does not allow time to assign personnel to assist MRD, assistance to identify the additional personnel shall be coordinated through the DOC.

This configuration allows for the needs of the media to be facilitated and ensure officer safety when the addressing the media at a skirmish line and behind police lines.

- **Supervisor** – The duties of the supervisor on the Media Team include interacting with media members requesting access into a closed area or behind a police line. Those media members will be allowed access behind the line and directed to the area designated for media, when such an area has been established, under the following circumstances:
 - An LAPD News Media Identification Card is not required to be considered a member of the media. If the individual is acting in a manner consistent with gathering, receiving, or processing information for communication to the public, they should be considered media.
 - If the individual’s behavior consists of engaging in criminal behavior or behavior that jeopardizes the safety of officers or the public (including, but not limited to, verbally threatening officers, inciting violence, or criminal conduct), when possible, the behavior should be recorded on video and the individual will not be allowed access reserved for media at the event. In such instances, the Media Team supervisor shall advise the individual why they are being denied access.
 - When the media is allowed behind the police line, the Media Team supervisor, in consultation with the IC, should determine the best point of access along the police line as well as a safe location to where media shall be directed. Although each situation will be assessed by the IC and the supervisor, a preliminary consideration should be to allow media through at one end of the police line. Once the access point is determined, the linebackers should be made aware of the location and share the location with the personnel on the police line, so they can direct any media that approaches them to the selected location to meet with the Media Team.
- **Media Team Members** – The duties of the officers assigned to the Media Team include ensuring that media allowed behind the police line do not interfere with police operations. As stated in the OCOP Notice regarding SB 98, access to a command post may still be restricted. The personnel and vehicles behind a police line are considered part of the command post. Members of the media should be directed to an area behind the LAPD personnel and vehicles. The Media Team officers will ensure the media is aware of where they have access and that members of the media do not encroach upon the command post.
 - A member of the media who attempts to enter the command post can be excluded from being behind the police line for violating 409.7 PC & 409.5(d) PC – Crimes Against the Public Peace, and/or 148 PC – Offenses Against Public Justice. Any advisements given to members of the media that could lead to their exclusion from the designated media area should be given by the Media Team supervisor or

another available supervisor. The advisement should be recorded on video and the video should include the image of to whom the advisement was given.

As delineated in the OCOP Notice regarding SB 98, *“Nothing precludes officers from enforcing other applicable laws if the member of the media is engaged in activity that is otherwise unlawful or is interfering with official law enforcement duties including, but not limited to, collecting evidence, and making arrests.”*

- **Dispersal Order:**

- In the event a dispersal order is issued, 409.7 PC exempts members of the media from the order. Media Team officers should identify media members and designate a media staging area for them which does not interfere with police operations but allows them to view police activity while in the closed area. The Media Team should work with the IC to include announcements for the media to identify themselves and meet with the Media Team at a location designated by the Media Team and the IC. However, the media are not required to utilize the designated media staging area.
- If a member of the media is detained during a large-scale incident, a supervisor shall be notified and meet with the detained individual.

- **Criminal Activity:**

- If a person who identifies themselves as a member of the media is engaged in criminal activity (*i.e.*, Vandalism, theft, battery, etc.), they are not exempt from arrest for the appropriate criminal section. In this instance, a supervisor shall respond and be made aware of the circumstances surrounding the detention and arrest.

Note: If a person alleging to be media is arrested and an MRD supervisor is not present, MRD shall be notified as soon as possible.

CRIME AND ARREST REPORTS

Victims of a crime may obtain a copy of the report prepared for their incident by calling Records and Identification Division at (213) 486–8130.

Releasable Information: Arrest(s)/Booking

In addition to responding to incidents in the field, MRD is also tasked with providing certain crime and arrest information as appropriate via a news release.

The identity of a suspect(s) will not be released prior to booking.

Note: Booking is defined as having been processed with a booking number generated. Department Manual Section 0/030 defines “Booking,” as the process of registering in the Department records the custody of persons or property.

The MRD will not provide the following information of an arrestee:

- Prior criminal record, reputation, or character of suspect;
- Confession or existence of a confession;
- Any photograph or booking photograph unless:
 - The release will aid in arrest;
 - The release will aid in investigation; and/or,
 - The release will warn the public of danger.
- Identity or any personal information regarding a juvenile arrestee or suspect without permission from a Juvenile Court;
- The identity, credibility, or testimony of prospective witnesses/including:
 - Any opinion as to the suspect’s guilt, innocence, or merits of the case;
 - Any information known to be inadmissible in court; or,
 - Results of investigative procedures (e.g., fingerprints, polygraph tests, or ballistic tests).

Note: Pursuant to 5328 Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC), information regarding any 5150 WIC action when a person is taken into custody for a 72-hour hold shall not be disclosed to the public and/or members of the media.

- Results of investigation prior to arrest, unless the release of the information will:
 - Aid in the investigation;
 - Assist in the apprehension of the suspect(s); or,
 - Warn the public of danger.
- The following employee and personnel matters are prohibited for release under Penal Code Section 832.5:
 - Confidential personnel matters;
 - Personnel records;
 - Information relating to pending litigation; and,
 - Any medical files that would constitute an unwanted invasion of privacy.

The following California PC sections state the name of a victim **may be withheld at the victim's request** or at the request of the victim's parent or guardian if the victim is a minor:

- 220 PC – Assault with Intent to Commit a Felony;
- 261 PC – Rape;
- 262 PC – Spousal/Marital Rape;
- 264.1 PC – Gang Rape (In Concert);
- 273(a) PC – Child Endangerment;
- 273(d) PC – Child Abuse;
- 273.5 PC – Corporal Injury to Spouse/Cohabitant;
- 286 PC – Sodomy;
- 288 PC – Lewd Acts with a Minor Child Under 14;
- 287 PC – Oral Copulation with a Minor;
- 289 PC – Forcible Sexual Penetration with a Foreign Object;
- 422.6 PC – Committing a Hate Crime;
- 422.75 PC – Hate Crime Enhancement; and,
- 646.9 PC – Stalking Laws of the Non–Releasable Information.

Chapter 2

Media Access to Incidents

CRIME SCENE GUIDELINES

The following are guidelines the IC, officers and supervisors on scene should take into consideration:

1. Do not establish artificial barriers. If the public has access, so does the media;
2. Do not isolate the media outside of the crime or incident scene unless the area has been secured to preserve evidence; or,
3. Do not prevent the taking of pictures or interviews of person(s) in public places. News reporters may photograph or report anything or interview anyone they observe when legally present at an emergency scene.

MEDIA ACCESS AT INCIDENTS OR CRIME SCENES

Note: *Incident/Crime Scenes and Command Posts may be closed to the media.*

Under most circumstances, the incident or crime scene and accompanying command post will be closed to the media. The purpose of such constraints is to protect the integrity of the investigation and to ensure a safe, coordinated, and unrestricted response by law enforcement and other emergency personnel.

Limitations to media access to incident or crime scenes are subject to review by the responsible Incident Commander (IC) and/or the appropriate Department command staff personnel. Those limitations should be lifted as soon as the situation allows.

Whenever the media is denied access to an incident or crime scene, Department personnel shall:

- Establish a “Media Staging Location,” where the most reasonable access is given under the circumstances determined by the IC; and,
- Assign a police supervisor at scene or a PIO, to provide timely and updated information to members of the media present, and via social media.

Consider “Pool” access (one TV camera, one TV reporter, one print reporter, one still photographer, and one radio reporter) at the incident. Pool reporters and photographers will share information with other media personnel at the scene.

MEDIA ACCESS AT DISASTER SCENES

The LAPD may close disaster scenes to the public, but authorized media representatives shall not be prevented from entering the area at their own risk. As stated in the manual, the LAPD may close an area under authority of 409.5(a) PC when "... a menace to the public health or safety is created by a calamity such as a flood, storm, fire, earthquake, explosion, accident, or other disaster ..." However, as stated in 409.5(d) PC, "... Nothing in this section shall prevent a duly authorized representative of any news service from entering the area closed ..."

Note: Pursuant to 409.5(d)(2) PC (as amended by Assembly Bill 750) an authorized media representative cannot facilitate the entry of a person into or facilitate the transport of a person within an area closed due to a menace to the public safety or health, if that person is not also an authorized media representative, unless it is done for the safety of the person.

MEDIA ACCESS AT PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES

As per **California Senate Bill 98**, if officers close the immediate area surrounding any emergency field command post or other area, police line, skirmish line, or other rolling closure at any demonstration, march, protest, rally, or where individuals are primarily engaged in any activity that is protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Article I of the California Constitution, the following requirements shall apply:

- A duly authorized representative of the media shall include any member of a news service, online news service, newspaper, radio, television station or network, and those persons may enter the closed area;
- Officers shall not intentionally assault, interfere with, or obstruct the duly authorized representative of the media who is gathering, receiving, or processing information for communication to the public;

Note: The Department may restrict access to a command post (i.e., the area where incident-specific information is being shared by public safety personnel, strategic decisions are being made, or deliberations are ongoing), or crime scenes for the purpose of the preservation of evidence, but **MAY NOT** restrict access to the area surrounding the command post. Members of the media have access to areas the public has access to.

- A duly authorized representative of the media who is in a closed area described above shall not be cited for failure to disperse, a violation of curfew, or other violation of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of California Penal Code Section 148, for gathering, receiving, or processing information; and,
- If a duly authorized representative of the media is detained, that member of the media shall be permitted to contact a Department supervisor immediately to challenge the detention, unless circumstances make it impossible to do so.

Note: Nothing precludes officers from enforcing other applicable laws if a member of the media is engaged in activity that is otherwise unlawful or is interfering with official law enforcement duties including, but not limited to, collecting evidence, and making arrests.

Consistent with Department Manual Section 3/579.15, Objectives of Body Worn Video, and Section 3/579.13, Digital In–Car Video System (DICVS) Use and Deployment, interactions with members of the media shall be captured on Body Worn Video and, if applicable, Digital In–Car Video.

Chapter 3

Media Credentials

NEWS MEDIA IDENTIFICATION CARDS (PRESS/MEDIA PASSES)

The Los Angeles Municipal Code authorizes the Board of Police Commissioners (BOPC) to issue news media identification cards, commonly referred to as “press/media passes.” That authority has been delegated by the BOPC to the Chief of Police. News media identification cards are valid for up to a one-year period.

Pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code Section 52.16, the exclusive purpose of a news media identification card shall be to enable the bearer “to pass through established police and fire lines in order to cover news events occurring behind such lines.” This does not apply to crime scenes.

To review the full text for the Los Angeles Municipal Code Sections 52.16(A) and (C), visit https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/los_angeles/latest/lamc/0-0-0-135802.

News media identification cards are simply a tool to easily recognize members of the media. The Department currently issues news media identification cards to assist with identification of duly authorized members of the media. The Department will honor media identification cards issued by another law enforcement agency. Freelance and independent media representatives without a news media identification card may lawfully cover an event that is open to the public.

If confronted with a situation where a person within the crowd identifies as a member of the media, officers should request a supervisor if they are unable to immediately identify the individual as an actual media representative. Department personnel should make every effort to determine whether the person has any evidence that they are gathering information for news, such as possessing a media station identification or business card. If a determination cannot be made, a PIO should be requested to assist.

Note: If a PIO is not assigned to an incident, PIOs are available off-hours and can be contacted via the Department Operations Center.

If an individual at a protest self-identifies as a member of the media but has been engaged in unlawful activity such as inciting violence or participating in the destruction of property, they can be detained or arrested for criminal behavior with or without a news media identification card.

If, during a large-scale detention or mass arrest event, an officer, supervisor, or PIO determines that an individual detained is a duly authorized member of the media that was not engaged in unlawful activity, other than failing to disperse after a dispersal order has been given, the individual should be immediately released and directed to a media staging location designated by the IC.

Note: If an IC or supervisor determines that an individual who identifies as a member of the media was engaged in unlawful activity, other than failing to disperse, the IC must ensure the arresting officers clearly articulate the individual's unlawful actions in the arrest report (e.g., how that individual was inciting violence or destroying property).

Access to Secure Police Facilities and Government Buildings

The Department may allow members of the media who possess valid government-issued press/media credentials access to secure government buildings for the purpose of attending Department media events. Examples of government-issued media credentials include an LAPD, FBI, or LA County Sheriff's Department issued press/media pass. Other government issued press/media credentials will also be reviewed and honored upon verification. Any other form of identification, such as a media station identification or business card that identifies the bearer as an employee of a media outlet may be an acceptable alternative.

Chapter 4

Ride-Along Guidelines

It is common for members of the media to go to a law enforcement agency directly and ask for a ride-along. Consistent with Department Manual Section 4/280, Private Persons in Police Vehicles, *all requests to ride in police vehicles for the purposes of gathering information for use in feature articles* shall be referred to MRD. Members of the media and/or camera crews participating in a ride-along, must abide by the following list of guidelines:

1. All media and/or camera crews attending a ride-along shall have prior approval from the Commanding Officer of MRD. Each member of the media requesting to ride in a police vehicle shall sign a waiver releasing the City of Los Angeles and the LAPD from any liability during that ride-along. The MRD has waivers specifically for members of the media.
2. Members of the media and/or camera crews who are accompanying Department personnel are prohibited from accompanying officers into areas that are not accessible to the public. This includes areas where officers gain access due to their authority as peace officers, including, but not limited to, homes, backyards, ambulances, or any area where a reasonable expectation of privacy exists. Under no circumstances shall any member of the LAPD invite any member of the media onto the private property of another person for the purpose of filming activity taking place. Members of the media shall not accompany a member of the Department during the search of private property, with or without a search warrant.

Note: The Department does not allow members of the media and/or camera crews in any areas that are not accessible to the public without prior consent from the person whose reasonable expectation of privacy exists. There is no exception to this rule.

3. Any authorization from a private person who agrees to be taped or who grants access to a non-public area, is an agreement solely between said person and the member of the media and/or a camera crew. Department personnel shall not be involved in obtaining or upholding any such form of consent.

Note: Members of the media may follow officers onto private property when the officers have a legal right to be there, if members of the media have consent from the person(s) in lawful control of the private property, and their presence does not inhibit the officers' ability to affect their duties. Additionally, members of the media may observe officers' activities from an area where they have a legal right to be.

4. Authorized Department personnel shall conduct only tasks directly related to their normal law enforcement duties and shall not grant members of the media and/or camera crews any special treatment or access that exceeds what any other person is entitled to during a ride-along.
5. Authorized Department personnel shall not allow members of the media and/or camera crews to disrupt the normal course of their law enforcement duties and shall terminate the ride-along immediately upon any such disruption.
6. All persons approved for a ride-along shall ride in a police vehicle with a supervisor. Under no circumstances shall persons engaged in ride-along activities be permitted to follow in a “convoy” style in a private vehicle.
7. Under no circumstances shall any member of the LAPD assist any member of the media in obtaining waivers from persons being filmed; nor shall Department personnel mediate or otherwise act as an intermediary in obtaining such a waiver.
8. To ensure compliance with the provisions of the Lanterman–Petris–Short Act and Section 5328 of the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC), Department personnel shall take all reasonable steps to protect the privacy of any person who they encounter that appears to have a mental disorder. This includes the evaluation, transportation, or detention of any person pursuant to the provisions of Section 5150 of the WIC.

Chapter 5

Digital Media

LAPD ONLINE

As part of the Department's commitment to public access of information, the Online Unit of the MRD is responsible for the maintenance of the LAPD Online website.

The website serves as a tool for the public to acquire information related to the Department's history, division codes, policies, sections, crime mapping and resources for crime prevention, job opportunities, as well as news media information.

The website, which receives an average of 20,000 views per day, also contains two avenues for communication between the Department and the public: the LAPD online e-mail account and E-Policing. E-Policing is a tool which facilitates direct communication between Senior Lead Officers (SLO) of various divisions and community members.

Community members who sign up for E-Policing receive crime information and safety tip e-mail updates from their Area SLO.

Police reports may also be filed online via the LAPD's Community Online Reporting Service (CORS) for various crimes including lost property, vandalism, harassing phone calls, theft-personal, theft from a vehicle, hit and run, illegal dumping, and hate crime/incidents. All CORS reports may be filed in English or Spanish. The CORS system is compliant with the Americans with Disability Act and follows the U.S. Federal standards as set forth in the Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards (Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973).

SOCIAL MEDIA

The Department provides the public with information through a large number of social media channels. The LAPD Headquarters, LAPD PIO, Join LAPD, the Chief of Police, each of the 21 Community Police Stations, the four Traffic Divisions, and several specialized divisions operate their own Facebook, X (formerly known as Twitter), and/or Instagram accounts.

The purpose of these social media channels is to provide the public with real-time information on matters of public safety and community interest. Each division posts their own content related to crime information, traffic alerts, community events, and other information that is relevant to the public in their area. The public and the media are encouraged to follow these accounts to stay informed on the latest from the LAPD.

You can access the various social media links and the Department's social media policy on the LAPD website at http://lapdonline.org/social_media. The Department can provide social media best practices for groups or individuals when requested. Department employees who have questions and/or suggestions related to social media can contact Media Relations Division at (213) 486-5910.

LAPD TRADEMARK AND LICENSING

The LAPD badge, uniform, motto (“to protect and to serve”), acronym (LAPD) and any other mark–design–motto–insignia that is readily identifiable and/or associated with the LAPD are trademarks of the City of Los Angeles. As a high–profile law enforcement agency, these marks are often portrayed in film, merchandise, and other entertainment media.

In 2006, the Department established the Entertainment and Trademark Unit (ETU). Per the Mayor’s directive to enhance filming in Los Angeles, ETU is the Department’s liaison with the entertainment industry. The ETU is responsible for coordinating with the Intellectual Property Law Unit within the City Attorney’s Office in order to facilitate the proper use of the LAPD trademark as well as filming access and location agreements.

The ETU is responsible for coordinating the Department’s participation in entertainment-based projects such as documentaries, filming on LAPD property, and research requests.

There is a monetary cost to licensing the trademark and securing film locations at Department sites. Information on applying for a trademark license or access agreement can be found on the website at <http://lapdonline.org>.

APPENDIX

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT

PREAMBLE:

The Los Angeles Police Department is committed to serving the community while protecting the rights of all persons. Consistent with this commitment, the Department's Vision, Mission, and Core Values, in concert with the Law Enforcement Code of Ethics and the Department's Management Principles, reflect the guiding philosophy of the Los Angeles Police Department.

VISION:

It is the vision of the Los Angeles Police Department to, as closely as possible, achieve a City free from crime and public disorder.

MISSION:

It is the mission of the Los Angeles Police Department to safeguard the lives and property of the people we serve, to reduce the incidence and fear of crime, and to enhance public safety while working with the diverse communities to improve their quality of life. Our mandate is to do so with honor and integrity, while at all times conducting ourselves with the highest ethical standards to maintain public confidence.

CORE VALUES:

SERVICE TO OUR COMMUNITIES

We are dedicated to enhancing public safety and reducing the fear and the incidence of crime. People in our communities are our most important customers. Our motto "To Protect and to Serve" is not just a slogan – it is our way of life. We will work in partnership with the people in our communities and do our best, within the law, to solve community problems that affect public safety. We value the great diversity of people in both our residential and business communities and serve all with equal dedication.

REVERENCE FOR THE LAW

We have been given the honor and privilege of enforcing the law. We must always exercise integrity in the use of the power and authority that have been given to us by the people. Our personal and professional behavior should be a model for all to follow. We will obey and support the letter and the spirit of the Law.

COMMITMENT TO LEADERSHIP

We believe the Los Angeles Police Department should be a leader in Law Enforcement. We also believe that each individual needs to be a leader in his or her area of responsibility. Making sure that our values become part of our day-to-day work life is our mandate. We must each work to ensure that our co-workers, our professional colleagues and our communities have the highest respect for the Los Angeles Police Department.

INTEGRITY IN ALL WE SAY AND DO

Integrity is our standard. We are proud of our profession and will conduct ourselves in a manner that merits the respect of all people. We will demonstrate honest, ethical behavior in all our interactions. Our actions will match our words. We must have the courage to stand up for our beliefs and do what is right. Throughout the ranks, the Los Angeles Police Department has a long history of integrity and freedom from corruption. Upholding this proud tradition is a challenge we must all continue to meet.

RESPECT FOR PEOPLE

Working with the Los Angeles Police Department should be challenging and rewarding. Our people are our most important resource. We can best serve the many and varied needs of our communities by empowering our employees to fulfill their responsibilities with knowledge, authority, and appropriate discretion. We encourage our people to submit ideas, we listen to their suggestions, and we help them develop to their maximum potential. We believe in treating all people with respect and dignity. We show concern and empathy for the victims of crime and treat violators of the law with fairness and dignity. By demonstrating respect for others, we will earn respect for the Los Angeles Police Department.

QUALITY THROUGH CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

We will strive to achieve the highest level of quality in all aspects of our work. We can never be satisfied with the “status quo.” We must aim for continuous improvement in serving the people in our communities. We value innovation and support creativity. We realize that constant change is a way of life in a dynamic city like Los Angeles, and we dedicate ourselves to proactively seeking new and better ways to serve.

APPLICABLE LAPD MANUAL SECTIONS

The following LAPD Manual Sections apply to the police working with members of the media.

VOLUME 1

- **420.10 ROLE OF THE NEWS MEDIA.**
- **420.20 ROLE OF THE DEPARTMENT.**
- **420.30 DEPARTMENT PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER.**
- **420.40 RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION.**
- **420.50 SCOPE AND CONTENT OF THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION.**
- **420.55 CRITICAL INCIDENT VIDEO RELEASE POLICY.**
- **420.60 NEWS MEDIA IDENTIFICATION CARDS.**
- **420.70 NEWS REPORTERS ENTERING AN AREA CLOSED PURSUANT TO STATUTE.**
- **420.75 ALLOWING NEWS REPORTERS TO ENTER AREA OF A SERIOUS POLICE INCIDENT OR CRIME SCENE.**
- **420.80 WHERE A NEWS REPORTER IS NOT AUTHORIZED.**
- **420.85 NEWS MEDIA NOT EXEMPT FROM LAWS.**
- **420.90 REQUESTING WITHHOLDING OF PUBLICATION.**
- **420.95 SEARCH OF NEWS MEDIA FACILITIES.**
- **440.10 REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION.**
- **440.20 PERMISSION FOR USE OF DEPARTMENT FACILITIES.**
- **440.30 COOPERATION FOR FEATURE ARTICLES OR PROGRAMS.**
- **440.40 RESPONSIBILITY OF OFFICERS TO SUPPLY INFORMATION.**
- **440.50 PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAMS AND EDUCATION.**
- **440.60 TOURS OF POLICE FACILITIES.**

Note: The LAPD Manual is modified as legislative law changes.

To review the full text for the LAPD Manual Sections please visit:

<https://www.lapdonline.org/lapd-manual/>.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

AL CRESPO v CITY OF LOS ANGELES, FEDERAL CASE NO. CV 00-08869

These mandates originate from a binding settlement agreement arising out of the 2000 Democratic National Convention, and include the following:

Under the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, it is not uncommon for large numbers of people to assemble for the purpose of demonstrating their opinions. At such demonstrations, it is the Police Department's obligation to protect individuals' First Amendment rights, maintain order, and protect lives and property. Occasionally, demonstrations become unlawful. In such circumstances, pursuant to California Penal Code Sections 407 and 409, an assembly may be declared unlawful, and all persons present, including members of the news media, may be lawfully ordered to disperse.

Note: Effective January 1, 2022, CA Senate Bill 98 added Penal Code 409.7 which amended the law in regard to media access at public assemblies.

The law provides that police officers may use reasonable force to disperse an unlawful assembly and to effect the arrest of violators. The Department's Use of Force Policy applies to such actions. The Department's policies concerning interaction with the news media are described in the relevant provision in Volume One of the Department Manual, the Department's Emergency Operations Guide, and the Department's Media Guide.

1. The Department recognizes that the news media has the right, without interfering with police operations, to cover events that may result in the declaration of an unlawful assembly and order to disperse. To the extent reasonably possible under the circumstances, the LAPD will make efforts to accommodate this reporting obligation. However, such efforts will be made consistent with the LAPD's primary obligation to maintain public safety and order.
2. Except for spontaneously occurring events, whenever the LAPD develops an operations plan for an event the Department is aware will involve a public assembly, the Department will, where practicable, designate an area outside of the anticipated impacted area, but within reasonable viewing distance and audible range of the event, in which members of the media may assemble. To the extent reasonably possible under the circumstances, the Department will try to prevent the media staging location from becoming part of any area impacted by an unlawful assembly declaration and order to disperse. However, the decision to assume the risk of danger involved in covering a public event remains with the individual news reporter making such decision, provided that any such decision does not constitute a waiver by a reporter of any constitutional or other legal rights.
3. The selection of the media staging location will take into consideration public and officer safety, police tactics, input provided by members of the media, if any, and the ability of the LAPD to prevent the location from becoming part of the impacted area. The final selection of the media staging location will be made by the IC in charge of the event.

4. To the extent reasonably possible without compromising public or officer safety or police tactics, the IC will relocate the media staging location if, due to changing conditions, the initial area no longer affords members of the media a reasonable view of the event.
5. Pursuant to Volume 2 of the LAPD Emergency Operations Guide, the LAPD IC will designate a PIO or Information Officer as part of the Incident Command System in order to facilitate interaction with members of the media. The PIO or Information Officer will be clearly identified at the scene.

CALIFORNIA PUBLIC RECORDS ACT REQUESTS

The California Public Records Act (CPRA), Government Code Sections 7920–7931, established the right of the public to access public records. Department records are subject to public disclosure unless a specific legal exemption exists. Members of the media and the public may submit a CPRA request for information by visiting the home page and typing CPRA in the search window (https://www.lapdonline.org/i_want_to_know/content_basic_view/36329).

The 10–day period mentioned in the act is not a legal deadline for producing records. The 10 days allows the agency to review records, if it is not clear that they are public records. As soon as a determination is made, it will be at that time the records shall be released.

The rights under the CPRA provide for the inspection of public records or to obtain copies of identifiable records. It does not compel the agency to create lists or reports in response to the request. Agencies may charge for the "direct costs" for providing copies of an identifiable record.

APPLICABLE LOS ANGELES MUNICIPAL CODES

Los Angeles Municipal Code Sections 52.16(A) and (C)

Visit https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/los_angeles/latest/lamc/0-0-0-135802.

APPLICABLE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY BILLS

SENATE BILL 98

SB 98 Public Peace: Media Access

Existing law makes every person who willfully resists, delays, or obstructs any public officer, peace officer, or an emergency medical technician, as defined, in the discharge or attempt to discharge any duty of the office or employment, when no other punishment is prescribed, guilty of a misdemeanor. Existing law also authorizes specified peace officers to close an area where a menace to the public health or safety is created by a calamity and to close the immediate area surrounding any emergency field command post or other command post activated for the purpose of abating a calamity, riot, or other civil disturbance, as specified. Existing law makes any unauthorized person who willfully and knowingly enters those areas and who remains in the area after receiving notice to evacuate or leave guilty of a misdemeanor. Existing law exempts a duly authorized representative of any news service, newspaper, or radio or television station or network from the provisions prohibiting entry into the closed areas, as specified.

This bill would, if peace officers close the immediate area surrounding any emergency field command post or any other command post, or establish a police line, or rolling closure at a demonstration, march, protest, or rally where individuals are engaged primarily in constitutionally protected activity, as described, require that a duly authorized representative of any news service, online news service, newspaper, or radio or television station or network, as described, be allowed to enter those closed areas and would prohibit a peace officer or other law enforcement officer from intentionally assaulting, interfering with, or obstructing a duly authorized representative who is gathering, receiving, or processing information for communication to the public. The bill would also prohibit a duly authorized representative who is in a closed area and gathering, receiving, or processing information from being cited for the failure to disperse, a violation of a curfew, or a violation of other, specified law. The bill would require that if a representative is detained by a peace officer or other law enforcement officer, the representative be permitted to contact a supervisory officer immediately for the purpose of challenging the detention. The bill would not impose criminal liability. The bill would state the Legislature's intention to achieve parity in the access and protections in these circumstances as those established pursuant to a specified law.

SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature that this act achieve parity in the access and protections for journalists and news media as those established pursuant to Section 409.5 of the Penal Code.

SEC. 2. Section 409.7 is added to the Penal Code, to read:

409.7 (a) If peace officers, as defined in Chapter 4.5 (commencing with Section 830) of Title 3 of Part 2, close the immediate area surrounding any emergency field command post or any other command post, or establish a police line, or rolling closure at a demonstration, march, protest, or rally where individuals are engaged in activity that is protected pursuant to the First Amendment to the United States Constitution or Article I of the California Constitution, the following requirements shall apply:

- (1) A duly authorized representative of any news service, online news service, newspaper, or radio or television station or network may enter the closed areas described in this section.
- (2) A peace officer or other law enforcement officer shall not intentionally assault, interfere with, or obstruct the duly authorized representative of any news service, online news service, newspaper, or radio or television station or network who is gathering, receiving, or processing information for communication to the public.
- (3) A duly authorized representative of any news service, online news service, newspaper, or radio or television station or network that is in a closed area described in this section shall not be cited for the failure to disperse, a violation of a curfew, or a violation of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Section 148, for gathering, receiving, or processing information. If the duly authorized representative is detained by a peace officer or other law enforcement officer, that representative shall be permitted to contact a supervisory officer immediately for the purpose of challenging the detention, unless circumstances make it impossible to do so.

(b) This section does not prevent a law enforcement officer from enforcing other applicable laws if the person is engaged in activity that is unlawful.

(c) This section does not impose, and shall not be used as the basis for, criminal liability.

SENATE BILL 978

SB 978 Law Enforcement Agencies: Public Records.

Existing law establishes within the Department of Justice the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training and requires the commission to adopt rules establishing minimum standards regarding the recruitment and training of peace officers.

Existing law, the CPRA, generally requires each state and local agency to make its public records available for inspection by a member of the public, unless the public record is specifically exempted from disclosure.

The act further requires every state and local agency to duplicate disclosable public records, either on paper or in an electronic format, if so requested by a member of the public and he or she has paid certain costs of the duplication.

This bill, commenced January 1, 2020, requires the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training and each local law enforcement agency to conspicuously post on their Internet Web

sites all current standards, policies, practices, operating procedures, and education and training materials that would otherwise be available to the public if a request was made pursuant to the California Public Records Act. By imposing this requirement on local law enforcement agencies, the bill would impose a state-mandated local program.

The California Constitution requires the state to reimburse local agencies and school districts for certain costs mandated by the state. Statutory provisions establish procedures for making that reimbursement.

SENATE BILL 1421

SB 1421 Peace Officers: Release of Records.

Effective January 1, 2019, Senate Bill 1421 (SB 1421) amended Penal Code Section 832.7 which generally made all peace officer personnel records and information confidential and exempt from disclosure, except by motion in a criminal, civil, or administrative action. The SB 1421 created exceptions from those general confidentiality requirements for the following categories of peace officer personnel and police investigatory records:

(A) Records relating to the report, investigation, or findings of:

- (i) an incident regarding an officer-involved shooting; or,
- (ii) an incident involving the use of force by an officer resulting in death or great bodily injury.

(B) Records relating to an incident involving a sustained finding of sexual assault by an officer involving a member of the public; and,

(C) Records relating to an incident involving a sustained finding of dishonesty by an officer directly related to the reporting, investigation, or prosecution of a crime or an investigation of misconduct by another officer.

Pen. Code § 832.7(b)(1)(A)–(C). These records are now available for public inspection and/or copying pursuant to the California Public Records Act (Cal. Govt. Code section 6250, et seq., or the “CPRA”).

The website LAPDonline.org contains documents disclosable under SB 1421 that the Los Angeles Police Department has released through the City of Los Angeles’ online public records request portal (Next Request). The Department will continue to upload records disclosed pursuant to the CPRA and SB 1421, along with audio/video redaction cost estimates (if available).

ASSEMBLY BILL 748

AB 748 Peace Officers: Video and Audio Recordings: Disclosure.

Existing law, the CPRA, requires that public records, as defined, be available to the public for inspection and made promptly available to any person. Existing law makes records of investigations conducted by any state or local police agency exempt from these requirements.

Existing law requires specified information regarding the investigation of crimes to be disclosed to the public unless disclosure would endanger the safety of a person involved in an investigation or would endanger the successful completion of the investigation.

This bill, notwithstanding the above provisions, commenced July 1, 2019, allows for a video or audio recording that relates to a critical incident, as defined, to be withheld for 45 calendar days if disclosure would substantially interfere with an active investigation, subject to extensions, as specified.

The bill allows the recording to be withheld if the public interest in withholding video or audio recording clearly outweighs the public interest in disclosure because the release of the recording would, based on the facts and circumstances depicted in the recording, violate the reasonable expectation of privacy of a subject depicted in the recording, in which case the bill would allow the recording to be redacted to protect that interest.

If the agency demonstrates the reasonable expectation of privacy of a subject depicted in the recording cannot adequately be protected through redaction, the bill requires that the recording be promptly disclosed to a subject of the recording, his or her parent, guardian, or representative, as applicable, or his or her heir, beneficiary, immediate family member, or authorized legal representative, if deceased.

ASSEMBLY BILL 750

AB 750 Menace to Public Health: Closure by Law Enforcement

On June 29, 2023, California Assembly Bill 750 (AB 750), Menace to Public Health: Closure by Law Enforcement, was enacted into law.

AB 750 was introduced in response to reports of media personnel transporting non-authorized persons into closed areas. AB 750 amends Penal Code Section 409.5 to prohibit a duly authorized representative of a news service, newspaper, radio station, television station, or network from facilitating the entry of a non-duly authorized person or transportation of that person within an area closed by law enforcement due to a menace to public safety or health, unless it is done for the safety of such person.

ASSEMBLY BILL 1475

AB 1475 Law Enforcement: Social Media

Existing law requires law enforcement agencies, departments, or entities to consider specified best practices regarding the downloading and storage of body-worn camera data, including prohibiting agency personnel from uploading recorded data onto public and social media internet websites, when establishing policies and procedures for the implementation and operation of a body-worn camera system.

This bill would prohibit a police department or sheriff's office from sharing, on social media, booking photos of an individual arrested on suspicion of committing a nonviolent crime, as defined, unless specified circumstances exist.

The bill would require a police department or sheriff's office that shares, on social media, a booking photo of an individual arrested for the suspected commission of a nonviolent crime to remove the information from its social media page, upon request, unless the same specified circumstances exist.

The bill would require a police department or sheriff's office to remove the booking photo of a person who has committed any other crime from social media if the individual's record has been sealed, the individual's conviction has been dismissed, expunged, pardoned, or eradicated pursuant to law, the individual has been issued a certificate of rehabilitation, the individual is found not guilty of committing the crime for which they were arrested, or the individual was ultimately not charged with the crime or the charges were dismissed.

More information on Senate or Assembly bills visit: <https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov>.

COMMONLY USED MEDIA TERMS

Sound Bite / “give sound”

- An interview which can be on camera or via phone.

Media Staging Location/Area

- Predetermined, designated media gathering/viewing area for static demonstrations and/or assemblies. See also: Media Staging location/area.

B-roll

- Background video may be used during a voiceover or narration.

Stringer

- A news correspondent not on the regular staff of a newspaper or tv station, especially one retained on a part-time basis to report on events in a place.

Visuals

- Can describe posters, pictures, evidence.

Multi-box

- A microphone plug-in mixer used to combine the main microphone into 1 output location.

Mic flag

- Station or news outlet identifier which is wrapped around a reporter’s microphone.

Pool camera

- A designated camera that will share footage with other news outlets.

Mug Shot

- Also known as a booking photo.

News Advisory

- Invitation to the media for a news conference or other event (i.e., Open house, toy give-away, DUI checkpoint).

News Release

- Information or event summary that is released to the media.

OIS

- Officer–Involved Shooting.

Media Availability

- A less formal media press conference that allows media the opportunity to ask questions of the LAPD participant.

White Balance

- Used by photographers and camera persons to focus and color balance their camera's brightness and contrast.

Sound Check

- Verification the microphones are operational and audio levels are optimal prior to recording.

STATEMENT TEMPLATE

- Begin by introducing yourself. Include your rank, assignment and spell your name.
“This is an evolving [situation, incident, event], and I have preliminary information to share. As more detail and additional facts become available, I will update you. Right now, what I can tell you is....”
- At approximately [time], a [brief description of what happened].
- The situation is [fluid, active, under] control. We are working with [local, state, federal] partners to [investigate, resolve, determine how this happened].
- We have a [system, plan, procedure, operation] in place. We are being assisted by [local public health officials, emergency response officials] as part of that plan.
- At this point, we do not know [how long the scene will stay active, shelters will stay open, etc.].
- We will continue to gather information and release it to you as soon as possible. I will be back to you within [amount of time in minutes or hours] to give you an update. As soon as we have confirmed releasable information, it will be provided.
- We ask for your patience as we respond to this [situation, incident, event].”

Note: This template is a guide, and it is not all encompassing. Every situation is distinct, and statements made by the Department related to an incident will be based on available information.

For any questions or advice, MRD can be contacted during business hours at (213) 486–5910 and off–hours through the Department Operations Center.



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