



Media Advisory

Office of Public Affairs
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May 9th, 2002

Seattle District Media Request Policy

Seattle, WA- **A media representative** desiring to conduct a personal interview with a detainee at an INS Service facility shall submit a written request to the responsible Public Affairs Officer,(PAO), preferably 48 hours, and no less than 24 hours prior to the time slot requested. The District Director may waive the 24-hour rule if convinced of the need for urgency.

The (PAO) will inform the detainee of the interview request. The detainee must indicate his/her willingness to be interviewed by signing a consent form, which is attached to this release. Once the form is signed, the District Director begins to consider the request. The written consent shall be retained in the detainee's detention file.

The District Director normally will approve/disapprove, in writing, within 24 to 48 hours of the request. Possible reasons for disapproval include:

- a. The news media representative or news organization he/she represents does not agree to the conditions established by this policy or previously failed to abide by them.
- b. The detainee is physically or mentally unable to participate, as indicated by the statement of a medical officer. A psychologist may verify mental incapacity, substantiating the reason for disapproval.
- c. The detainee is a minor whose parent or legal guardian has not provided the required written consent. If the juvenile detainee's parents or guardians are not known or cannot be located, the detainee's legal representative may provide consent. If there is no legal representative, the District Director shall notify the representative of the news media of the detainee's status as a minor, and shall then consider the authorization in consultation with the District Counsel.
- d. The District Director finds it probable that the proposed interview would endanger the health or safety of the interviewer, cause serious unrest, or could possibly disturb the orderly operation of the facility.

- e. The detainee is involved in a pending investigation/court action and the court with jurisdiction over the matter has issued a gag rule or the District Director, after consultation with the District Counsel, thinks the proposed interview could affect the outcome of the court case.
- f. The detainee is likely to criticize his/her government , creating grounds for an asylum case. The District Director will consult the Regional Director and/or Headquarters Operations before making this decision.

Interviews will take place during normal business hours in a location determined by the Officer in Charge, (OIC). The OIC will provide a location conducive to the interviewing activity, consistent with security and good order. The District Director may limit the number of interviews with a particular detainee to a reasonable number per month. Further, if interviews are imposing a serious strain on staff or facility resources, the District Director may restrict the time allotted to interviews.

The INS reserves the right to monitor and/or supervise, but not participate in, detainee interviews.

A media representative interested in touring the facility and photographing or recording other detainees in conjunction with an individual interview must follow all applicable procedures.