



GHANA
LIBRARY
AUTHORITY

GHANA LIBRARY AUTHORITY

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

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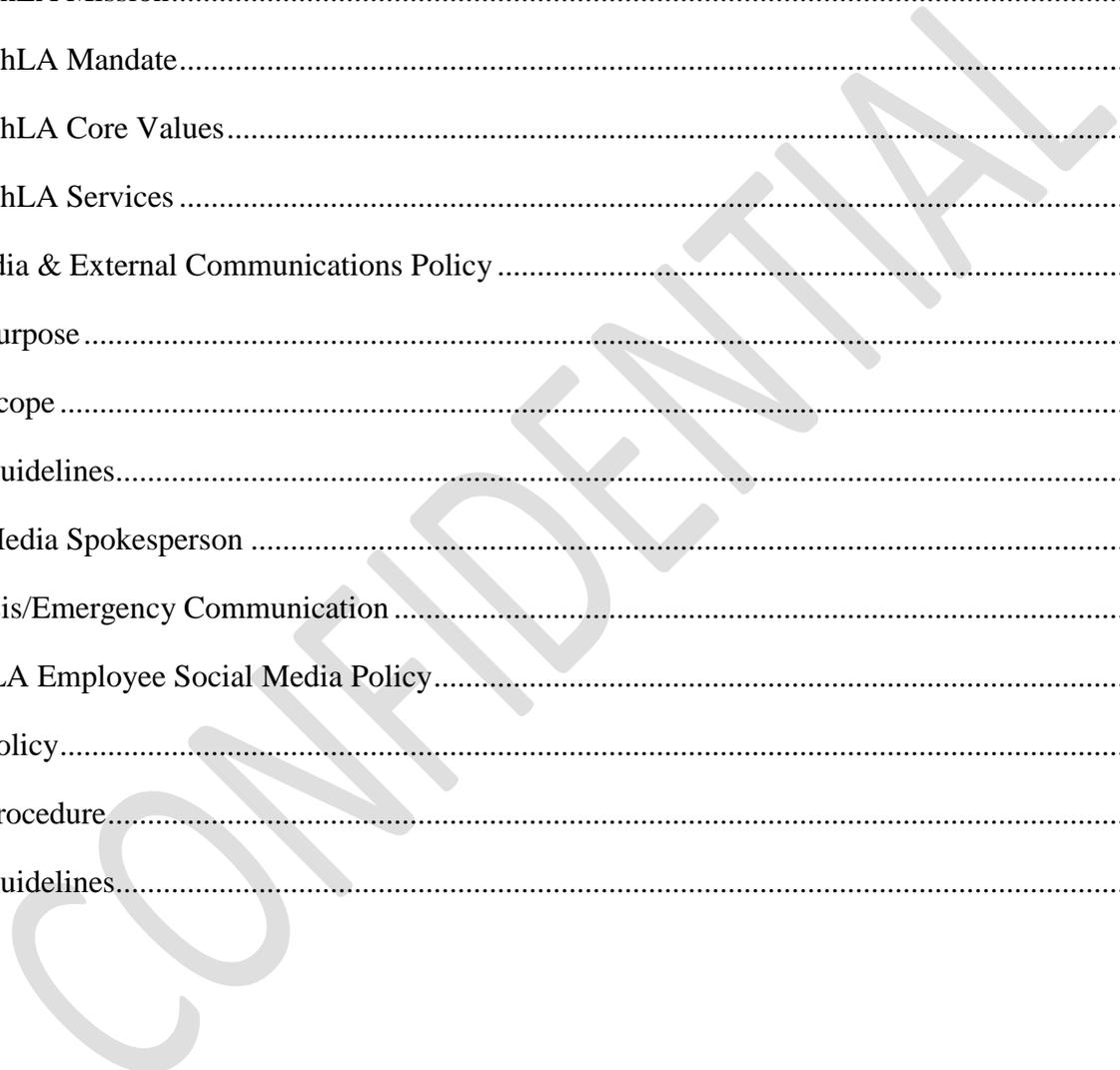
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Introduction

The Communication Policy comprises Media & External Communication, Crisis Communication as well as Social Media Guidelines. This **communication policy** is meant to give GhLA staff guidance for handling information, either outgoing or incoming, that pertains to the organization. The focus should be on spreading important news and information to the public and stakeholders.

GhLA Vision

To connect every Ghanaian to knowledge resources.

GhLA Mission

Be a leading knowledge services hub in the sub region by connecting all citizenry to knowledge resources to radically improve literacy and development outcomes, which transforms lives and communities

GhLA Mandate

To establish, equip, manage and maintain public libraries in Ghana.

GhLA Core Values

- Think Customer First
- Do the right thing
- Keep it simple, move fast and achieve excellence
- Think Innovatively
- Be Transparent
- Harness the collective power of one
- Treat all fairly

GhLA Services

Our services include Book and Device Lending services, Research Support Services, Mobile Library services, Digital Library Services, Book Box services, Bindery services, Technical Assistance, Software Development, Information Communication and Technology Training Services, Information Management System Services, Ghana National Bibliography Legal Deposit taking, Conference Venue Hiring, Issuance of International Standard Book Number (ISBN), International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) and International Standard Music Number (ISMN).

Media & External Communications Policy

The Media & External Communications Policy describes the protocols which authorized spokespersons of Ghana Library Authority are advised to follow when representing the Institution.

This section covers what GhLA designated spokesperson must know about, all media engagements for the institution, the type of media issues the GhLA comments on and what not to comment on.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that GhLA presents a unified, informed and consistent response to questions on our Institutions and services.

As a public centered Institution, GhLA has a great responsibility to ensure that the public can understand our services and that our media responses are accurate, relevant and timely hence the need for this guide to direct us in that order.

Scope

This Policy covers print, radio, television, and online media contributions such as interviews, commentary, media statements, letters, editorials or even engaging the press in a conference. It also includes representing the institution when engaging in any social media or publicly available discussion forums such as blogs.

At the regional front, it is only the Regional Director, Corporate Affairs representative, Branch Head and/or a competent staff appointed by the Regional or Branch Head who are mandated to

speak. As such, there must be a thorough engagement with the staff or branch spokesperson to understand the issue on board.

No staff (from Head Office) under any circumstance is to speak on behalf of GhLA unless authorized by Corporate Affairs with approval from Executive Director.

Note: Whoever engages any media person be it friend, partner, in a phone interview and later used as communication about GhLA is liable to its effects and tantamount to sanctions by the institution.

Guidelines

In responding to the media, GhLA authorized spokesperson/staff will adhere to the following principles.

Authorized spokesperson **does**:

- i. Comment on Library services rendered by GhLA.
- ii. Comment on essence of Libraries in National Development.
- iii. Comment on subscription to GhLA services.
- iv. Comment on Individual Development through reading.
- v. Profile and publicize GhLA Social Media platforms.
- vi. Profile and publicize works of other branches whether in the same region or a different region and activities from head office.
- vii. Comment on matters to which it has previously gone on record to discuss, or matters in which it has a stated position that is publicly available for review.
- viii. Comment on statistics on patronage if available.
- ix. Comment positively about GhLA

Authorized spokesperson **does not**:

- i. Comment on anything out of GhLA services and Library services in general.
- ii. Comment on personal issues that concern the Executive Director, another employee, employee or trainee's remuneration.
- iii. Comment on other branch activities or GhLA services & partnerships without authenticating information.
- iv. Rate schools in the country and project them negatively.
- v. Rate other agencies negatively.
- vi. Take all credits of work done either in your branch or in region.

- vii. Comment on adverse events of GhLA if it is likely to have an impact on disciplinary or legal proceedings.
- viii. Endorse literacy statistics without ascertaining source.
- ix. Comment on rumors or speculation except after consultation with the Chief Executive Officer and Management.

Employees shall be held responsible for any informal communication with media friends that escalates into the media sector.

Note: Employees invited by a media house to speak on a topic of expertise must seek the approval of Management.

Such employees may not speak on behalf of GhLA.

Employees who fall foul of the above will be referred to the disciplinary committee.

Media Spokesperson

Regional Level

All Regional Directors reserve the right to appoint spokespersons from their regions or branches based on knowledge of GhLA services and eloquence.

Branch Level

Branch heads must collaborate with Regional Director on designated spokespersons and further inform CA before any planned media engagement.

Interview Reports

Pictures of interviews together with a brief report on the media engagement must be presented to Corporate Affairs via corporate.affairs@library.gov.gh after the Interview.

Archive

Spokespersons are also to demand an audio/video copy of the interview to be sent to CA and to be archived on *Microsoft Onedrive* for reference purposes. Should spokesperson/s be misquoted, there would be evidence to rebut it.

Crisis/Emergency Communication

If incorrect information is published about GhLA at the regional level, the Regional Directors must first report the issue to Corporate Affairs (CA). CA after internal checks would

subsequently ask the media outlet or publisher to correct the information after presenting the evidence (Audio copy of Interview or Screenshots), do a rebuttal, or release an article to overshadow it (This would be with approval from the Executive Director).

In the event of a crisis, all communications should be directed to Corporate Affairs via: corporate.affairs@library.gov.gh (05496658353)

To all Heads of Department and Regional Directors -

On Internal Front - internal engagement/consensus: There is a need to constantly engage with the staff to know their challenges, share ideas and strategize for the next level.

These engagements can be weekly or monthly. It helps to answer worker concerns and kill any future agitations at the early stages.

Channels such as staff durbars, open forum, general meetings, etc. help to have internal consensus and cohesion.

Note: Once there is potential challenge that may escalate into crisis, it can be communicated to Management, HR or Corporate Affairs.

External: having identified possible crises triggers early on, these are possible ways to handle crises externally.

The crises communications team: the team consist of the Executive Director, Legal Counsel, the internal auditor and the CA team. This core team will manage crises and help with the information flow and gathering.

The team will therefore select one person that will answer all media queries and questions based on the nature of the crisis.

GhLA Employee Social Media Policy

Policy

This policy is to provide practical assistance on the use of social media platforms by employees. This includes; Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, WhatsApp, Telegram, other social networking sites, and other internet postings, including blogs, vlogs, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, among others. Use of this policy will help management ensure that, the use of social media by staff is appropriate and in the interests of the authority.

Procedure

GhLA employees are encouraged to use their personal social media handles to follow GhLA pages and GhLA news, on various online portals. It is likely many of your contacts on social media platforms will know or eventually find out you work at GhLA.

Therefore, it is important to follow the rules so you can be sure you do not act against the interests of GhLA and its clients/Users, breach confidentiality or reveal internal/stakeholder information in any way.

Guidelines**What you should do:**

- Follow news updates from GhLA offices, as well as industry news and campaigns.
- Clearly state on your profile that your views are personal, not the Authority's.
- Share content about the library and education sector. If you are following the latest trends, it's fine to comment on your area of expertise – just ensure this is done in a personal capacity and you do not criticise other sister agencies or competitors.
- Share exciting things the institution is doing that are already public knowledge. If you are proud of a product of GhLA projects, feel free to share the campaign on social media – but only *after* it has been publicly announced.

What you should keep in mind:

- Your interaction on social media may be local, but the internet is global. Be aware of diverse opinions and respect them. Bear in mind that GhLA is a government stake, and avoid getting too detailed with emotionally charged topics like politics, religion, sexual orientation etc.
- Remember that the public will still see you as a company ambassador, even if you do not claim to be a spokesperson or mention GhLA on your profile. If the public find out you work for GhLA, they will interpret your views as being the views of GhLA. Do not say anything you would not want your *superior* to see.
- Your patrons, managers, supervisors, peers and even company partners may read what you write; criticising them or making defamatory comments could result in the institution losing sponsorships, partnerships, business or even result in disciplinary action, which may lead to potential sanctions depending on the severity of the misconduct.
- Be sure to wait until you know the facts about anything GhLA -related before you talk about it on social media
- Be aware that cyber bullying/ harassment and or discrimination are serious matters and will be treated as such.
- If employees encounter a situation on social media that threaten to become antagonistic, employees should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of a supervisor.

What you should never do:

- Share gossip, rumours or other internal information about your colleagues online.
- Disclose any information that is confidential or exclusive - even if you think it is secure. This includes via direct messages on social media.
- Post any unprofessional content that could be seen as offensive or discriminatory.
- Use GhLA email addresses or images to set up personal profiles.
- Post anything disparaging about the government.
- Answer clients or library user questions from a personal account or criticise a user from your personal account.
- Communicate any information about any crisis on personal profiles. Communications regarding crisis should only come from authorised spokespeople and only through official company channels.

Disciplinary Actions

Staff who flouts GhLA Communication guidelines will be subjected to the following sanctions:

- Formal apology
- Leave without pay
- Suspension
- Withholding of salary
- Denial of promotion
- Dismissal

NB: Management should ensure the avoidance of victimization.

Media Relation Strategy

Media relation is the relationship between journalists and an organization that can be initiated by either side.

The Ghana Library Authority seeks to apply the following strategies to maintain media relations;

1. Periodic Courtesy Calls

Periodic visits would be paid to various media houses to have detailed discussion on operations and how both parties can benefit from the relationship.

2. Identify Friendly Media

Build friendship with media houses

3. Press Briefings

GhLA would host periodic events to officially brief the media on GhLA operations and answer questions.

4. Strategic meetings

Strategic meetings would be organized for key media partners to propagate GhLA's objectives and strategies.