Communication Basics
A Quick Guide

CITY OF STOCKTON

Contact Us!

Planning Communications

Communicating with and reaching out to the community is essential to open and transparent government. No matter how large or small the effort, planned communication is successful communication.

News Release (aka Press Release)

A News Release is the foundation of communication.

- DRAFT the press release, and make sure it answers the questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? and How?
- Send your DRAFT press release to the City Manager's Office for review, edits and to be distributed to the media. It will be posted to the City's website, sent to print, radio and television media outlets, community-based organizations, and to over 2,000 people who have signed up to receive email notifications through Ask Stockton.
- Remember to follow the 7 Cs of Communication:
  1. **Clear:** Make the goal of your message clear to your recipient. Ask yourself what the purpose of your communication is.
  2. **Concise:** Your message should also be brief and to the point. Why communicate your message in six sentences when you can do it in three?
  3. **Concrete:** Ensure your message has important details and facts, but that nothing deters the focus of your message.
  4. **Correct:** Make sure what you're writing or saying is accurate. Bad information doesn't help anybody. Also make sure that your message is typo free.
  5. **Coherent:** Does your message make sense? Check to see that all of your points are relevant and that everything is consistent with the tone and flow or your text.
  6. **Complete:** Your message is complete when all relevant information is included in an understandable manner and there is a clear "call to action". Does your audience know what you want them to do?
  7. **Courteous:** Ensure that your communication is friendly, open, and honest, regardless of what the message is about. Be empathetic and avoid passive-aggressive tones.

Website Content

- Web Team Members are responsible for updating Department web pages.
- Update website content by using your DRAFT press release as your guide.
- Everything in your press release - and in your social media post - should be available on the website...and more!
- Always link back to the webpage where additional information can be found.
- Contact the City Manager's Office to create a shortcut: www.stocktonca.gov/SpecialEvents, instead of this www.stocktonca.gov/government/departments/communityServices/specialEvents.html

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City Social Media Accounts

Social Media Policy

- Review and become familiar with the City's Social Media Accounts Policy 13.04.010.

Social Media Accounts

- Approved for use by the City Manager.
- Should not be activated without City Manager approval form submitted and signed by the City Manager.
- Content is the responsibility of the Department Director.

Social Media Posts

- Only Department contributors who have received training from the City Manager's Office may post on City social media accounts.
- City sites are for City information only; never use your personal sites for official City communication.
- Social media is an important tool, but it is not enough and should never be the only method of communication.
- While social media is less formal, grammar, spelling, punctuation and format are still very important!
- Always link back to the webpage where additional information can be found. Example: Info @ www.stocktonca.gov/SpecialEvents
- Never delete or hide a comment, except as provided for in the City's social media policy.

Graphics/Photos

- Create an eye-catching graphic or use a photo that you have permission to use.
- Make sure that it is sized correctly for the social site.
- Your social media graphic should match the design and style of any printed materials.

Poster, flyers, postcards, handouts, banners, etc.

- Create an eye-catching graphic.
- If you use a photo, make sure you have permission and have a release form on file. Do not use photos or artwork from the internet, as these are copyrighted by the person who took them or the artist.
- Social media graphics should match the design and style of any printed materials.
- Allow enough time to have materials printed and distributed.

Communications Team

Connie Cochran (209) 937-8827/connie.cochran@stocktonca.gov
Allison Aube (209) 937-5089/allison.aube@stocktonca.gov
Thom Holbrook (209) 937-8073/thom.holbrook@stocktonca.gov

Resources & Tools

- Press Release/Event
- Handouts & Flyers
- Website Content
- Social Media
- Ask Stockton
- Meetings
- Videos

July 12, 2021

Communications
A Quick Guide

Communications Team

- Connie Cochran, Community Relations Officer, (209) 937-8827 (o) - (209) 629-1251 (c) connie.cochran@stocktonca.gov
- (Vacant) Admin. Aide II, (209) 937-5089
- Thom Holbrook, Admin Aide II, (209) 937-8073 - thom.holbrook@stocktonca.gov

Communications Resources & Tools

- News Releases - (aka press releases, distributed to traditional media, e.g., print (newspapers, publications), television & radio
- Media interviews/Issues Management/Messaging
- Press conferences
- Community Outreach/Engagement - meetings, announcements, events, etc.
- Social Media - City social sites (www.stocktonca.gov/socialsites)
- Website - www.stocktonca.gov (redesign and update coming in summer 2023)
- Ask Stockton
- Chatbot (coming in early 2023)
- Government Access Television - Comcast Channel 97; AT&T U-verse menu Channel 99
- Council Fact Sheets
- Videos, Posters, flyer, mailers, handouts, photos, graphics, etc.

Resources & Tools

- Press Release/Events
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- Website Content
- Social Media
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California Public Records Act

- Public Records Act requests - log, track, process, coordinate department records
- Respond to requests for public information.

Updated February 15, 2023