

MUSLIM MEDIA RELATIONS, PART 3

How to Write an Effective News Release

A news release is the basic means of communication between an organization and the media, whether print, television or radio. Much of the news you read, see or hear began with a simple news release. A good news release reads like a good news story. Reporters and editors feel more confident using material from sources who are aware of what media professionals need to do their jobs.

Some tips:

- Use a headline that summarizes the local, interesting or significant aspects of the story. A news release for *al-jum'at* might read, "Local Muslims Celebrate End of Month-Long Fast with Communal Prayers."
- Type the release using double spaces or single space with wide margins.
- Use only one side of a single piece of 8.5x11 white paper.
- Include a contact number including home, work, pager and mobile phone numbers.
- Triple check for accuracy and spelling.
- Send releases to the right media "gatekeepers." The most important are the television stations' "news assignment editor," radio stations' "news director" and newspapers' "city editor." Note - Always send a release to the local Associated Press bureau "daybook editor."
- Avoid rhetoric and inflammatory language.
- Give facts, not opinions. If you want to give opinions, put them in the form of quotes.
- Be rational. Eliminate emotionalism and hostility from your release.

Note - Call CAIR to schedule a media relations seminar in your community.

CAIR News is published quarterly by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). CAIR is a nonprofit, grassroots membership organization dedicated to presenting an Islamic perspective on issues of importance to the American public. In offering that perspective, CAIR seeks to empower the Muslim community in America through political and social activism.

CAIR's mission is carried out through:

- Media Relations
- Conferences and Seminars
- Publications
- Anti-Defamation Work
- Action Alerts
- Lobbying
- Training

For more information, call CAIR's Washington, D.C., office at (202) 638-6340, or fax (202) 638-6412. E-Mail: cair1@ix.netcom.com

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