



City of Coral Gables Implementation Order of the City Manager

Implementing Order No.: 2026-001

Title: Implementation of the Public Information Policy and Procedure

Ordered: 1/1/2026

Effective: 1/1/2026

City of Coral Gables Public Information Policy and Procedure

Purpose

This Public Information Policy and Procedure is to establish clear standards, roles and processes for the creation, approval and dissemination of public information by the City of Coral Gables. The policy ensures that information released to the public is accurate, timely, transparent, accessible and consistent with applicable federal and State of Florida laws, including public records and open government requirements.

It governs communications through all channels, including but not limited to media relations, social media, websites, press releases, public notices, digital publications, emergency communications and public events.

Note: The Coral Gables Police Department and Fire Department maintain their own Public Information Officers (PIOs) and may independently release information and manage their respective communication channels, including social media. In the event of a major incident or emergency, the Police and Fire PIOs must notify the City's Communications Office to ensure coordinated citywide messaging. The Coral Gables Community Recreation Department may independently manage and post content to its official social media channels, which may be subject to review by the Communications Office at any time.

Guiding Principles

The City of Coral Gables is committed to:

- Timely dissemination of information
- Compliance with public records, ethics and accessibility laws

- Professional, nonpartisan communication

Legal and Regulatory Framework

Public information activities shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including:

- Florida Public Records Law (Chapter 119, Florida Statutes)
- Florida Sunshine Law (Chapter 286, Florida Statutes)
- Florida Ethics Code (Chapter 112, Florida Statutes)
- Federal and state accessibility requirements, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- City Charter, ordinances and administrative policies

Roles and Responsibilities

1. City Commission and City Manager

- Establish overall policy direction
- Serve as primary policy spokespersons for the city
- Coordinate with the Communications Office on major announcements

2. Communications Office

The Communications Office is the central authority for public information and media relations and is responsible for:

- Developing and implementing communication strategies
- Serving as the primary point of contact for the media
- Drafting, editing and distributing official city communications
- Managing the city's official website, social media and digital platforms
- Coordinating emergency and crisis communications
- Ensuring messaging consistency across departments

3. Department Directors and Staff

- Coordinate all external communications with the Communications Office
- Designate departmental liaisons for communication needs
- Provide accurate, timely information to support public messaging

- Refrain from issuing independent public statements on city matters without authorization

4. Authorized Spokespersons

Only the following may serve as official city spokespersons unless otherwise authorized:

- Mayor and city commissioners
- City Manager
- Communications Director or manager
- Department Directors, with prior coordination and approval

Media Relations Policy

1. Media Inquiries

- All media inquiries shall be referred to the Communications Office
- The Communications Office will coordinate responses with subject-matter experts
- Responses shall be timely, factual and consistent with city policy

2. Press Releases and Media Statements

- All press releases and official statements must be reviewed and approved by the Communications director or designee
- Sensitive or high-impact communications requires City Manager review

3. Interviews and Press Conferences

- Media interviews must be coordinated through the Communications Department
- Press conferences shall be planned and staffed by the Communications Department

Digital and Social Media Communications

1. Official Platforms

- Only Communications Office approved accounts may represent the city
- Content shall align with city branding, tone and messaging standards

2. Content Standards

- Comments may be moderated in accordance with the city's social media guidelines

- Records of social media content shall be retained in compliance with public records requirements

Public Records and Information Requests

1. Public Records Requests

2. All public records requests shall be handled in coordination with the City Clerk

3. Information Accuracy

- All released information must be verified prior to publication

Crisis and Emergency Communications

1. Authority

- The Communications Office, in coordination with the City Manager and Emergency Manager, shall manage crisis communications

2. Procedures

- Prioritize public safety and timely dissemination of critical information
- Use multiple communication channels to reach diverse audiences
- Provide regular updates as conditions evolve

Accessibility and Language Access

- Public communications shall be accessible to individuals with disabilities
- Reasonable efforts shall be made to provide translations for key communications

Internal Communications

- Internal communications shall align with external messaging when appropriate

Review and Updates

This policy shall be reviewed periodically by the Communications Office and updated as necessary to reflect legal, technological or organizational changes.

APPROVED BY:

Peter J. Iglesias

City Manager

Date

10/9/2020