

IDAHO STATE POLICE PROCEDURE

02.05 PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND COMMUNICATIONS

I. General

The Idaho State Police (ISP) recognizes the public's right to information regarding its activities and operations. This procedure establishes standards for all public communication to ensure accuracy, consistency, legal compliance, and the protection of investigative integrity, agency operations, and individual privacy.

This procedure applies to all public communications made on behalf of ISP, including media interviews, news releases, social media communications, digital assets, and the use of personal social media. Employees shall understand and adhere to this procedure and the following:

[**EHF 02.05.01 – Media Interviews**](#)

[**EHF 02.05.02 – News Releases**](#)

[**EHF 02.05.03 – Official Social Media Accounts**](#)

[**EHF 02.05.04 – Digital Assets**](#)

[**EHF 02.05.05 – Employee Personal Social Media Use**](#)

- A. All public communications shall be released through the official ISP digital ecosystem. Employees shall not release information through personal email accounts or personal platforms.
- B. Employees are responsible for ensuring that all public communications comply with this procedure, applicable law, and related procedures. Communications may impact investigations, operations, and public confidence.
- C. Any digital asset created by employees while on duty or using agency equipment is the property of ISP and subject to retention and disclosure requirements.
- D. Digital assets and communications may be subject to subpoena, discovery, or public records requests in administrative, civil, or criminal proceedings. Employees using personal devices for agency-related communications must be aware that their devices may be subject to disclosure.
- E. Digital assets that constitute evidence shall be preserved in accordance with applicable law and procedures. Exceptions may apply as outlined in [**EHF 08.08 - Social Media for Undercover Operations**](#).
- F. Employees have no expectation of privacy when using agency systems or equipment for public communications.

II. Definitions

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The following definitions apply to this procedure and related Public Affairs Office (PAO) communication activities.

- A. “Digital Asset” is all content created or used by ISP, including documents, photographs, video, graphics, audio, and other media for public use.
- B. “Digital Ecosystem” is the interconnected network of digital platforms, systems, and tools used to create, manage, and distribute information on behalf of ISP, including websites, social media, and other public-facing technologies.
- C. “Media” refers to individuals or organizations that gather and disseminate information to the public, including traditional news outlets, digital media, independent journalists, and content producers.
- D. “Official ISP Social Media Account” is a digital account created or approved by ISP for official agency communication with the public.
- E. “Personal Social Media” are digital accounts owned and managed by an individual for personal use that are not created, authorized, or controlled by ISP.
- F. The “Public Affairs Office” is the unit responsible for ISP media relations and public communications, including the Communications Director, Headquarters Public Information Officer (HQ PIO), and other designated personnel who support agency messaging and public outreach.

III. Information Authorized for Release

Unless restricted by law, court order, or investigative necessity, the following information may be released through official ISP communication channels. The release of information is subject to coordination with investigative personnel and the PAO when appropriate.

- A. The date, time, and general location of an incident.
- B. The general nature of the incident and a brief description of the circumstances.
- C. Age, gender, and hometown of involved individuals when consistent with privacy and investigative considerations.
- D. The general condition of injured people using broad terms such as fatal, critical, serious, minor, or non-life-threatening.
- E. The fact that an arrest has occurred, including the applicable criminal charge(s) and location where the individual was booked.
- F. A general description of vehicles, property, or other items involved.

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- G. The identity of suspects after initial court arraignment when the information becomes publicly available through the court system, unless earlier release is necessary to protect public safety or assist in suspect apprehension.
- H. The names of assisting law enforcement or public safety agencies.
- I. Information related to road closures, traffic hazards, weather conditions, or other public safety notifications.

IV. Information Prohibited from Release

The following restrictions apply to public communications made by employees on behalf of ISP, including media interviews, news releases, social media, website postings, and other official ISP communications. These restrictions do not apply to the release of records in response to a Public Records Request, which is governed by applicable law and [EHF 02.06 - Public Records Requests](#).

A. *General Restrictions*

Information shall not be released if doing so would:

1. Jeopardize the safety of the public, media, or law enforcement.
2. Compromise an ongoing criminal investigation, law enforcement operation or prosecutorial process.
3. Reveal law enforcement tactics, operational details, or sensitive investigative methods.
4. Violate the legal rights, privacy, or due process of any individual.

B. *Specific Restrictions*

The following information shall not be released unless authorized by law or investigative necessity for public safety purposes:

1. Name of an arrestee prior to initial court arraignment.
2. Identity of victims or witnesses.
3. Specific medical details or descriptions of injuries beyond general condition.
4. The identity of deceased individuals prior to official release by the county coroner, unless release is requested by the coroner's office.
5. The identity of any juvenile unless authorized by law.

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6. Identifying information of a reporting party in cases involving child abuse, neglect, or related investigations.
7. The identity of confidential informants or sources.
8. The results or details of investigative procedures, including lineups, polygraph examinations, fingerprint comparisons, or forensic analysis.
9. Information that could interfere with suspect apprehension or investigative strategy.
10. Evidentiary information that could compromise criminal or civil proceedings, including statements, confessions, or evidence not presented in court.