

Society Seneschal's Policy

“Media Relations and External Publicity”

1. **General Policy.** It is the policy of the Office of Society Seneschal and Vice President of Operations that specific guidelines pertaining to interactions with modern media organizations and staff will be set forth in this document and subject to regular review in accordance with the needs of the Society and our ever changing modern environment. This policy crosses into both the ‘game’ side of the Society, and into modern era operations. The General Policy is to have a unified, professional approach to informing the Media of our purpose, activities, and when necessary, a position on relevant topics and events. To this end, the Society Seneschal and Vice President of Operations will appoint via formal warrant a deputy Society Seneschal and Assistant Vice President for Media Relations. Duties of this deputy include, but are not limited to:
 - **Maintaining and monitoring the Media Relations Policy** to ensure it is within the confines of customary modern era public relations Best Practices.
 - **Monitoring Media Relations Activities**—as defined below—to ensure that the best possible image and ‘face’ is shown to modern era, organized news media.
 - **Assisting the Society Seneschal** in ensuring that qualified persons fill a similar role within each Kingdom level branch.
 - **Assisting the Society Seneschal** in ensuring that each Kingdom level branch has sufficient policy in place to ensure that each is in compliance with Corporate media guidelines.
 - **Assisting the Society Seneschal** in developing for the President and the Board of Directors official statements that best meet the current and long-term needs of the Society.
 - **Developing Publicity Materials and Basic Press Kits**—as defined below—for use by local, Regional, and Corporate officials when interacting with media, site owners, educational facilities, and governmental entities.

2. **Execution of Policy.** The conduct of Media Relations at Corporate, Society, Kingdom, and local branch levels will be performed in accordance with the Media Relations Plan, at Appendix 1 of this handbook.

Appendix 1 - Society Media Relations Plan

1. Definitions:

- **Deputy Society Seneschal and Assistant Vice President for Media Relations.** An official representative of the SCA, Inc., warranted by the Society Seneschal and the Board of Directors for the purpose of accomplishing the duties outlined in Section One of this policy document. This official reports directly to the Society Seneschal, with matrix responsibilities to the President and the Board of Directors.
- **Organized News Media.** This includes but is not limited to major television news networks and local network affiliates, published newspapers, periodicals, print and online media outlets and syndicated publications, radio stations and their networks, and local free press and/or college outlets.
- **Media Relations activities.** Activities involving information gathering and distribution through organized news media, whether the SCA, Inc., is approached by a media representative or the media participation is sought out by our organization via an individual, branch, or other Society representative.
- **Reportable media event.** Any event or happenstance in which one or more of the following occurs:
 - i. Media representative contacts the SCA for the purpose of doing a news story, column, or media presentation.
 - ii. SCA Branch or representative wishes to publicize an event or activity in modern media venues.
 - iii. Unfortunate occurrences that might result in media coverage, such as
 - 1. Severe Injury or fatality
 - 2. Incident resulting in official law enforcement being summoned to an SCA activity.
 - 3. Negative news resulting in the organization being displayed in an unfortunate light—e.g. destruction of property, prominent member retained on criminal charges, etc.

2. **Image to the outside World.** The image we wish to portray to the outside world should reflect our goals, purpose for existence and the finer aspects of achievement. To this end, people asked to speak to the media should show the best of:

- Clean-cut image

- Professional style
- Knowledge of the rules, purpose, and policies of the Society For Creative Anachronism.
- Skill at avoiding unfortunate topics.
- Skill as a public speaker
- Use vocabulary that is both meaningful and palatable to the public.
 - i. Avoid the word “Mundane.” Never use it with the media—its patronizing and insulting. A better term is “Modern-era.”
 - ii. Never discuss the following topics with the media
 1. Religion
 2. Lewd behavior that can be perceived as a form of sexual harassment.
 3. Alcohol making, preparation, studies, distribution, sale, etc.
 4. Households.

3. **Media relations at the local branch level.**

- **Materials to be used.** Basic press kits will be created, maintained, and distributed to Kingdoms and the Corporate office by the Deputy Society Seneschal for Media Relations and be made available for download online. It is always acceptable to obtain and distribute these to the media and any interested body.
- **Additional, Event/Occurrence based materials.** Additional materials may always be requested to better meet the specific needs of an Event, occurrence, or particular media interaction. At a minimum these must be approved by the Kingdom-level media representative. If the interaction is with major mainstream Media venue, such as CNN, History Channel, etc., then the Deputy Society Seneschal for Media Relations is the approving authority for content and format.
- **Reporting.** Local individuals, branches, or other entities should report within 7 days a media interaction to their Kingdom representative and the seneschallate whenever one or more of the following is true.
 - i. Outside Media Venue requests material for a story.
 - ii. Outside Media Venue arrives unannounced at an SCA event or activity.
 - iii. Outside Media Venue contacts the SCA regarding an ongoing news item.
 - iv. A story—positive or negative—regarding the SCA appears in an outside media publication.

4. **Media Relations at the Kingdom level.**

- **Kingdom level Media Relations representative.** Each kingdom will have a designated representative responsible for compliance to this policy. This person may or may not be an already-existing officer—that is left to the Kingdom to decide and manage. This person should meet the criteria contained in **Image to outside world**. When appointing this official, the Kingdom Seneschal should route the candidate information to the Society Seneschal and Deputy Society Seneschal for Media Relations. In the event a Kingdom has no appointed representative, the responsibility for compliance lies within the office of Kingdom Seneschal.
 - The Kingdom level Media Relations representative will be responsible for distributing press-kit materials to local groups and individuals.
 - The Kingdom level Media Relations representative will ensure all reportable events are communicated to the Seneschallate as well as the Deputy Society Seneschal for Media Relations.
 - Kingdoms will ensure that events projecting either attendance in excess of 2000 participants, or known attendance by major media organizations, are covered by the Kingdom level Media Relations representative.
5. **Reporting.** The Media Relations deputy will report through appropriate supervisory channels as follows:
- Quarterly report of all media relations activity
 - Incident reports whenever there is an occurrence of an incident involving items in or similar to the list under **Reportable Media Event** of this Policy.
 - Copies of stories, articles, newscasts, and/or televised features should be forwarded through channels to the Deputy Society Seneschal for Media Relations for retention in the Knowledge Base. As appropriate, these materials will be added to the press materials available to all branches via hard copy or the Society Seneschal Website.