

# MEDIA GUIDELINES

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Engaging with media is not always in our best interest, especially if they do not tell our story accurately or give more credibility to detractors or opponents, so we should always interact with the media on our own terms when possible. Even well-constructed sentiments and responses to the media can be deconstructed and misquoted to be used against us.

## MEDIA INTERACTIONS AT YOUR CLINIC

- ✦ Designate a media spokesperson, and identify them to volunteers.
- ✦ Respond to any requests politely, ask for name, contact info, and credentials.
- ✦ State that we all have jobs to do, and you'll find the appropriate person to either provide a brief comment OR respond later on.
- ✦ Discreetly let day-of coordinators and volunteers know a media representative is there.
- ✦ In the absence of a media spokesperson, invite them to observe the clinic (offer water) and say that we'll respond at a later time.
- ✦ If possible, provide responses in writing, where we can more carefully control messaging.
- ✦ Few, if any people other than the media spokesperson should talk to media.
- ✦ Nothing is "off the record." Never say anything you wouldn't want to hear on TV or read in the news.
- ✦ Avoid saying, "No comment." Stick to the script and explain our need to stay engaged with the community during the event.

## ENGAGE, DON'T RAGE

Stay connected to the message of solidarity, not the knucklehead trying to rattle your cage (this includes counter-protesters and cops). Brainstorm some one-line responses to summarize what we're doing that can't be further dissected into sound bites or misquoted by the media:

- "We are out here helping people get their vehicles back in full working order [so they can go about their lives]."
- "We are reaching out to support those in our community."
- "We believe that traffic stops and fines for simple issues like brake lights can be burdensome and even dangerous to the most vulnerable members of our community."

