

RESOLUTION NO. 10-19009

A RESOLUTION OF THE BILLINGS, MONTANA, CITY COUNCIL ADOPTING A POLICY ON COMMUNICATIONS WITH OR THROUGH THE MEDIA AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR TO ENACT RULES AND PROCEDURES GIVING THE POLICY FORCE AND EFFECT AND INCLUDING AN EXPIRATION DATE.

WHEREAS, the Billings City Council wishes to ensure that accurate and consistent information is provided to the media on matters relating to the City of Billings and all its departments; and

WHEREAS, the City Council also wishes to ensure that legally protected, private, proprietary privileged or sensitive information is not released, and that investigations are not compromised and the identity of undercover law enforcement investigators and confidential informants are not disclosed; and

WHEREAS, the City Council wishes to foster interest in the services and activities of the City and to disseminate useful information to those it serves by responding to media inquiries in a way that builds trust and credibility.

WHEREAS, procedures implementing the Communications With or Through the Media Policy are being adopted contemporaneously by Administrative Order.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BILLINGS, MONTANA AS FOLLOWS:

1. That the City of Billings hereby adopts the Communications With or Through the Media Policy, which is set forth in Attachment "A".
2. That this Resolution and the attached Policy shall be reviewed within three years of its adoption.

APPROVED AND PASSED by the City Council of the City of Billings, this 25th day of October, 2010.



ATTEST:

THE CITY OF BILLINGS

By: Thomas W. Hanel  
Thomas W. Hanel, Mayor

BY: Cari Martin  
Cari Martin, City Clerk

# Communications With or Through the Media

## **PURPOSE**

- To ensure and protect the security, safety and integrity of the City of Billings, its departments, its employees, other individuals and entities, and the public.
- To ensure that accurate and consistent information is provided to the media on matters relating to the City of Billings and all departments of the City of Billings.
- To ensure that legally protected private, proprietary, privileged, or sensitive information is not improperly released.
- To ensure that investigations are not compromised and the identity of undercover law enforcement investigators and confidential informants are not disclosed.
- To ensure the quality and professionalism of all communications with and through the media.
- To respond to media inquiries in a way that builds trust and credibility.
- To ensure productive and respectful relations with the media and with other government entities with whom the City of Billings works and/or cooperates.
- To foster interest in the services and activities of the City of Billings and disseminate useful information to those it serves.

**DEFINITIONS** The following definitions apply to this Policy:

**Media:** Any print, radio, television, online, or other outlet which provides news and/or information locally, state-wide, nationally and/or internationally. This includes social media, such as Facebook and Twitter, when your communications are broadly accessible.

**Crisis:** Death or serious injury of one or more individuals, or the threat of death or injury to one or more individuals. Examples include

bomb threats or scares, explosions, hostage situations, standoffs or encounters with armed individuals, serious vehicular accidents, and other situations of a similarly serious nature.

**Disaster:** A serious incident, such as a fire, flood, landslide, earthquake, unusually heavy snow or ice, multiple vehicle accident, accident involving an airplane, bus, train or other public transportation, large explosion, and any other incident of a similarly serious nature.

**Emergency:** Any other circumstances that make it necessary to take quick action to prevent significant harm to persons and/or property.

**Media Contact**

**Supervisor:** The person listed in the attached Media Contact List for your department.

**AUTHORITY TO IMPLEMENT PROCEDURES**

The City Administrator is authorized to develop and maintain procedures to enact this policy.

**PERIODIC REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the City Council.

**POLICY**

Each employee of the City of Billings shall understand and respect the distinction between acceptable communication with or through the media as an employee and acceptable communication with or through the media as an individual, where the communication is related to the City or is related to or arises from the employee's employment with the City.

## **MEDIA CONTACT LIST**

List each department and its Media Contact Supervisor