

# **Corporate Communications Policy**

*Revised and passed by the Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate Board of Directors: August 17, 2023*

## **BACKGROUND:**

Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate, in its day-to-day operations, has the need for a formal corporate communications process for review and approval of written or spoken public communications that are aimed at mass or targeted audiences served by Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate to ensure these standards:

1. **Accuracy of information:** Scientific facts about eye care and/or eye disease need to be accurate, keeping in concert with our publisher's liability insurance responsibilities and policies of Prevent Blindness America.
2. **Consistency of message and image:** Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate will reap greater recognition when key messages, name and logo are presented with a consistent look and feel to all audiences.
3. **Efficient use of limited resources/avoidance of duplicate efforts:** The goal is to design selected communications to mass and/or targeted audiences to serve statewide organizational needs, without regard to geography.

To reach these standards, staff, the Board of Directors, and other volunteers will use the following guidelines in developing and releasing public communication on behalf of Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate. It will be the responsibility of the President & CEO to administer this communication process.

## **CRISIS COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES:**

### **General Policy**

Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate is committed to taking a preemptive approach to public relations crises, using disclosure whenever possible as the preferred strategy for preventing or minimizing public relations crises. No one is authorized to speak to the news media in a crisis without approval from the President & CEO or Board Chair (refer to Media Relations Guidelines below).

### **Crisis Prevention**

The President & CEO and/or Board Chair will monitor local, state, and national news coverage for any issues. Appropriate Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate staff, the Board Chair and the Marketing and Development Committee Chair will be advised of the issues and/or trends that might lead to negative stories.

### **Crisis Response**

When crises occur, the President & CEO and/or Board Chair will gather and verify information about the crisis; assess the severity of the crisis; develop strategies concerning how information is to be released, who should speak on behalf of Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate, and who is to be notified of the crisis. Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate also will confer with Prevent Blindness America and Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate's Statewide Marketing and Development Committee Chair, as appropriate, to work out logistical details of releasing information and to distribute verified information as quickly as possible to internal and external audiences.

### **Crisis Communication Procedure**

- The President & CEO and/or Board Chair will be notified immediately of an emerging crisis and will determine the necessary strategy and who should be involved.
- The President & CEO will gather as many details as possible, recommend strategies for internal and external communication, and select an appropriate spokesperson.
- Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate Staff and Board of Directors will be notified immediately of the crisis, referring all media to the spokesperson handling the crisis.

- Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate staff and Board of Directors should receive regular updates on the crisis.
- The President & CEO and/or Board Chair (or his or her designee) will work to supply verifiable details to the news media as quickly as possible.
- After releasing information, the President & CEO and/or Board Chair (or his or her designee) will monitor the news coverage and quickly correct any errors that are made. The President & CEO and/or Board Chair (or his or her designee) will assess the lessons learned and any new guidelines for the next crisis.
- The President & CEO and/or Board Chair (or his or her designee) will document the news coverage surrounding a crisis, including wire stories, newspaper articles, radio, and television broadcasts.

#### **MEDIA RELATIONS GUIDELINES:**

The President & CEO and Board Chair are the only Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate representatives authorized to speak to the media on all matters. Other members of the organization may be authorized to speak to the media, only with the approval of the President & CEO or Board Chair. All media requests should be referred to Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate's President & CEO.

#### **PRINT COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES:**

The following types of materials will be submitted for review by Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate's President & CEO prior to publishing on hard copy or electronic media. Depending upon the content and intended audience for the printed piece, the President & CEO may also involve a member of the Board of Directors, Prevent Blindness America, Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate's Development and/or Community Services Departments in the review process. Reviewing documents will be conducted as expediently as possible. However, at least two days lead-time should be allowed for the review process.

Examples (for the review process) include the following:

- Newsletters
- Press releases
- Website information
- Brochures/pamphlets
- General and/or event solicitation letters
- Event invitations/programs/posters
- Communication under the signature of a member of the Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate Board of Directors (except for usual and regular Standing Committee communications)

#### **SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES:**

Staff and volunteers should follow the guidelines in the Prevent Blindness, Ohio Affiliate Employee Handbook for guidance in use of social media.