

PIERPONT COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Board of Governors Policies and Procedures

PP-2064

SHORT TITLE: Communicating with Government Officials

EFFECTIVE: May 13, 2025

AMENDED:

REPEALED:

REVIEWED:

SECTION 1. PURPOSE¹

The President, Board of Governors Chair, and/or their designees are responsible for developing all Pierpont Community & Technical College ("Pierpont" or "College") positions on state and Federal legislation and proposed regulations, and for coordinating College relations and communications. Such communications could be with the West Virginia Legislature, the Governor, Congress, and State and Federal Executive Branch officials. This policy establishes a process and framework for communication with federal and state officials and sets requirements related to direct communication by all College employees with federal and state government officials. This policy is designed to distinguish between an employee's personal right to voice their opinions to the government versus speaking on behalf of the College to government officials. Noncompliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

SECTION 2. Communication with Government Officials²

2.1 Contacts relating to College business with elected and appointed officials and their offices are coordinated by the Office of the President at the direction of the Board of Governors. Central coordination assures that one part of the organization is not working at cross purposes with another and prevents confusion on the part of government officials as to Pierpont's priorities.

2.2 The three main types of contact are governed as follows:

2.2.1 Contact with local, state, and federal elected officials, their staffs and key agency personnel on matters impacting the finances, appropriations, operations, program policy, or general operating policy: The College leadership has been entrusted with the stewardship of Pierpont. Only the President or Board

¹ Source Virginia Commonwealth University

² Source The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

of Governors Chair and/or their designees will speak for the College to local, state, and federal elected officials and agency personnel in matters related to the finances, appropriations and operations of the College and its programs and state or federal legislative processes in conformance with state and federal law. All communications with government officials pertaining to matters of Pierpont's institutional interests, legislative priorities, or related policy matters must be coordinated through the Office of the President.

2.2.2 At times employees may be contacted by governmental officials or their representatives for information or consultation or to provide testimony at formal hearings. Employees may be involved in advocacy related to an external organization that has some relationship to the College mission or appropriations. While Pierpont may benefit through such requests and encourages employees toward service to their fellow citizens, the College maintains the right to be informed of such contacts or relationships and to be involved, as appropriate, in such relationships. Further, these types of contacts may be regulated by state or federal law. The Office of Governmental Relations is available to assist the employee in navigating the legislative or regulatory process and for ensuring compliance with reporting requirements.

2.2.3 Pierpont recognizes and appreciates the privilege of each employee as a citizen of this state and nation to express his or her own political opinions. The right to express one's own opinions and to seek to make that opinion known is inalienable. Employees who choose to exercise their rights as citizens must make every effort to indicate clearly that the position they take is an individual opinion and does not represent the opinion of Pierpont. If an employee identifies himself or herself as a member of the faculty or staff of Pierpont, he or she must clearly state that the opinions expressed are his own and not those of the College.

2.3 Employees may not utilize any state resource in any expression of their political views or personal opinions. This policy expressly prohibits Pierpont employees from using Pierpont funds, materials, telecommunications media, or staff support in communicating their personal opinions and views to government officials.

2.4 The officials covered by this policy are the executives of federal, state, and local departments and agencies, whether elected or appointed; members of Congress; members of the West Virginia Legislature; legislative agencies; state agencies; county and city elected officials and staff including County Commissioners; any City Council within our service area; and the immediate staff of these persons.

The topics of communication covered by this policy are those pertaining to matters of institutional interests, state or federal appropriations, matters pertaining to the operation of the institution or institutional programs, legislative priorities, regulatory oversight, or related policy matters.

3.1 Before contacting any state or federal legislator or staff; state or federal agency or department head or staff; or city and county elected officials or staff on a topic

covered by this policy, employees must first discuss the issue, the desired action and potential state or federal reporting requirements with the President or their designee.

All employees must immediately inform the President, or their designee, when they have been directly contacted by a government official or his or her staff members on a covered topic. Based upon the nature of the contact and its ramifications, the President shall determine the most appropriate next steps or the response to an inquiry.