



THE  
FORT MONROE AUTHORITY  
FMA-HR-004

# Dissemination of Public Information Policy

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Approved by:

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John Lawson, Chairman, Fort Monroe Authority Board of Trustees

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G. Glenn Oder, Fort Monroe Authority Executive Director

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2014

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## SECTION 1 – POLICY STATEMENT

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The ~~Marketing Department~~Director of Communications has been designated by the Executive Director as the primary contact for news media issues and for the coordination of dissemination of information to the public. This office is also responsible for ensuring organization-wide compliance with this policy. The Chair of the Board of Trustees and the Executive Director will serve as the primary spokespersons for the Fort Monroe Authority.

All due diligence must be taken to ensure that information originating from the Fort Monroe Authority is accurate, complete, reflects the official position of the Authority and is released to the media and target public audiences in a timely manner.

## SECTION 2- PURPOSE

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Providing information about the Fort Monroe Authority is vital to our internal and external audiences and the Authority's ability to carry out its mission. This policy establishes the official guidelines for the dissemination of information for publication, broadcast through the mass media, or other public forums. The policy also provides specific guidelines to aid individuals speaking on behalf of the Authority. These guidelines are not intended to hinder open communication between Authority constituents and the public or the news media. These guidelines are, however, intended to ensure a more accurate, consistent and reliable flow of information about Authority activities.

## SECTION 3- DEFINITIONS

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### 3.1 OFFICIAL FORT MONROE AUTHORITY POSITIONS

The Fort Monroe Authority Board of Trustees may take a position or have an established policy toward issues facing the community or the Fort Monroe Authority. These positions must be approved by a majority of the Authority's Board of Trustees or formulated by the Executive Director in consultation with the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

### 3.2 PUBLIC DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION

Providing information to the public may include interviews with news reporters, speeches to community groups, letters to the editor, guest editorials or columns in newspapers or magazines, appearances on television or radio talk shows, placement of advertising, posting information on the Authority's website, or other channels of communication.

### 3.3 PERSONAL OPINIONS

As citizens of the United States and the Commonwealth of Virginia, everyone has the right to form and express opinions about public issues. A distinction must be drawn however, when an individual (employed by the Authority) is in the role of

representing the Fort Monroe Authority. It is the affirmative responsibility of staff not to represent their personal opinions as positions or policies of the Authority, unless the Executive Director has specifically authorized them to do so. Authority staff should use neither Authority letterhead nor electronic mail sent through the Authority mail servers to communicate their personal opinions or positions.

## SECTION 4 – PROCEDURES

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1. Staff members who release information to the public through mass produced publications, brochures, news reporters or other mass communication channels must provide this information to the ~~Marketing Director~~Director of Communications in advance of distribution. The ~~Marketing Director~~Director of Communications will have responsibility for sharing the final releases and or publications with the Executive Director for final approval for the public release of information.
2. It is also essential for the continued voluntary cooperation and support of the Authority that the lines of communications between the Board of Trustees and the public be developed to the optimum. While board meetings and committee meetings are not always open to representatives of the news media, information may be available shortly after the meeting. All statements on behalf of the Fort Monroe Authority by officers, board members, committee chairpersons, and others must be in accord with the communications policy or cleared through the Executive Committee. Equally important, when board members are expressing personal views and not those of the Authority, the news media and public should be so advised.
3. It is appropriate for Authority employees involved in newsworthy events to respond to news reporters on facts surrounding the event, such as, professional recognitions or special events sponsored by the Fort Monroe Authority. The information provided to reporters should be released in coordination with Executive Director or designated person from the ~~Marketing Department~~Director of Communications.
4. Information disseminated to the media should be limited to the facts pertaining to the particular event or the safety and welfare of staff, residents, and visitors to Fort Monroe. Information that may be sensitive or have implications relating to litigation or personal privacy should not be discussed. In addition, information or speculation that deals with broader issues or policies of the Fort Monroe Authority should be referred to the Executive Director.
5. All graphic elements of advertising, brochures, fliers, invitations, annual reports, etc., should be in compliance with the graphic standards and approved by the ~~Marketing Department~~Director of Communications.

## **SECTION 5 – POLICY INFRACTIONS**

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Infractions of this policy will be determined by the appropriate supervisor. Disciplinary actions will follow existing guidelines for such process.