

# Public Information Officer Standard Operating Procedures (SOP)

## 220.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to establish guidelines, procedures, and responsibilities of the University of Maryland, Baltimore Police Department (UMBPD) Public Information Officer (PIO).

## 220.2 SCOPE

The PIO is responsible for communicating information between the UMBPD and University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB) students, employees, community members, media, stakeholders, and public. The PIO creates, coordinates, and disseminates information both internally and externally. The PIO is also responsible for 24/7 crisis and emergency communications at UMB.

## 220.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

The PIO is responsible for managing all public communications related to UMBPD (including the policing partnership with the University of Baltimore), UMB Office of the Fire Marshal, and UMB Office of Emergency Management (OEM). Under the umbrella of the UMBPD, the PIO is assigned to the Office of the Chief of Police, serving as the primary point of contact for the department regarding information releases.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- (a) **Strategic and Leadership Communications:** Develop communications plans and craft messages that align with UMBPD's goals. Create talking points, speeches, presentations, and provide public safety communications subject matter expertise for UMBPD, UMB Administration and Finance, and University leadership.
- (b) **Emergency and Crisis Communications:** Provide 24/7 support for emergency and crisis communications, including sending University-wide emergency notifications and timely warnings in compliance with the Clery Act. Recognize and manage potential reputational crises through proactive messaging.
- (c) **Marketing and Public Relations:** Develop strategies and objectives to increase awareness of public safety at UMB. Design campaigns and use graphic design principles to create flyers, digital displays, social media, newsletters, and other platforms to connect with the UMB community and the public.
- (d) **Social Media:** Create and execute engaging content and graphics for several social media platforms, tracking engagement and efficiency, and responding to community compliments, concerns, and questions.
- (e) **Media Relations:** Write press releases, coordinate media interviews, and respond to media inquiries regarding public safety at UMB.

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- (f) **Media and Social Media Monitoring:** Track news related to UMBPD and advise leadership of any notable stories or mentions. Address misinformation and rumors, when appropriate.
- (g) **Photography and Videography:** Create, design, produce, and implement videos and photos in alignment with the University's brand.
- (h) **Website Development:** Manage the public safety websites to ensure accurate and updated information is conveyed to the public.

#### **220.4 PROCEDURE**

The PIO is a single resource and is not an emergency first responder. The PIO will respond 24/7 during an emergency or crisis if emergency or crisis communications are needed and if they are notified by the Assistant Vice President for Public Safety and Chief of Police, Executive Director of Emergency Management, or their designee.

Additional roles, responsibilities, and procedures of the PIO are outlined in Policies 323 (Media Relations), 341 (Department Use of Social Media), 327 (Major Incident Notification), 317 (Public Alerts), and the OEM Emergency Communications Annex.