



Newsgathering at Mercy and Mercy West Lakes

Mercy's goal is to work with the media in the gathering and reporting of information. Due to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) confidentiality requirements, media must have a Public Relations escort at all times whenever they are in the facility or when on campus. Media requesting interviews or video/photo opportunities should contact **Gregg Lagan at 515-490-6636 or Traci McBee at 515-247-3050.**

Mercy Medical Center – Des Moines and Mercy Medical Center – West Lakes are private health care facilities. Media should not be on: Mercy Central Campus, Mercy Medical Center – West Lakes campus, Mercy Behavioral Services Campus (Mercy Franklin Center), Mercy Capitol Medical Building campus, Mercy College of Health Sciences campus, Mercy Park, Mercy Court or McAuley Terrace senior apartments, Mercy Child Development Center campus, House of Mercy campus, Bishop Drumm Retirement Center Johnston campus or Mercy Hospice Johnston campus, 330 and 411 Laurel medical office buildings without permission of Public Relations & Marketing. Media failing to gain permission to be on campus will be escorted off the campus by Mercy Public Safety.

In some instances, media will be provided with special badges that clearly identify the media for the general public. In some situations Public Safety can provide a media escort until PR staff arrives. **Interviews or video acquired, but not coordinated through Mercy PR, should not be published or broadcast.**

Page Two—

To better assist you, media are asked to observe the following guidelines:

- Breaking news, including the arrival of ground or air ambulance vehicles and fire or police personnel, still requires permission from Public Relations & Marketing staff for media to be on campus. Mercy has processes in place that will allow media coverage of breaking news without compromising patient care or the safety of the general public and media. For safety purposes, reporters and photographers must stay behind Public Safety boundaries during helicopter operations. Media must be discreet in photographing patient unloading so as not to identify the patient. **Breaking news permission must be requested by calling the Media Relations cell phone at 515-490-6636 or the PR on-call cell at 515-229-1546.** Media regularly failing to gain permission will be escorted off campus by Mercy Public Safety.
- **Outside photography and live reporting is not allowed on Mercy properties without specific permission from PR.** Public Safety will be notified by PR when media are expected and where they have been directed to meet PR staff. Locations will be selected that do not impede ambulance, helicopter and/or patient traffic. Care should also be taken to protect the visual identity of Mercy patients, family members and the general visiting public.
- **An invitation extended to the media by a Mercy patient, or patient family member, is not a valid invitation to be on campus.** Public Relations & Marketing staff must verify consent for the release of Personal Health Information (PHI) by speaking with the patient or family members **before** any interviews, photographs, or video or audio recording is done. Media must call Media Relations staff at **515-490-6636** or the PR on-call at **515-229-1546** for permission. PR staff will work with the media once consent is verified. Media without valid permission to be on campus will be escorted off campus by Mercy Public Safety.

Page Three—

- An invitation by Mercy physicians, medical staff or employees are not valid invitations to be on campus. All requests for interviews with Mercy staff or administrators should be made by calling the Media Relations cell at **515-490-6636** or the PR on-call cell at **515-229-1546**. Media failing to gain permission to be on campus will be escorted off campus by Mercy Public Safety.

Media organizations or reporters/photographers who are unable to work within these guidelines will be subject to a review of their newsgathering privileges at Mercy. If a media representative is discovered in a patient room by medical staff or Public Safety without permission, PR will be contacted and the media will be escorted off campus. A follow-up meeting will be scheduled to address the situation. If materials and visuals are gathered through unauthorized interviews, a discussion will be held immediately with the reporter or media organization. It is our expectation that information improperly attained will not be broadcast, printed or distributed on the Internet. Doing so could affect future reporting privileges at Mercy