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 	CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AGENCY Approved by: <u>Brenda Donald</u> Agency Director Date: <u>December 5, 2012</u>	REVISION HISTORY: October 27, 2004
LATEST REVISION: December 5, 2012	EFFECTIVE DATE: October 27, 2004	

I. AUTHORITY	The Director of the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA or Agency) adopts this policy to be consistent with the Agency's mission and applicable federal and District of Columbia laws and regulations, including DC Official Code §2-531 - §2-536, and §4-1303.31.
II. APPLICABILITY	All Agency employees and contract personnel.
III. RATIONALE	As the District agency charged with promoting safety, well-being, and permanence for children and families that come to the attention of the District of Columbia's child welfare system, CFSA has an obligation to inform the public about activities and progress related to the Agency's charge. Specifically, the Agency is accountable for communicating to six key stakeholder groups: (1) clients, (2) child welfare advocates, (3) CFSA and contracted employees, (4) community partners (such as private providers and foster parents), (5) the general public, and (6) oversight authorities. CFSA is committed to free and open provision of information about the Agency's mission, programs, services, initiatives, policies, and role as a public agency serving children and families.
IV. POLICY	It is the policy of CFSA to accurately communicate the scope and function of the Agency to key stakeholders. Such communication occurs through CFSA's public and media relations, which includes a recognized Agency logo. It is also the Agency's policy to inform stakeholders of Agency activities related to the safety of children and to provide stakeholders with general information regarding staff and policies
V. CONTENTS	A. Agency Logo/Graphic Image B. Public-Media Relations C. External Communication

<p>VI. PROCEDURES</p>	<p>Procedure A: Agency Logo/Graphic Image</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CFSA uses the Agency-specific logo below to identify official Agency materials, e.g., stationary, policies, forms, publications, and web sites. <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The logo may appear in any size that is compatible with the use of official documents as long as its overall proportions remain constant. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. When the logo is printed in color, the original coloring is always used. b. It is prohibited to alter the logo design, typeface, proportions, or color. 3. CFSA's Office of Public Information (OPI) is the authority on the Agency logo and its uses. 4. Unofficial use of the Agency logo is prohibited.
	<p>Procedure B: Public-Media Relations</p> <p>The following responsibilities for CFSA's relations with the public and the media are under the purview of OPI:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Routine media inquiries <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. OPI is the primary and initial contact for media interactions. b. On a case-by-case basis, OPI determines whether to select and prepare the most appropriate management spokesperson to address media queries. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Spokespersons include but are not limited to CFSA's director, principle deputy director, or any of the deputy directors. ii. Alternate spokespersons may be designated by any of the above individuals to respond to a media request when the subject matter concerns a particular area of expertise, authority, responsibility, or accountability. c. No employee should represent CFSA to the media or respond to queries without approval and guidance from OPI. 2. Generating and coordinating media coverage of the Agency 3. Acting as a clearinghouse for Agency information 4. Organizing media interviews as well as photography and videotaping opportunities within Agency facilities 5. Escorting representatives of the media on CFSA premises

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	<p>6. Protecting client confidentiality (pursuant to CFSA’s <i>Confidentiality Policy</i>)</p> <p>a. Unless a client provides formal, written consent in advance, CFSA cannot allow media or others to interview, photograph, or videotape clients when the potential exists for the resulting material to reveal the client’s status with CFSA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. When client input is vital to a story that may reveal a client’s status with CFSA, OPI works with appropriate CFSA staff to obtain informed consent for any interviews or photography or videography sessions that may be published, broadcast, or posted. ii. For clients under age 18, OPI provides a waiver of confidentiality for the client’s parent to sign, providing that the Family Court has not terminated parental rights (TPR). iii. If the parent is unavailable, OPI provides sufficient information to allow the assigned assistant attorney general to request the Family Court’s permission for participation, as appropriate. iv. For clients under age 18 for whom a TPR does apply, CFSA has the legal authority to sign the waiver of confidentiality. v. Clients age 18 or older may sign their own waivers of confidentiality at their own discretion. <p>b. The procedures cited above also apply to private providers under contract to CFSA.</p>
	<p>Procedure C: External Communication</p> <p>For purposes of this policy, “external communication” is defined as any officially printed, recorded, electronic, or verbal information targeted toward the Agency’s external stakeholders on a mass basis. The following examples apply:</p> <p>1. Public Information</p> <p>a. Definition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. “Public information” is any item that meets any or all of the following criteria: printed, recorded, and electronic material created or procured by CFSA and communicated on an official, mass basis to external stakeholders. ii. Public information includes but is not limited to banners, booklets, brochures, direct-mail letters, blast emails, fact sheets, flyers, handbooks, manuals, social media channels, newsletters, posters, signs, videos, and web postings. iii. Excluded from this definition are any Agency forms, automatic responses to incoming email, individual correspondence, reports that are mandated by law or by court orders, and official notices that are automatically generated by a computer system.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Centralized development, review, and approval of public information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Responsibility for recommending, conceptualizing, developing, producing, and revising (as needed) Agency-related public information is centralized within OPI. ii. OPI fulfills program requests for communication support based on identified needs for dissemination of public information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) When programs choose to develop their own publications, they submit drafts to OPI with sufficient lead time to allow for a thorough review and approval before distribution. b) CFSA employees and programs must obtain approval from OPI before establishing CFSA-related social media accounts, websites, blogs, and other forms of online communication. c. OPI has the discretion to obtain official public information from other organizations for purposes of dissemination to staff or stakeholders when such information furthers understanding of the Agency or when the information eliminates duplicative efforts on the part of CFSA. Some examples are materials from the federal government, National Association of Social Workers, or Child Welfare League of America. <p>2. Advertising</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Definition - For purposes of this policy, “advertising” is defined as any material that meets the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Printed, recorded, or electronic materials ii. Created or produced by or in partnership with CFSA for external audiences iii. Distributed via paid or donated space or time in local, regional, or national mass or social media venues b. Advertising campaigns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Development and placement of mass or social media Agency advertising and public information campaigns are under the sole purview of OPI. ii. OPI is the only entity authorized to make an Agency commitment for paid advertising or for Agency public information for promotional purposes. iii. Managers with a need for mass promotion must contact OPI with sufficient lead time to ensure timely, accurate, high-quality, strategic, and cost-effective advertising. c. Exceptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Development and placement of Agency advertising to recruit employees is under the sole purview of the CFSA Human Resources Administration (HRA). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) HRA is the only entity authorized to make Agency commitments for paid or public service advertising for purposes of employee recruitment. b) Managers with a need to recruit workers should contact HRA for assistance.
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	<p>c) Upon request from staff at the level of program administrator or above, CFSA's Contracting & Procurement Administration and/or the Office of General Counsel may develop and place one or more of the following legal notices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of competitive bids • Availability of material for public inspection • Public meetings or hearings <p>3. Official Agency representation</p> <p>a. Whenever CFSA or CFSA-contracted employees are on their tour of duty, the staff members are considered to be representing both CFSA and the District's child welfare system.</p> <p>b. Formal Speaking Engagements</p> <p>i. To increase public understanding of CFSA's scope and function, the Agency may provide one or more knowledgeable, competent speakers for public and community speaking requests.</p> <p>ii. Staff members at the level of program administrator and above are considered official representatives of CFSA and may seek or accept formal speaking engagements. They may also designate other employees at any level to speak or represent them.</p> <p>iii. Employees below the level of program administrator who wish to speak about CFSA in front of a public, community, or professional forum must obtain approval from OPI or from their program administrator.</p> <p>iv. Upon advance request, OPI helps Agency staff prepare for speaking engagements and provides public information materials for handouts.</p> <p>c. Formal participation in external groups</p> <p>i. CFSA staff at the level of program administrator and above may represent the Agency on external boards, committees, panels, and other groups as long as no conflicts of interest exist. They may also designate employees as representatives.</p> <p>ii. Administrators are responsible for ensuring that employees who are representing the Agency are free from conflicts of interest and prepared with sufficient information and authority to provide representation in CFSA's best interest.</p> <p>d. Publicizing opinions</p> <p>i. Staff must obtain advance permission from OPI if they wish to represent CFSA in the mass media, including submission of letters to the editor, op-ed articles, online comments, blogs, or other opinion pieces for publication or broadcast.</p> <p>ii. OPI prepares (or reviews) and approves all Agency opinion materials for mass and social media publication or broadcast.</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. Staff members who wish to express their opinions publicly as private citizens are prohibited from using Agency letterhead, computers, telephones, fax machines, postage, or other CFSA resources to express those opinions. Staff is also prohibited from citing any connection with CFSA while expressing private opinions. <p>4. Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Employees must obtain approval from the Office of the Chief of Staff before committing the Agency to co-sponsor any events with outside organizations. b. CFSA-related events should take place in the District of Columbia unless the following circumstances apply: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. There are several jurisdictions involved and the group decides to hold the event in another jurisdiction. ii. CFSA is a co-sponsor with another organization that has the major role in financing the event. iii. Participants for the event are located primarily outside of the District. <p>5. Endorsements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Any staff member who is asked for an Agency endorsement of a policy, position, event, or proposal forwards the request to the appropriate program administrator for a decision. b. CFSA and private agency employees are prohibited from endorsing outside organizations or their products and services for promotional purposes.
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