

# Media Relations Tip Sheet

## Press Releases and Press Conferences

### Media Relations | Press Releases & Conferences

\*click the video link for practical tips from law enforcement agency personnel



### Purpose and Common Uses

Law enforcement press releases and press conferences can be effective channels to promote timely and transparent communication of critical information to large audiences. Press releases can promote heightened awareness of emerging concerns and press conferences can encourage open dialogue and clarification of information. It is essential that victims and co-victims receive advance notices of press releases whenever possible, prior to sharing with media representatives and the public. Including victims and co-victims in press conferences can also help address concerns related to safety, well-being, and key updates.

## Victims' Rights Connections

Although victims' rights in each state and the federal system are unique, they often include the rights for victims and co-victims to treatment with fairness and dignity, privacy around access to personal information, notice of and be present at justice system events, confer with system professionals, express views and accompaniment of support persons at key system intersections, reasonable protection from the accused, and information about processes and services. When planning for and carrying out press releases and press conferences, agency personnel should adjust practices whenever possible to ensure proactive and consistent access to these rights for victims and co-victims.



## Victimization Considerations

Press releases and press conferences are often used to inform the public about incidents and initiatives, seek assistance with ongoing investigations, address public safety concerns, and augment positive community relationships. As a vital part of the community, the related needs and experiences of victims and co-victims are equally vital to consider. Victims and co-victims connected to death investigations and unsolved cases may have information needs and participation desires that differ from victims of property and nonfatal personal crimes, but advance notifications and invitations should be offered to all.



## Victim Services Role

Victim services personnel can provide essential assistance around press releases and press conferences – to victims, co-victims, law enforcement agency personnel, and media representatives. Victims and co-victims benefit from advance notifications of press releases and opportunities to participate in press conferences. They also benefit from supportive contact and accompaniment to review roles of allied professionals, anticipated interactions, and possible outcomes. Media representatives and law enforcement agency personnel often benefit from input related to trauma-informed language and practices. Victim services personnel can also help enhance press releases and press conferences by addressing language access and other participation needs.