

## **DHHS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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<b>Section III:</b>	<b>Communications</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Media Training Manual</b>
<b>Chapter:</b>	<b>Media Events</b>
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In general a media event is going to get more coverage than a news conference. In addition to providing reporters with news, it also gives them pictures. A good picture can mean better placement in a newspaper and it is a virtual requirement for a television story.

Ask yourself these questions?

- Who does this announcement affect?
- Can you get affected parties to participate in the media event?
- Is the location the story?
- What pictures will help tell your story?

If you're going to have a press conference, in a government building, standing behind a podium, then forget it. That kind of press conference only works for the most newsworthy events – things like spot news.

If you decide to do a media event, then you need to do the following:

- Find a location that will provide good pictures.
- Get "real" people to participate – not just talking government heads.
- Develop an agenda – decide who will speak and what they'll do.

### **Event Checklist**

**Visit the location and make sure that it meets your needs:**

- Is the location easy to find?
- Is there enough parking?
- Is there enough room for all the media, including television cameras?
- If the location is outside, is there a rainy day alternative?

**Talk with participants and make sure they're prepared:**

- Do they know what they are going to be saying and doing?

- Do they need to walk through the event?
- Are they prepared for any potential questions?
- Are they prepared to go on camera?

**Prior to the event:**

- Send out a media advisory to let the media know about the event.
- The advisory should include basic who, what, when, where and why details.
- The advisory should go out at least 24 hours before the event.
- Make follow-up calls to make certain media received the advisory and urge them to attend.
- If you sent the release to specific reporters, then call that reporter. In general, your release has gone to news outlets, rather than specific reporters. This is particularly true of television stations, where reporters may cover different things on different days.
- When calling television, ask for the news assignment editor. The best time to talk to that person is when they are least busy. If your event is scheduled for the daytime, then you should call before 8:30 am. If your event is scheduled for evening, then you should call between 3:00 pm and 4:30 pm.
- Prepare briefing materials, if needed. If the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Secretary or NC Governor, or other dignitary is participating, then they'll need a briefing. The briefing should include: logistics, details about what you're announcing, background on the announcements, details about participants, and details about the audience.

**On the day of the event:**

- Prepare a "day of" release that gives details about the program or initiative you're announcing. You might also want to prepare a fact sheet and some general information about your division/office/section. If you have several sheets of paper, then put them in a file folder with your contact information.
- Staff the event. Get there early and be prepared to do everything from helping reporters to moving furniture. You're responsible for making this event run smoothly.
- Call the event to order. That means getting everyone in place and starting the event on time.
- Drop the "day of" release to news outlets that were unable to cover the event.

**After the event:**

- Send thank-yous to participants.
- Do a debriefing with participants to see what went well and what didn't, so you can change future events as needed.

*For questions or clarification on any of the information contained in this policy, please contact [The Office of Public Affairs](#). For general questions about department-wide policies and procedures, contact the [DHHS Policy Coordinator](#).*