

PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Public Relations program's purpose is to create, share, implement and support communication that advances the mission of the ALA and projects a positive image of our organization to the public at all levels. It covers every kind of communication from casual conversation to public speaking, news releases, interviews, and all forms of media. It is the vehicle through which we can share our purpose, vision, and mission, as well as information about upcoming events that may interest the public.

Public relations as a concept is neither simply "publicity" nor internal communications. It reaches **beyond** our own organization to promote visibility in our communities and share a positive message. Sharing interesting and relevant information about the ALA as well as the Legion Family, its programs, and mission can serve to increase visibility and interest.

The Public Relations Chair should be informed of any newsworthy events or activities and plans for events, so as to be able to promote them to the community in a positive manner.

Considerations for the Public Relations Chair:

- Maintain social media accounts; this includes monitoring them.
 - Identify the Unit's number, name, city, and state.
- Have more than one administrator on any social media account.
- Build relationships with local media and personnel.
- Send press releases and letters to the editor to local media.
- Explore the use of public service announcements and community programming.
 - Locally produced talk shows are often looking for content for human interest stories or a community calendar.
- Collaborate with unit chairs to contact local government for proclamations related to pertinent events (such as National Poppy Day, Month of the Military Child, etc.).
- Notify local media to request coverage of events.
- Download and use the ALA PR toolkit available at <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/resources/pr-toolkit>
- Take the ALA Academy courses related to PR (Branding and Using Social Media)
- Download the Branding Guide available at <https://member.legion-aux.org/member/guides/branding-guide>
 - There are very specific rules related to use of the ALA Emblem and Brandmarks.
 - Permission to use them is required in many instances. Be sure to consult the Branding Guide before using either of them, and obtain permission for their use when indicated. Page 4 of the Branding Guide describes how to request permission.
- Consider purchasing a subscription to the ALA Magazine for an office or business to put in their waiting area.

Reminders:

Every member represents *all* members in the eyes of the public. Unless a member is designated to speak for the organization, they should not speak *on behalf of* the organization.

We are the American Legion Auxiliary, not the “Ladies Auxiliary” or “Women’s Auxiliary”; and we should not refer to ourselves as a “sisterhood”. We have male members in the ALA so those antiquated labels should not be used in any of our communications.

Promoting a positive image is everyone’s responsibility. Urge all members to have an “elevator speech” ready to share the ALA mission and the value of membership.

Other

Join the ALA Public Relations Facebook group and check the National ALA website frequently for updates.

Excerpted from the ALA Unit Guide (2024, pp.86-89), <https://www.legion-aux.org/Member/Committees/Public-Relations/Get-Involved-Public-Relations> and links provided above.