



Public Information Officer (PIO) Checklist

Public Information Officer (PIO) The PIO may be a representative of the affected organization or this position may be assumed by an outside agency as assigned by the IC. This position works closely with the fire chief, family liaisons, the IC and outside agencies to insure information that is disseminated is accurate, timely, and coordinated.

PIO Sector

- ✓ Gather facts from the fire chief, union officials, family members as soon as possible.
- ✓ Begin work on an initial press release that outlines only the known facts. Do not divulge more than is necessary in the early stages.
- ✓ Compile a list of news agencies, newspapers, and social media outlets to release to.
- ✓ Compile a list of fire service and law enforcement organizations that might need to be included in your press release.
- ✓ Upon approval of the fire chief, update the website, blast a press release and update social media. Disclose the date, time and location of any press conferences.
- ✓ Insure immediate family and department members have all been notified before sending press releases or updating websites or social media.
- ✓ Participate in all planning meetings and insure new and updated information is shared accordingly.
- ✓ Continually update your website and social media with relevant information.
- ✓ Keep close watch over your social media for the duration of the event. Respond to public inquires that come in via social media and email.
- ✓ Constantly update your website. Direct all agencies to your web site for the most up-to-date information.
- ✓ Serve as the initial central point of contact for outside agencies that might be responding or attending the services.
- ✓ Prepare to manage calls for donations. Is there an account established? Blast this info too. Consider staffing phones to handle large call volumes.
- ✓ Keep your people informed. There will be a lot going on and everyone will want to know how the planning process is evolving. Consider daily updates from the chief or IC to your people.
- ✓ Blast important information to fire service agencies as far in advance as possible. Ask outside participating department personnel and apparatus to arrive well in advance of the ceremony start time.
- ✓ The department PIO should discuss with the family the potential for a media presence at the memorial. The family may want the media to participate. If the family agrees to their participation, the PIO should make specific arrangements to accommodate media needs. The family's privacy is a top priority.
- ✓ Keep your website and social media platforms updated as information becomes available. Direct everyone to a single resource for information (usually your website) to avoid confusion.