

 CONSUMER PROTECTION BC	Media Relations Policy	Version: 2.0 Modified: March 15, 2025 Approved: 2 April 2025
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1.0 Purpose

This document sets out the Policy and Procedures Consumer Protection BC will follow when developing, managing and releasing media releases or statements or responding to media requests.

2.0 Definitions

“Media releases” includes proactive statements with information about statistics, licensing activities and actions, compliance or enforcement activities and actions, and the legislation Consumer Protection BC administers

“Media requests” can include requests for statistical information, information about licensing, compliance or enforcement activities, information about the legislation Consumer Protection BC administers, Consumer Protection BC’s position on consumer issues or general requests for interviews or corporate statements.

“Media statements” includes reactive responses to media requests including Consumer Protection BC’s position on consumer or marketplace and regulatory issues.

3.0 Policy Statement

- 3.1 Consumer Protection BC recognizes the support media interest holders offer in sharing important marketplace information with consumers and businesses.
- 3.2 Consumer Protection BC will develop, foster and maintain positive and proactive relationships with key media partners in the BC, with a specific focus on those partners that have consumer protection interests, segments and audiences.
- 3.3 Consumer Protection BC will develop and share media releases on issues that involve the public interest and our mandate. This includes corporate information related to key events, personnel, and the publishing of key documents. This also includes issues of broad concern in the marketplace, emerging investigations that require input from, or awareness of consumers, and publishing information respecting our decisions, actions orders and penalties consistent with our publishing policy.
- 3.4 In dealing with media inquiries, Consumer Protection BC will:
 - a) Handle all inquiries promptly and professionally
 - b) Be as open and transparent as possible with information
 - c) To the extent possible, ensure messages and responses are easy to understand; and

- d) Act in accordance with the requirements of delegated statutes, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the Communication Protocols set out in the Administrative Agreements with government, and the Publishing Policy.

3.5 Consumer Protection BC will consider each media inquiry on a case-by-case basis. In doing so it will be guided by the following considerations:

- a) The extent to which the media request is likely to directly contribute to informing consumers and businesses of an important marketplace issue
- b) The internal and external resources and time required to gather and interpret the required information.
- c) Priority will be given to media requests related to:
 - Industries/businesses regulated and/or licensed by Consumer Protection BC
 - Marketplace issues that fall under legislation administered by Consumer Protection BC, and/or
 - Consumer Protection BC initiatives, investigations or statutory determinations

3.6 Consumer Protection BC retains discretion to provide media statements in written or verbal form and may refuse to provide on camera or on-air interviews depending on the nature of the issue. Wherever possible, Consumer Protection BC will provide access to its corporate spokesperson for recorded or on-air interviews.

4.0 Procedures

4.1 All media requests will be forwarded to the Director, Public Relations as soon as they are received. Similarly, the Director of Public Relations must be advised by email or phone immediately or as soon as possible within 24 hours of any issues that could result in media interest.

4.2 The Director of Public Relations is responsible for determining what information can be provided to the media on a case-by-case basis. The decision will be based on the criteria in the above policy statements.

4.3 The following people have been designated to speak publicly to the media on behalf of Consumer Protection BC:

- a) The Director of Public Relations is the official spokesperson for Consumer Protection BC.
- b) The Chair of the Board will speak on behalf of the Board of Directors on governance-related issues.
- c) Only employees who have been designated to speak to the media on behalf of the organization may act as back-ups or address specific topics with the media. These people may include the CEO, COO, the Vice President of Strategic Services, the Vice President of Operations, the Vice President of Regulatory Affairs.
- d) All individuals granting media interviews must do so based on the guidance provided by the Director, Public Relations or designate.

4.4 If an employee is giving a presentation or a speech, and if the media are expected to attend, the Director, Public Relations will help develop messaging for potential media questions and attend the event to support the employee involved.

4.5 Responses to media calls or emails will occur preferably immediately or on the same day, and always within 24 hours during business hours as best practice. If extensive data is required, additional time may be required.

4.6 As required by the Communication Protocols of our Administrative Agreements with government, Consumer Protection BC will track all media contacts and interviews on an ongoing basis.

5.0 Documentation

[Administrative Agreement Communications Protocol](#)
[Consumer Protection BC Publishing Policy](#)

6.0 Authority

6.1 Article 8 of the Authority's Administrative Agreement with the Province states: "The Authority's administration of the Legislation will include the following core business functions:

- a) provision of information and assistance, including the voluntary, fair and impartial mediation of disputes, to consumers and Licensees regarding their rights and responsibilities under the Legislation
- b) consumer education initiatives that provide information verbally, in printed materials, via the Internet, and through the media to raise consumer awareness of consumer rights and responsibilities
- c) education initiatives, to ensure a fair marketplace and to inform businesses and applicants for licenses about their statutory duties and other responsibilities."

7.0 References

The *Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act* sets out the information handling requirements for any person engaged in the administration of the Act.

7.1 *The Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act*

The *Business Practices and Consumer Protection Act* (Part 12, Division 3) states:

Confidentiality

185(1) A person who is engaged in the administration of this Act or the regulations and who has custody of, access to or control over information or records under this Act must not disclose the information or records to any other person except

- (a) if disclosure is for the purposes of the administration of this Act or the regulations,
- (b) with the consent of the person to whom the information or record relates,
- (c) in court proceedings related to this Act, or other similar enactments of British Columbia, another province or Canada,
- (d) if an enactment of British Columbia, another province or Canada requires the disclosure,

- (e) to the person's counsel,
- (f) to a law enforcement agency in Canada, or
- (g) under an agreement with the government.

(2) The person referred to in subsection (1) is not, except in a proceeding under this Act, compellable to disclose or give evidence about information or records the person has custody of, access to or control over.

//original signed by//

April 1, 2025

Rob Gialloreto , President & CEO

Date