



**CITY
OF
BOULDER**

DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

Mark R. Beckner
Chief of Police

Dear members of the media:

As you know, we are a mid-size agency in a college town with lots of activity that tends to draw media attention. Unfortunately, we only have one PIO. While we take our media relationships, opportunities and responsibilities seriously, it is not reasonable to ask or expect one person to be on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. We have established some guidelines in the past with previous PIO's and identified procedures the media should follow in getting updates or information after hours. Over time, and as turnover has occurred, these procedures have not been utilized. Although not new, I'd like to remind everyone of what these procedures are.

- Our PIO is generally available and happy to help you with all your inquiries during normal working hours (M-F, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm, with the exception of holidays and vacation). If you would like an update on a major case, we request that you call toward the end of the normal work day (M-F, 8:00 am – 5:00 pm) to obtain the latest information, rather than waiting until the evening hours to call. If not immediately available on any inquiry, our PIO will get back to you as soon as possible.
- If you have routine questions or want some information on something that has happened or is happening after hours, the proper procedure is to call our dispatch center at 303-441-3333. Dispatch will field your request and forward it to an on-duty supervisor who will get back to you as soon as he/she can. Calling our PIO after hours is not helpful, as she is unlikely to have immediate access to the information.
- We recommend that weekend reporters look ahead for stories they may wish to cover on the weekends and conduct any necessary interviews in advance. Unless something new develops or assistance is requested by an incident commander, our PIO will not be available for standup interviews to help media organizations catch up on stories that occurred during the work week.
- Should we have a major event or major crime develop after hours that we know will attract a lot of immediate media attention, or there is a public safety need to get the information out quickly, the incident commander will contact our PIO to assist with providing you with information in a timely manner. This may occur in the form of a press release and phone interviews or the PIO responding to the scene. If the PIO is not available, someone will be assigned to act as a PIO for the particular incident, usually a Sergeant or Commander.

- If you need a copy of a closed report, you may contact our Records and Information Services unit (RIS) at 303-441-3300. This number may be called at any time of day as RIS is typically available 24 hours a day (except some holidays). RIS is the only unit that can release reports. Calling the PIO for a copy of a report can actually take more time, as she has to relay the request to RIS for processing. The RIS staff will be able to tell you if the report is available to the public. Our PIO can answer questions about individual cases or provide summaries, but is not expected to read case reports to reporters over the phone.

Please know that it is unlikely that an after-hours on-duty supervisor will be able to give you updates on cases being investigated by detectives or those that occurred on a previous shift. For these situations, it is best to check in with the PIO during regular hours. If something new should happen in one of these types of cases after hours and immediate release of this information is necessary, the detective commander will contact the PIO and ask her to alert you.

We are committed to be as informative as possible and we greatly appreciate the opportunity to work with you on communicating important public safety information. These procedures are intended to help meet your needs while recognizing the staffing limitations of our department.

Please let me know if you have any questions about these procedures. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Mark R. Beckner
Chief of Police
Boulder, Colorado