



MEDIA POLICY

PURPOSE:

The purpose of creating a formal LACERA media policy is to ensure that the policies and actions of LACERA and the Boards of Retirement and Investments are accurately transmitted and explained to legitimate representatives of the mass media. The same policy will serve as a guide for communications with all outside parties, including the Board of Supervisors, Chief Executive Officer, County departments, employee organizations, and other industry groups.

Information subject to legal protection, including under the Brown Act, the Public Records Act, and other legal privileges, may not be disclosed.

LACERA STAFF:

The general spokesperson for LACERA is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), or designee. The CEO is authorized to respond to legitimate inquiries by relaying any policy and action officially adopted by LACERA or the Board(s). This includes making available any documents which have been presented to the Board(s) and are therefore matters of public record or which are otherwise organizational records subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act.

Neither the CEO, nor any other LACERA employee, is authorized to speculate as to the intent or motivations of a Board Trustee or staff member. Personal opinions are to be avoided whenever possible. When a personal opinion is provided, discretion is to be utilized and the opinion is to be so identified to the inquiring party.

On Board of Investments policies and practices, the Chief Investment Officer (CIO), or designee, is the primary spokesperson. The CIO's discretion and restrictions are the same as those mentioned above.

The CEO, or designee, which may include the Deputy Chief Executive Officer (DCEO) and the Assistant Executive Officers (AEOs), is the primary spokesperson for Board of Retirement policies and practices and general administrative and benefits issues. The same discretionary authority and restrictions as those mentioned above apply to the designees.

On occasion, the CEO or CIO may designate a particular staff member as the sole and exclusive contact for a particular issue. Such designations will be made only to staff members who are technically proficient with respect to the subject of the designation and who can effectively deal with media representatives. The CEO and CIO, and designees, in their discretion may use LACERA's engaged public relations and media consultant, under the terms of their contract, to assist in communicating with the media and other outside parties.

As a general rule, LACERA staff members will not initiate any mass media contact without specific Board direction. Written press releases should be referred to the respective Board

Chair for review. All media contacts will be reported to the respective Board immediately using e-mail and the attached Report of Media Contact.

LACERA BOARD TRUSTEES:

In order to achieve the purposes of this policy, Board Trustees should be encouraged to refer inquiries directly to the CEO or CIO.

In the event that a Board Trustee does respond to a media inquiry, discretion should be used to limit the discussion to formally approved Board or LACERA policies and actions. Personal opinions and speculation as to the motivations of the Board or any Board Trustee or staff member are to be avoided. Any personal opinion given must be clearly identified as such.

As a courtesy to other Board Trustees, all such contacts should be reported to the Board concerned at the earliest opportunity.

All Board contacts with outside parties, in which LACERA policies and practices are discussed, shall be conducted in accordance with the intent of this policy.

RESPONSES TO MEDIA REPORTS:

Generally, LACERA representatives will not initiate contacts with the media. News stories related to LACERA, even when positive in content, often provoke consternation and concern among our participants and beneficiaries. However, if a news story contains clearly inaccurate information, authorized LACERA representatives will contact the author and/or publication responsible for the inaccuracy in order to request a correction. Such instances shall be reported to the respective LACERA Board.

Editorials or opinion pieces will be addressed as necessary by "letters to editor." Such communications will be submitted to the Board for approval prior to their release.

Executive Office staff will prepare position papers on media articles for staff to use when responding to member inquiries. Copies of these "position papers" will also be provided to Board Trustees.

ATTENDANCE AT A CONFERENCE AND OTHER PUBLIC MEETINGS:

Board Trustees and staff members representing LACERA at conferences and other public meetings should remember that reporters often attend such events. When making presentations or participating in discussions at such events, care should be taken not to speculate about past or future Board or LACERA policies and actions. Moreover, the expression of personal opinions should be avoided. If a personal opinion is given, it should be clearly identified as such. If media representatives are present when a LACERA representative makes a presentation, copies of the presentation materials should be provided to all Board Trustees.

Approved: Board of Retirement, November 3, 2021;
Board of Investments, November 17, 2021

LACERA REPORT OF MEDIA CONTACT

Prepared By: _____

Date of Contact: _____

Reporter's Name: _____

Reporter's Phone Number: _____

Reporter's Employer: _____

Where Will the Story Be Aired? _____

When Will the Story Appear? _____

Is the Story for an Opinion Piece or a News Story? _____

What Prompted the Reporter's Interest? _____

What Topics Were Covered by the Reporter? _____

- Distribution: Board of Retirement
Board of Investments
Chief Executive Officer
Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Assistant Executive Officers
Chief Counsel
Chief Financial Officer
Chief, Communications