

Communications & Information Sharing

Policy 1505

Revised: January 31, 2021

Purpose

To protect its mission and reputation, **BRPC** needs to retain control of its communications, branding, and information assets.

External Communications

- ❑ **Media Relations:** All media contacts are to be handled by the **Communications Director**, **Executive Director**, **Board President**, or a designee they appoint.
- ❑ **Review & Approval:** All press releases, communications or other promotional materials are to be approved by the **Communications Director**, **Executive Director**, or **Board President** prior to dissemination.
- ❑ **Public Representation:** No **Team Member** shall use **BRPC** stationery or any title of **BRPC** or refer to **BRPC** or misidentify themselves as an authorized representative in connection with any matter as to which they are not authorized as a representative of **BRPC** and to express an opinion on its behalf.

Use of BRPC Name / Logo

The **BRPC** name and logo are copyrighted materials. Use of these materials is strictly prohibited without express consent from the **Communications Director**, **Executive Director**, or **Board President**.

Individuals and organizations given permission to use **BRPC's** name/logo in the production of approved publications and promotional materials will be provided a copy of our copyrighted name/logo. Use of the name and logo is restricted to approved publications and promotional materials and cannot be used for future publications and promotional materials without the express approval of the **Communications Director**, **Executive Director**, or **Board President**.

Email / Document-Sharing

To ensure that we can comply with our retention and discovery policies, we must maintain control of all information and communications.

- ❑ All **Senior Team Members** and people with ongoing administrative roles will use **BRPC** email accounts to send and receive both internal and external communications. This includes leaders of programs, functions, projects, and **Team Members**. It does not include occasional **Team Members**.
- ❑ **Team Members** should share only one another's **BRPC** email addresses for **BRPC** activities. They should never give out other **Team Members'** personal emails without prior consent.
- ❑ **BRPC Documents:** All documents and files associated with **BRPC** plans, operations, and activities must be stored on and shared through **BRPC** virtual drives.

These policies serve several critical purposes:

- Enables compliance with our information retention policy (all 501c3s are expected to have such a policy).
- Enables **BRPC** to comply with potential legal discovery requirements.
- Ensures that constituents have a durable email address to contact.
- Enables **BRPC Team Members** to differentiate between work-related and personal communications.
- Enables **BRPC Team Members** to share one another's work emails while protecting each other's privacy.

Social Media and the Internet

Our Social Media Guidelines

To understand our social media policies, it helps to understand their underlying rationale:

- ❑ **Our Mission:**
- ❑ **Our Standards of Practice:** In everything we do, we seek to:
 - Present a sharp, professional image.
 - Maintain a family-friendly environment.
 - Respect all copyrights.

- ❑ **What We Seek to Do:** Our goal is to support our local LGBTQ+ community through advocacy, education, celebration, and service. We therefore seek to use social media and the internet to:
 - Promote anything that is aligned with this overriding goal.
 - Promote our programs, events, projects, and resources.
 - Personify Blue Ridge Pride by sharing pictures of our team in action.
 - Share news and announcements relevant to our mission.
 - Offer daily affirmations – feel good quotes, local pictures, happy things, etc.
 - Support partner organizations and their events.
 - Share pictures and videos of past **BRPC** and community events (e.g., Throwback Thursdays).
- ❑ **What We Will Not Do:** It is against our policy to do any of the following:
 - Promote political candidates or parties.
 - Spread misinformation.
 - Share information confidential to our team, donors, and other constituents.
 - Shame, demean, threaten, or stereotype any individual, group, or group identity. (This includes groups and identities that we may not identify with.)

Social Media Policies for Team Members

- ❑ **Team Members Are Encouraged to:**
 - Add posts and events that comply with the guidelines above.
 - Tag other organizations when you mention them in a positive light.
 - Interact with your audience as much as you can: Like comments; Say “Thank you” to those who share or are helpful; Invite “Likes” to officially like our pages.
- ❑ **Team Members Should Not:** Because we value our reputation for quality, we ask colleagues:
 - Don’t share information without doing your research. Is the website valid? Is the information correct?
 - Don’t use low-quality pictures or videos or logos that are off brand.
 - Don’t be needy – don’t ask for shares/likes/etc.
 - Don’t write in ALL CAPS!
 - Don’t overuse hashtags. They are often used on Twitter but do not get much traction on Facebook. One or two, if any, should suffice.
- ❑ **Team Members Must Not:** When representing Blue Ridge Pride or interacting through Blue Ridge Pride social media channels, you must not:
 - Post or comment contrary to our guidelines above.
 - Comment personally through the Blue Ridge Pride account unless you are speaking on behalf of **BRPC** with the express support of the **Executive Director**, **Communications Director**, or **Board President**.
 - Share **Team Members’** personal contact information (e.g., personal email or phone).
 - Go negative, use a sarcastic tone, or act in a confrontational manner to anyone when you are presenting yourself as a representative of Blue Ridge Pride.
 - Communicate to or about individuals, except where supportive. [If you feel that we need to respond to someone’s post or comment critically, bring it to the attention of the **Communications Director**.
 - Use profane language, threats, racist/homophobic/transphobic/any-phobic language.
 - Critique anyone’s expression of their identity.
 - Share copyrighted material without proper credit and permission.
 - Share pictures or videos that are likely to be considered adult content.
- ❑ **When Team Members Should Seek Review:** The **Communications Director**, **Executive Director**, **Board President**, or one of their designees must review and approve the following content:
 - Editorials and opinion pieces
 - Policy endorsements or critiques

- Criticisms of individuals, organizations, events, or movements.

Personal Social Media

We hope that **Team Members** will use similar standards of practice in their own social media accounts. If a **Team Member** deviates from these standards, we ask that they make certain that their comments cannot in any way be construed to represent the views of **Blue Ridge Pride Center, Inc.**

Political Activities / Advocacy

- Team Members** are encouraged to take an active interest and to participate in the political and governmental process. However, except for registered lobbyists and others authorized to act on behalf of **BRPC**, **Team Members** participating do so as individuals and not as representatives of **BRPC**.
- Team Members** must not engage in political activities on behalf of **BRPC** unless expressly approved beforehand by the **Executive Director** or **Board President**.
- To avoid any inference of support or sponsorship by **BRPC**, a **Team Member** must never represent that their political donation, endorsement, or other political activity was made or engaged in with the approval, or on behalf, of **BRPC**.

Not Sure?

If you have something that you want to communicate, share, or post but aren't certain about compliance issues, please email it to communications@blueridgepride.org.