

Checklist: Media Relations Toolbox

PRIOR TO ELECTION DAY: (have you included information or a press release on each of the following:)

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1) Nomination paper deadlines, where and when to file? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 2) Voter registration deadlines, where and how to register? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 3) Absentee balloting - who can vote absentee, when and how? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 4) Early voting - dates, times, and locations? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 5) How, when, and where to sign up to work the polls? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 6) The date of the election and the hours the polls will be open? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| <p>✚ If the above information is given as a press release, include the date on which the information should be released.</p> <p>✚ Post all press releases on website immediately.</p> | | |
| 7) The name of the contact person who will handle media questions throughout the election season? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 8) A list of polling places? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 9) Rules and laws regarding media at polling places on Election Day? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 10) Rules and laws in your jurisdiction regarding exit polling? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 11) A list of candidates and/or public measures on the ballot? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 12) A sample ballot? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 13) Historical data, such as turnout, for previous comparable elections? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 14) Date and time of the canvas of the election results? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

INVITE MEDIA TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ELECTION PROCESS: DO YOU.....

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 15) Invite the media to meet with the commissioner of elections to discuss the details of the process? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
| 16) Invite the media to attend a pollworker training class? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |

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- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 17) Invite the media to be present when testing voting equipment? | <input type="checkbox"/> YES | <input type="checkbox"/> NO |
|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

INVITE MEDIA TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ELECTION PROCESS: DO YOU.....

18) Invite the media to be present when results are being tabulated at the central location or offer to fax or e-mail results to those media

outlets who may not be able to have a reporter present?

YES

NO

AFTER THE ELECTION: DO YOU.....

19) Provide printed results reports on election night especially for

the print media?

YES

NO

BITS OF ADVICE DEALING WITH MEDIA:

20) Never lie. Never. Ever. Period.

21) Be Available! Even if no detailed answer is possible immediately, reporters like to have their questions acknowledged within a reasonable amount time.

22) Hiding mistakes can make you look incompetent or guilty or both. In some cases, you're handing the megaphone to your critics. Even if you don't want to get into a topic, call back and politely decline.

23) Never get (visibly or audibly) angry with them.

24) Develop talking points ahead of time so you are prepared.

25) Never talk off the top of your head. If you don't know the answer, find someone who does.

26) Be proactive. Develop relationships with reporters and editorial boards.

27) Work with other jurisdictions in the same media market to produce a uniform message.

28) Almost never go off the record unless you know the reporter VERY well.

29) Never say "No Comment". If you are prohibited from discussing a matter, explain that to the reporter.

Election Center Checklist for Media Relations

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