

# Public Information Officer (PIO) Collateral Team Members

## 349.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish expectations, responsibilities, scheduling requirements, compensation, and training standards for members assigned as collateral duty Public Information Officer (PIO) Team Members for the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office (SMCSO).

## 349.2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all sworn and professional staff assigned as collateral duty members of the PIO Team. These members provide public information support in addition to their primary assigned duties.

## 349.3 ON-CALL REQUIREMENTS

- (a) Collateral PIO Team Members shall be on call for a minimum of seven (7) days per month.
- (b) Team members are responsible for keeping their immediate supervisor informed of their assigned on-call status.
- (c) The PIO will coordinate with the team members' respective Captain(s) to ensure timely and ongoing communication regarding special-duty needs, critical incident response, and scheduling considerations.

## 349.4 ON-CALL SCHEDULING AND AVAILABILITY

- (a) Collateral PIO Team Members are required to submit their monthly on-call availability no later than the third week of the preceding month.
- (b) Availability shall be submitted through the PIO On Call calendar in Microsoft Outlook.
- (c) Once finalized, the monthly on-call schedule will be submitted for posting in the on call spreadsheet located at: **S:\Call Out-On Call Information**
- (d) Changes to the on-call schedule may occasionally be necessary. Any schedule changes must be communicated in writing among PIO Team Members to ensure continuity of coverage and accountability.

## 349.5 ON-CALL RESPONSIBILITIES

- (a) While on call, Collateral PIO Team Members' duties may fluctuate based on operational needs. Responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following:
  1. Responding to call-outs as directed.
    - (a) Answering the phone within ten (10) minutes when member is on call.
    - (b) Responding on scene within 45 minutes when required.

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2. Writing, reviewing, and distributing news releases.
3. Creating and publishing social media content on behalf of the Sheriff's Office.
4. Monitoring and responding to emails in the SMCSO.PIO email account.
5. Responding to media inquiries and coordinating media responses as directed.
6. Taking photographs at SMCSO-sanctioned events.
7. Monitoring social media platforms, including official Sheriff's Office channels and other media outlets, to remain aware of emerging issues, trends, or public concerns related to the agency.

#### **349.6 CRITICAL INCIDENTS AND SPECIAL ASSIGNMENTS**

- (a) Collateral PIO Team Members may be called upon to support critical incidents, agency initiatives, or special projects outside of their regularly scheduled on-call periods.
- (b) When required to meet immediate or specialized public information needs, these assignments may take precedence over the team member's regular duty assignment.
- (c) Supervisors will be notified as soon as practicable when a collateral PIO assignment impacts on regular duty responsibilities.

#### **349.7 COMPENSATION**

- (a) The collateral PIO assignment is a compensated duty.
- (b) Team members accrue twenty-four (24) hours of pay per quarter for collateral PIO service.
- (c) Compensation is paid quarterly.
- (d) To receive payment, team members must submit SMCSO Form #396 in accordance with guidance from SMCSO Fiscal.
- (e) Team members are responsible for following the payroll submission timeline and procedures outlined in the SMCSO payroll guide.
- (f) Compensatory time may be issued in accordance with SMCSO policies governing the accrual and use of comp time.

#### **349.8 TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

- (a) Collateral PIO Team Members are required to participate in agency-approved training related to public information duties.
- (b) Training may be conducted in-house, offsite, or during active incidents as operational needs dictate.
- (c) Training orders will be issued in advance for scheduled training whenever possible.
- (d) Successful completion of required training is a condition of continued assignment as a collateral PIO Team Member.