

## **10 FAM 120**

# **REMARKS AND WRITINGS FOR THE MEDIA AND GENERAL PUBLIC**

*(CT:PEC-14; 06-12-2009)*  
*(Office of Origin: PA)*

## **10 FAM 121 POLICY, SCOPE, AND AUTHORITY**

### **10 FAM 121.1 Policy**

*(CT:PEC-14; 06-12-2009)*

- a. All official statements to the press must be approved by the Assistant Secretary *for Public Affairs/Spokesperson*.
- b. All official public remarks and testimony by Assistant Secretaries and above must be approved by the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs.
- c. Official appearances before the media or general public to give formal interviews, speeches, or remarks must be cleared with the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs. See also 3 FAM, Personnel. See 10 FAM 121.4.
- d. All unofficial speaking, writing, or teaching activities that are of official concern must be approved by the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs, in accordance with 3 FAM. See 10 FAM 121.4.

### **10 FAM 121.2 Scope**

*(CT:PEC-14; 06-12-2009)*

- a. The policy for official public remarks applies to all current State Department employees.
- b. The policy for unofficial speaking, writing, or teaching (*see* 10 FAM 121.4) applies to all current State Department employees.
- c. Former employees remain obligated by law not to disclose classified information, and certain employees may be bound by nondisclosure

agreements. See also 3 FAM.

## 10 FAM 121.3 Responsibilities

*(CT:PEC-14; 06-12-2009)*

- a. The Bureau of Public Affairs (PA) clears all Department statements, speeches released to the press, *and* media interviews.
- b. The PA bureau drafts speeches and testimony for the Secretary. It clears all public remarks by senior officials above the Assistant Secretary level.
- c. The bureau clears all official appearances before the general public.
- d. The bureau oversees the wide dissemination of public remarks and the approval of unofficial speaking, writing, or teaching (see 10 FAM 121.4).

## 10 FAM 121.4 Definitions

*(CT:PEC-14; 06-12-2009)*

- a. **Official:** Speaking, writing, or teaching is official (and automatically of official concern) when conducted in connection with Department employment, or in any capacity representing the Department of State, regardless of location:
  - (1) Statements to the press include any remark to the press that quotes, reflects the views of, or gives the Department's position, or represents the Department in any way;
  - (2) Public remarks include speeches, congressional testimony, press statements, and remarks prepared for photo opportunities;
  - (3) Public appearances include appearances before the general public for the purpose of giving speeches or other remarks;
  - (4) Media interviews include those with newspaper, magazine, TV, radio, or other forums; and
  - (5) Teaching includes that which involves subject matter of official concern *and/or* occurs on duty, on U.S. Government property, or under U.S. Government sponsorship.
- b. **Of official concern:** These activities reasonably may be interpreted as relating to the current responsibilities, programs, or operations of the Department of State or to current U.S. foreign policies, or which

reasonably may be expected to affect the foreign relations of the United States. They require Department clearance in accordance with 3 FAM (see also 10 FAM 121.1). Those activities and subjects not included in this definition do not require clearance. When in doubt, contact the Office of *Electronic Information (PA/EI)*.

- c. **Unofficial:** Speaking, writing, or teaching is unofficial when conducted in a private capacity outside U.S. Government property, work hours, or orders and concerns such matters as the employee or former employee may be involved in by virtue of unofficial, personal, or avocational interests. These activities fall into two categories:
  - (1) Unofficial but of official concern (see paragraph b of this section); or
  - (2) Unofficial and of no official concern. These are all activities and subjects *that* do not require clearance (see 10 FAM 121.4, paragraph b of this section).
- d. **Electronic dissemination:** Includes but is not limited to any information dissemination through public computer bulletin boards or other on-line systems, e-mail, CD-ROM, or digital audio tape.
- e. **Organized hard-copy dissemination:** Any hard-copy material reproduced using a copier, printing press, *or similar equipment that* is disseminated through any sales program or is disseminated free to the public regularly and/or through a mailing list to selected audiences (as opposed to limited copies reproduced in response to specific requests from the public on an ad hoc basis).

## 10 FAM 121.5 Authorities

*(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)*

Basic Bureau of Public Affairs authorities are found at 1 FAM 320.

## 10 FAM 122 OFFICIAL STATEMENTS AND REMARKS TO THE PRESS

*(CT:PEC-14; 06-12-2009)*

Generally, statements to the press are made only by the Secretary; *a Deputy Secretary or* Under Secretary; the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs/Department Spokesman or Deputy Spokesman; authorized personnel

of the Office of Press Relations; and other Department officials cleared to deliver such statements by the Bureau of Public Affairs.

## **10 FAM 123 PREPARING OFFICIAL PUBLIC REMARKS**

*(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)*

At the level of Assistant Secretary and above, submit drafts of public remarks as early as possible for clearance by the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs or designee within the Bureau of Public Affairs.

## **10 FAM 124 PUBLIC APPEARANCES**

### **10 FAM 124.1 Media**

*(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)*

The Office of Press Relations (PA/Press) clears all requests and arrangements for interviews with the media.

### **10 FAM 124.2 General Public**

*(TL:PEC-01; 10-01-1999)*

- a. Officers must obtain clearance from the Office of Public Liaison (PA/PL) for all official appearances before the general public and must keep the office up to date on status.
- b. Bureaus must keep the Office of Public Liaison informed of the names of officers who are qualified to participate in public appearances.
- c. Bureaus should work closely with the Bureau of Public Affairs to identify issues that should be receiving special attention for overall planning purposes.

## **10 FAM 125 DISSEMINATION OF PUBLIC REMARKS**

*(CT:PEC-14; 06-12-2009)*

- a. Major speeches, testimony, and other remarks are reviewed for inclusion in Dispatch by the Office of *Electronic Information (PA/EI)*. See 10 FAM 132.
- b. Bureaus/offices must obtain prior approval for electronic or organized hard-copy public dissemination from *PA/EI* following procedures in 10 FAM 132.

## **10 FAM 126 UNOFFICIAL SPEAKING, WRITING, AND TEACHING**

*(CT:PEC-14; 06-12-2009)*

Employees should submit requests for review of unofficial speaking, writing, and teaching (as defined above) to the Office of *Electronic Information (PA/EI)*. State Department employees cannot make public or provide in a way that could allow access to the public any such material until it is cleared by the appropriate Department office(s). In addition, appropriate authorization must be received before any classified information may be disclosed. (See 3 FAM.)

## **10 FAM 127 THROUGH 129 UNASSIGNED**