

**SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL**  
**National Council of Canada**

**GUIDELINES FOR PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS ON BEHALF OF THE**  
**SOCIETY OF SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL IN CANADA**

The purpose of these guidelines is to establish clear lines of authority as it relates to public communications on behalf of the Society in Canada and in any regional jurisdiction.

**COMMUNICATIONS**

Members of the Society and its employees shall refrain from any public expression of personal views likely to be associated with their membership or employment status in the Society and which may generate public controversy or bring the Society into disrepute. If such a situation occurs, the Central or Regional Council President may issue a public disclaimer to appropriate media after a careful review of the controversy. The National Council President shall be advised of all such incidents and public disclaimer.

Communications, for the purposes of these guidelines, may be defined as any activities, declarations or other types of communication (via e-mail, web sites, etc.) by members or employees on behalf of the Society to the media. This also includes communications that may likely be reported by any media that may generate public controversy, or may bring the Society into disrepute. All such communications shall be approved by the relevant Regional Council President or the President of the National Council of Canada (see also Policy FIN 002).

Presidents of Conferences and Councils may inform the general public, specifically the Clergy Episcopate, of the activities conducted by the Society in their area, as per Sub-section 3.20 of the Rule.

**General Procedures**

Unless specifically authorized, the National, or Regional Councils assumes no liability or responsibility for correspondence conducted by any of its members purportedly made on behalf of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul.

With respect to matters dealing with Special Works within any Regional jurisdictions, any correspondence conducted by a member/volunteer shall be initially submitted to the President and Committee Chair for approval prior to its release.

In other matters, the President of the Council should be first consulted before associating the name of the Society with any expression of personal views. When reviewing such materials, and in the exercise of discretion and good judgement, the President among other factors, may consider the following elements:

- a) Inappropriate tone or terminology
- b) Possible misinterpretation of facts
- c) Misinterpretation of the Rule
- d) Expressing political views, or views on matters that are not directly related to the Society's work

The above shall not apply to opinions generally expressed within the Society.

**Employees**

With respect to employees of the Society

- a) All correspondence relating to policy matters of funding will be submitted to the President, Executive Director or Manager, as the case may be, prior to the final draft being prepared. In the case of ED or Manager, then the draft is submitted to the President of the Council.
- b) No other employees may conduct correspondence without the express approval of the Director, or President as the case may be.
- c) All Directors and Managers shall maintain a specific correspondence file that will be kept on the designated premises.
- d) All Chairpersons, Directors and Managers shall ensure that one copy of all significant correspondence, other than statistical forms or form letters dealing with routine business, is provided to the employing Council office for appropriate distribution and filing.
- e) All official correspondence shall be conducted on official Society letterhead. An original signature is required.
- f) A copy of each item of significant correspondence will be submitted to the relevant Board of Directors and/or committee for the information of the members at the regular meeting.

### **Accountability**

The President of the relevant Council to the President of the next higher Council.

Executive Director or Manager to the President of an employing Council

Chairs of Committees to the President of the relevant Council.

**REFERENCE:** International Rule (*rev. October 2003*), section 7; the Canadian Rule (*ed. 2006*) sub-sections 1.1, 1.3.1.3, 2.2.2, 2.4.13, 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.13, 3.21, 3.22; National Policy FIN 002.

**The Rule (ed. 2006), Sub-sections 2.6 and 2.2.11, 2.3.8 and 2.3.14, 2.4.8 and 2.4.13, 2.5.7 and 2.5.11, 2.6.7, 2.6.10 and 2.6.17; sub-sections 3.3, 3.4, 3.6, 3.17 and 3.20, National Policy FIN 002.**