



August 14, 2020

ALL GMD DISTRICT EMPLOYEES, PLANT MANAGERS, POSTMASTERS GMD

SUBJECT: Guidelines for Handling Local Media Inquiries

The Postal Service continuously strives to project a positive image, protect its brand, and present a unified message to the customers and communities it serves. So it is imperative that one person speaks on behalf of the Postal Service to deliver an appropriate message and to avoid giving misinformation to the media. Here are our district guidelines for how to handle media requests for official comment, including newspapers, radio, television, and social media such as Twitter and Facebook.

The most important step when receiving a media inquiry, request for information, or request for comment is to refer the media representative to the proper person. All media requests for official comment should be referred to Sabrina Todd at 517-337-8722 (work), 616-881-6937 (cell), or sabrina.a.todd@usps.gov. If you are a craft employee, you should contact your supervisor or manager, who will refer the request to Sabrina or the appropriate communications specialist. All offices are encouraged to keep this contact information close at hand for quick reference.

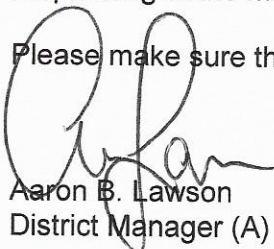
If you are contacted by a media representative, please respond politely that you are not authorized to respond on the Postal Service's behalf, but you will have an authorized person contact the representative. To that end, please ask the representative for this information:

- The name of the media representative;
- The name of the media organization;
- The representative's contact information (phone number and e-mail address); and
- A brief summary of the information requested.

After you have gathered that information, contact Sabrina Todd by phone or e-mail so an appropriate response can be developed (again, craft employees should first contact their supervisors or managers). Avoid the temptation to "answer a few questions." Keep in mind that, while most media representatives will identify themselves up front, sometimes they do not. If you are dealing with a customer, especially one who asks a series of questions, it is perfectly appropriate to ask, "Are you a member of the media?" Asking this specific question will help ensure your interaction is not used as the basis for any kind of "official" Postal Service statement or position.

Where a media inquiry could result in negative or controversial coverage, it is crucial that the Postal Service provide an official response as quickly as possible. So that such a response can be prepared, employees should contact Sabrina Todd immediately. She will work with the appropriate functional areas to develop a response that will be reviewed and approved before responding to the media.

Please make sure that all employees understand this policy. Thank you.



Aaron B. Lawson
District Manager (A)