

## MEDIA RELATIONS POLICY

### Definitions

1. Terms in this Policy are defined as follows:
  - a) **Advisory**– A notification issued to the media about an upcoming competition or Media Event, a notable result, a major development for Ringette Canada, or other matter that may be of interest to the media.
  - b) **Media Event**– An in-person gathering or a conference call for the media hosted by Ringette Canada that will be attended by a Spokesperson and possibly other representatives of Ringette Canada (such as athletes or coaches). Media representatives are invited to attend Media Events to receive information and ask questions.
  - c) **Media Training** – Education and assistance about how to interact with the media that is provided by Ringette Canada (or an external third party) to Spokespeople, to the Communications, Engagement and Marketing Director, and to representatives of Ringette Canada who will be attending a Media Event.
  - d) **Spokesperson (or Spokespeople)** – An individual (or individuals) who is authorized to represent Ringette Canada. The Spokesperson is typically the Executive Director or their designate(s).
  - e) **Statement** – A response endorsed by Ringette Canada on a specific topic of interest, and/or an ongoing matter or crisis, that can be published by Ringette Canada and/or delivered by a Spokesperson in response to a media request. Statements can be accompanied by other documentation or resources.

### Purpose

2. The purpose of this Policy is to describe how Ringette Canada will issue Advisories and Statements, how and when Ringette Canada will offer Media Events, and how and when Ringette Canada will respond to requests from the media.

### Advisories

3. From time to time, Ringette Canada will issue Advisories to the media. Advisories may be issued when there is an upcoming competition or Media Event or when an individual associated with Ringette Canada has achieved a notable result. Advisories should also be issued when major developments occur, such as an important partnership, sponsorship agreement, new programming, change in senior staff or the President of Ringette Canada, or other matters important to the sport community.

4. Advisories should include:
  - a) Details of the accomplishment, matter, or development (i.e., the reason for the Advisory);
  - b) Importance of the matter to Ringette Canada and its corporate values;
  - c) Comments from affected individuals;
  - d) Any administrative details (such as the date and location of a competition or Media Event);  
and
  - e) Contact information for the Communications, Engagement, and Marketing Director.
  
5. Advisories may be issued, at Ringette Canada's discretion, as follows:
  - a) On Ringette Canada's website;
  - b) As a direct email to Ringette Canada's stakeholder database(s);
  - c) On Twitter, Facebook, or another social media platform;
  - d) To the Sport Information Resource Centre (SIRC);
  - e) To select media outlets; and/or
  - f) By any other means available to Ringette Canada.

### **Media Events**

6. From time to time, Ringette Canada may host Media Events. Media Events should be hosted when there has been (or will be) a major development involving Ringette Canada or one or more of its representatives. Media Events can be hosted for positive reasons (e.g., an athlete wins a significant competition) or for negative reasons (e.g., a head coach is expelled from Ringette Canada).
  
7. When Ringette Canada plans to host a Media Event, it will issue an Advisory with the details of the event, the topic(s) to be discussed, whether photos can be taken (for in-person gatherings), and the individual(s) who will be available to answer questions.
  
8. At its discretion, Ringette Canada may prohibit individuals (such as members of the public – not media representatives) from attending a Media Event.
  
9. Ringette Canada will ensure that Spokespeople, the Communications, Engagement and Marketing Director and representatives of Ringette Canada who will be attending a Media Event will receive Media Training from Ringette Canada or from an external third party .

## Media Training

10. Media Training should be as comprehensive as required for the individual (i.e., the Spokesperson, who interacts often with the media, should receive more detailed training than an individual who is attending a single Media Event).
11. Media Training allows individuals to answer media requests and questions clearly, appropriately, and without controversy. Media Training should include:
  - a) How to clearly deliver a Statement (when applicable);
  - b) The amount of appropriate additional information that can or should be provided;
  - c) When not to comment;
  - d) How to highlight Ringette Canada's corporate values;
  - e) What to say to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of personal information (as described in the *Confidentiality Policy*);
  - f) Words and conduct to avoid (e.g., swearing, dismissive rhetoric, insults, etc.);
  - g) How to handle challenging questions or accusations; and
  - h) How to tactfully end the interaction.

## Statements

12. For ongoing matters or crises, Ringette Canada will create a Statement that can be provided to the media and/or delivered by a Spokesperson. When developing the Statement, Ringette Canada should contact all individuals or representatives who are involved in the matter and who can provide accurate information. For sensitive matters, Ringette Canada should also connect with legal counsel and/or a communications consultant.
13. Statements should include:
  - a) An acknowledgment of the incident or matter;
  - b) Comments from the Spokesperson;
  - c) A plan of action;
  - d) Stated commitment to Ringette Canada's values; and
  - e) Contact information for the Communications, Engagement and Marketing Director.
14. Statements may be issued, at Ringette Canada's discretion, as follows:
  - a) On Ringette Canada's website;
  - b) As a direct email to Ringette Canada's stakeholder database(s);
  - c) On Twitter, Facebook, or another social media platform;
  - d) To the Sport Information Resource Centre (SIRC);
  - e) To select media outlets; and/or
  - f) By any other means available to Ringette Canada.

15. Statements may include resources, documents, or external links at Ringette Canada's discretion.
16. Ringette Canada may issue a Statement before a matter or incident is the subject of a media request.
17. Ringette Canada may preemptively create a Statement but, if there is no media request, end up not releasing it to the media.

### **Receiving Media Requests**

18. Requests from the media that are sent to Ringette Canada should be forwarded to the Communications, Engagement and Marketing Director who must use their discretion to determine if the request is legitimate. In exercising their discretion, the Communications, Engagement and Marketing Director should consider:
  - a) Whether the request comes from an individual who appears to be affiliated with a reputable media outlet (e.g., an email from a reputable source will contain information about the media outlet and contact information);
  - b) Whether the individual properly represents themselves as being from the media; and
  - c) Whether the request involves a topic the media may be interested in.
19. If the media request is not legitimate, the Communications, Engagement and Marketing Director will reject the request.
20. If the media request appears to be legitimate, the Communications, Engagement and Marketing Director will take the following actions:
  - a) Record the individual's name, contact information, and media outlet;
  - b) Determine the topics the individual would like to discuss and/or the nature of the request (the Communications, Engagement and Marketing Director should not comment on the topic or request – even if they can provide information or are asked to respond);
  - c) Record who the individual would like to speak to;
  - d) Direct the individual to any published Statement (if already available) and any upcoming Media Event; and
  - e) Inform the individual that a Spokesperson will respond to them within a set timeframe.
21. Subsequent media requests from the same individual should be responded to with the same information as the first request. After three (3) requests, and/or if the request appears to be vexatious, the Communications, Engagement and Marketing Director] may respond by saying or writing "Thank you for your request. No further information will be provided at this time".

### **Spokespeople**

22. Ringette Canada will identify Spokespeople to represent Ringette Canada, respond to media requests in a timely manner, attend Media Events, and provide Statements.
23. Spokespeople should be educated and informed about the topic of the media request and any matter being discussed at a Media Event. Ringette Canada will make available any staff member, Director, or other representative who can provide accurate and appropriate information to the Spokesperson.
24. On a case-by-case basis, Ringette Canada will determine whether legal counsel or a communications consultant should be involved to assist a Spokesperson.

This Policy is subject to review at least once every three years

**Date of last review: September 2021**

*The publication of Ringette Canada policies will be in the English and French languages. In the case of conflicting interpretations, the English version will prevail.*