



Communications Contact: Lola Potter
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Goal: F&A should provide timely, accurate and consistent information to the news media, whether mainstream media or nontraditional and “new” media, such as online news services.

F&A’s communications director oversees communications with media for all divisions of the department except Benefits Administrations, which directs its communications separately.

F&A communications is the primary point of contact for public information and media relations for the department. All interactions with the media are to be coordinated through communications.

F&A’s communications director is available at any time to assist the department in responding to media requests, which are often outside normal business hours. Communications will work with others, including the commissioner’s office, the governor’s communications office and counterparts in other agencies. It’s crucial that we collaborate with these contacts on any external communications.

If you receive a call from a reporter, try to avoid simply telling him/her to call communications. A simple way to handle this is:

“We will be glad to provide you with information, but we want to make sure you speak with the correct person on this issue. If you’ll give me your name and number, we’ll get back with you quickly.”

Once communications is notified, we’ll make sure we have all the information we need before returning the call, and make sure we are coordinating with others as necessary.

If a reporter asks, “Why can’t you tell me ... “ the answer is always:

“We want to make sure you speak with the correct person.”

If you receive a message from a reporter on your voicemail or receive an email from a reporter, please forward the email to communications or notify the communications office of a phone message and we will return the reporter’s call.

Being Proactive in Reactive Situations

In addition to reporting media inquiries immediately, staff should report any issues that are likely to become of interest to the media to the communications office. This early notification will allow us to collaborate with appropriate communications colleagues, to be pro-active where appropriate, and to be prepared with responses.

Telling our Story

F&A has a story to tell: we support agencies that are serving Tennesseans. If you have a success, award, positive feedback from customer agencies, or are involved in a project or business function of service to sister agencies or Tennesseans, we want to tell that story. Contact communications and we can work together on the best way to do that.

Social Media *Note: Benefits Administration has a separate social media team.*

Some noteworthy tips about social media:

- All F&A sites must be public.
- All posts are public record.
- Media responses are never handled through social media outlets - they should be handled by the communications team.
- Our sites strive to reflect the work and culture of F&A.

F&A social media sites:

Facebook/FinanceAndAdministration

(<https://www.facebook.com/financeandadministration/>)

Twitter/@TNDeptofFandA

YouTube/TennDeptFinanceAdmin

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/tn-dept-of-finance-and-administration/>