



# **Media Relations Toolkit: Capturing Media Attention**

OFFICE OF  
HOUSING COUNSELING

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# Media Relations: A Key to Effective Consumer Education

Greetings!

This Media Relations Toolkit is designed to assist Housing Counseling Agencies (HCAs) in their mission to educate and empower consumers to make responsible choices when addressing their housing needs. Our belief is that every community benefits when its population has access to sustainable housing.

The local media in your community are powerful influencers of consumers. HCAs should understand how the media work to engage with them to raise awareness about counseling services. This toolkit is designed to provide you with this understanding through basic steps, tools, and support you will need to get started.

From researching and assembling a media contact list to tips for capturing media attention, to templates for creating a press release and pitching emails, this toolkit will help HCAs feel confident starting a conversation with their media. Whether your HCA is just beginning its media outreach or is already engaged, we are certain you will find valuable takeaways in this toolkit.

*Sarah Gerecke*

Deputy Assistant Secretary  
Office of Housing Counseling



# **An Introduction to Media Relations**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) – Office of Housing Counseling (OHC) provides counseling to consumers on seeking, financing, maintaining, renting, or owning a home. The counseling is provided by HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agencies (HCAs).

This toolkit was developed by the OHC to provide guidance to HUD-approved HCAs across the United States to better communicate with consumers through media relations. In this guide, you will find information to help you understand the importance of media relations and how to get started—from identifying the right media to contact to creating a press release. In addition, it will provide you with the best practices and tips for communicating with the media to help you with your media relations outreach.

## Why Media Relations?

Do you want to help your community become aware of the services your HCA offers? If so, then you will likely be interested in learning how to use media relations as part of your marketing efforts. This toolkit and its associated webinars can help you get started.

When companies share information about their business, products, or services with media reporters or journalists directly, they are participating in media relations. When you read, see, or hear a news story about a company that was written by a reporter or journalist in a newspaper or magazine or reported on TV or radio, you are seeing the results of media relations.

Done correctly and consistently, media relations can help raise awareness about your HCA's services. News stories written and published about your HCA by an unbiased, trustworthy local media source add credibility to your reputation and message. That can help to positively influence what consumers think about your HCA and services and even motivate them to take a specific action.

# **Media Relations:** **Capturing Media Attention**

## Understanding Media Relations

### What Is Media Relations?

- An important part of public relations
- A company's communications and relationships with editors, reporters, journalists, and bloggers
- Newspapers, radio, television, and the Internet

You have probably heard of public relations but may not be certain what it is. In a nutshell, public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their public. An important public for nearly any company is the media.

Media relations is the side of public relations that involves persuading journalists, reporters, or editors to tell a positive story about your HCA or services in a magazine or newspaper, on a TV or radio station, or on a website. Your goal is to capture the media's attention by communicating your newsworthy story or information to the right people and at the right media outlets, using the appropriate media tools.

## HCA Stakeholders

Depending on what services your HCA offers, your target stakeholders are likely to be consumers in your community who fall into one or all of these categories:

- Renters
- First-time homebuyers
- People in default or at risk of foreclosure
- Reverse mortgagors
- Existing homeowners
- People who are homeless

Media relations can be a valuable conduit to get your story or message in front of these consumer stakeholders. It all depends on how you present the information to the media and to which media you choose to present it. No matter what services your HCA offers, your local media is likely interested in news affecting any of these consumer audiences.

## Basic Media Relations Tools

Depending on what your news is, there are some basic tools that will help you appropriately package your information to share it with the media. These tools can be used alone or together to complement each other. Some of these will be discussed in more detail in other webinars and toolkits.

- **Press Release** – A one-to-two-page written document used to succinctly convey specific information about an HCA event or announcement that is sent to targeted members of the media. It is designed to pique the media’s interest about the topic so they will write a story.
- **Media Alert or Advisory** – A one-page written document that notifies the media about an upcoming newsworthy event such as an open house or press conference. It provides vital information (who, what, when, where, why) in a brief format. It should outline what visual opportunities are available for TV cameras and print photographers.
- **Media Interview** – The opportunity to directly answer questions from the media about your news. It can be in person or on the phone, one-on-one or in a group.
- **Photos, Graphics, Charts** – A graphical representation of your news that supports and accompanies a written document, such as a press release.
- **Social Media Post** – Your Twitter, Facebook, or other social media accounts can be used to share your news with the media in many different formats, including video, graphics, testimonials, and more.

## Getting Started

No matter what media relations tool you use to share information, you must send it to the right place and the right person, or nothing will happen. Every media outlet serves a specific market and audience, and every journalist covers specific topics (also known as “beats”) for that audience. Journalists are far too busy to pass your information on to the right reporter. They expect you to know their beats and send your information to the right person.

### Assemble a Local Media Outreach List

Your first task, then, is to create a list of the local, consumer-focused media that would be interested in writing stories about your HCAs services. Ask yourself, “Which media in my community talks to my stakeholders (consumers) about the services we offer?” Don’t forget to include those media that focus specifically on ethnic audiences in your community, such as Hispanic, African-American, Pan-Asian, and others.

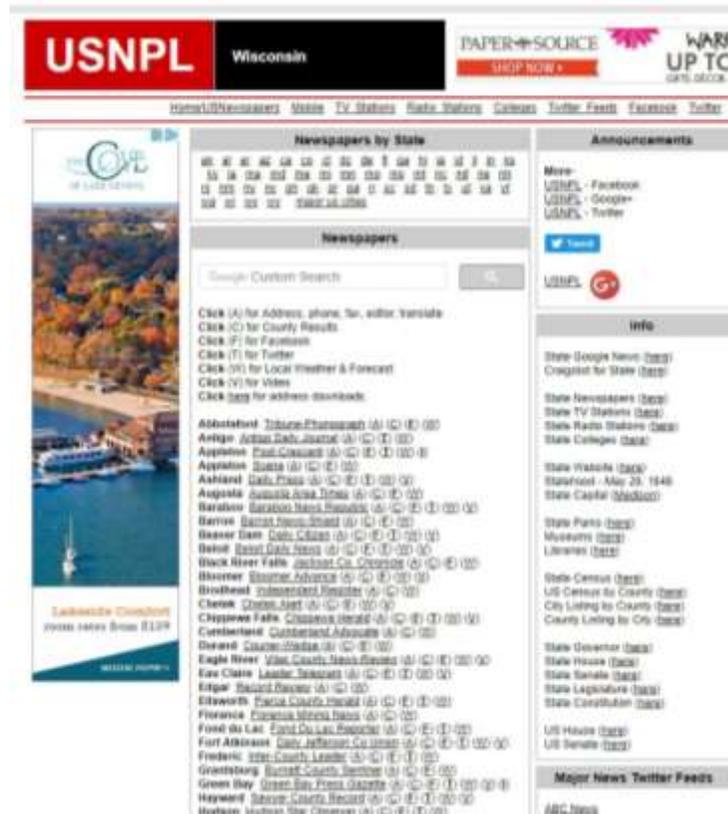
These media typically include the following:

- Daily consumer newspapers
- Community newspapers
- Community bloggers
- City magazines
- TV news desks
- TV and radio talk shows
- Local ethnic-focused media

You may already know the names of some of the media in your community. But if you don't or are unsure, here a few ways to find them.

### Do a search

www.USNPL.com provides the names and links of all daily newspapers and TV and radio stations, listed by city and state. It also provides the names and links of all state college newspapers. Using the URL [http://www.usnpl.com/\[state abbreviation\]news.php](http://www.usnpl.com/[state abbreviation]news.php) (filling in your own state's abbreviation), enter it into a Google search.



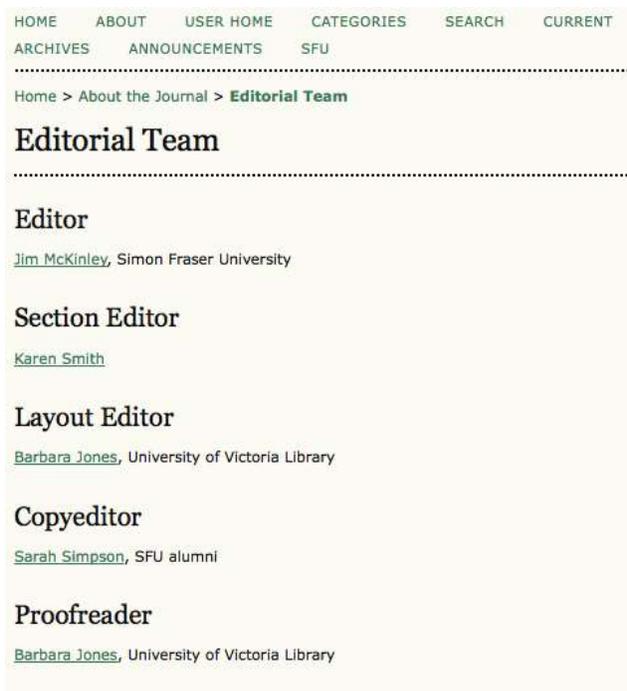
Once you start finding the names of the media to which you want to send your news, create a table in Word or Excel and enter the key information. Right now, just include the media name and the website's URL.

## Find the Right Contact Name

Next, you will need to identify the person at each media location who would be interested in creating stories about your topic. That will take some research to find which reporters, columnists, editors, or TV or radio station producers write or talk about your topic.

To find media contact titles and background details, go to the media’s website and then to the Contact Us or About Us link, usually located either at the top or bottom of the webpage. There you may find a list of staff emails, their titles, what topics they cover, and how they like to be contacted.

Alternatively, if you have an actual copy of the target newspaper or magazine, these names can be found on the first few pages of the publication on what’s known as the masthead. It often has their emails and phone numbers.



Online editorial list Publication Masthead



Publication masthead

Sometimes the person's job title is specific (e.g., real estate, finance, business), and sometimes it is general (e.g., senior editor). Who you want to contact will depend on what your topic is. Often, one reporter covers multiple topics.

Try searching through the articles and stories (which you can often do online) and see who has written about topics similar to what your news is about. You can also do a topic search on the publication's website, and related stories should come up. Make a note of who wrote the story and find out more about what they cover (their beat) by doing a search of their name on the publication's website.

If you are targeting your story to be featured on a TV newscast, there are often biographies about the reporters on the station's website. They might include what stories they like to cover and how to contact them. The best option is to match up your news topic with a writer or reporter who is responsible for a similar topic.

If you still don't know who to contact, you can always call the main number, request to speak to someone in the editorial or news department, and ask them who the best person is to send the news about your topic and what their email is. Sometimes you can get results by sending your news to the general news desk email address, such as [newsdesk@tmj4.com](mailto:newsdesk@tmj4.com) or [newstips@fox6.com](mailto:newstips@fox6.com).

As you begin finding the right contact people, update your contact list by entering the person's first and last name, email address, and phone number. You may also want to include a Notes column to keep track of your communication with each person. (A note of caution: Don't send the same news information to multiple people at the same media outlet at the same time, or they may think you are spamming them and may block you.)

Your media contact list should start to grow and will look something like this:

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Media Name	Contact Name	Email	Phone	Notes			
2	Radio							
3	WKOC	Jane Smith, host and producer, Our	<a href="mailto:jane.smith@wkoc.com">jane.smith@wkoc.com</a>	416-344-2671				
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10	TV Newsdesks							
11	Fox 12	Mike Thomas	<a href="mailto:mike.thomas@fox12.com">mike.thomas@fox12.com</a>	416-887-2990				
12								
13								
14								
15	Newspapers							
16	The Morning Voice	Tami Benton, financial reporter	<a href="mailto:tbenton@scannett.com">tbenton@scannett.com</a>	416-640-2253				
17								
18								
19								
20	Online/Bloggers							
21								
22								
23								
24								

## Media Outreach Tips

If you want your media contacts to pay attention to what you're saying, you must have something newsworthy to say. After all, it is their job to report news, so if you can help them do that by providing information that is interesting and valuable to their readers, you will earn their respect and reap the reward of seeing a media story that mentions your HCA. Here are some primary criteria to determine if your topic is newsworthy for media purposes:

### 1. Be Timely

In general, the media want to talk about what is happening now, or what will be occurring in the not-too-distant future (such as an open house). If your event or announcement happened last month, it is considered old news, and most media will either not cover it or will give it a very small mention.

One way to demonstrate to the media that your news is timely is to connect your announcement, information, or event to a specific time of year (holidays or seasons), to a current local event (community celebrations), or to a major national event (National Homeownership Month).

*Examples of timely topics:*

- Budgeting tips for the Christmas gift-buying season
- Home expenses that are tax deductible during tax season
- HCA open house occurring during National Homeownership Month (June) or a community celebration

### 2. Be Relevant

The media want to provide news that has legitimate importance to their readership. So, it is critical that you understand and can explain to the media how your news or information will impact or benefit their specific audience. One way to do that is to think about how you would answer if a reporter asked you, "Why should my readers care about your (event/announcement)?"

*Examples of relevant topics for a financial or real estate reporter who writes articles for a consumer audience:*

- Tips for improving your credit score before getting a home loan
- Local HCA workshops or seminars about the homebuying process
- A new financial service your HCA is offering to consumers

### 3. Be Local

Since you will be working with the local media, it is important to remember that they are laser-focused on covering news and information for and about their local community. Your HCA is part of that community and provides valuable services to members of the community, so anything that your HCA does that is new or is a significant change will likely positively impact the community and should potentially be of interest to the media—as long as it meets the criteria for newsworthiness and relevancy.

*Examples of local topics:*

- HCA events – workshops, seminars
- New HCA office location
- Addition of a new housing counselor at your HCA
- Counselor certification

## Best Practices

Over the past several years, the growing use of the Internet and social media now allows people to self-publish information on websites, blogs, and other digital outlets. Consequently, the number of reporters, editors, and producers on staff at every print and broadcast media has steadily declined. Those who are left must operate with a very lean staff. Fewer reporters are now responsible for covering more topics than before.

As a general rule, media staffs are always pressed for time due to impending news filing deadlines and the constantly changing news cycle. Whenever you reach out to a member of the media by email or phone or prepare written material for them, keep the following best practices in mind:

- Be brief, but informative
- Ask about (and meet) their deadlines
- Be available for and prompt when answering their questions
- Remember: Nothing is guaranteed. They are under no obligation to do anything with your news.

## Tools

Following is a media contact list template you can use to create your own list. Copy and paste it, and then fill it in to begin customizing your own media contact list.

Media Name	Contact Name	Phone	Email	Notes
<b>Radio</b>				
<b>TV</b>				
<b>Print</b>				
<b>Online/Bloggers</b>				



# Press Releases

## **Communicating with the Media**

In this section, you will learn the basics of using press releases and how to write and format them. You will discover how to target your audience and how to benefit from best practices and tips. Finally, you will get some sample templates.

## Understanding a Press Release

A press release, also referred to as a news release, serves as a way to distribute information to the media, who will hopefully disseminate your message to the public. While a press release is rarely published as-is, it is written as a ready-to-publish news story with an audience of journalists in mind. Your press release establishes a framework for the general discussion of information related to HUD Housing Counseling. According to a study done by media intelligence company Cision, more than 94 percent of editors and journalists use submissions, including press releases and media kits, from communications professionals when producing content.

### Why Write a Press Release?

A press release serves as a tip for media specialists, including editors, journalists, and bloggers, to circulate brand, product messaging, and information. While there is no guarantee that your press release will be published (unlike paid advertising), a well-crafted, strategically distributed press release is an inexpensive way to share information while building valuable connections with the media. Many journalists and influencers often reach out for more information, unique angles, or even interviews.

## What Makes News “News”?

Since the goal of a press release is to arouse a journalist’s curiosity about your company, you must provide them with newsworthy information, making sure to avoid promotional writing. Here are a few newsworthy ideas you can use to generate a press release about your HCA:

- Upcoming events
- New hires
- New services

Successful press releases include one or more of the following eight news values to appeal to journalists’ interests.

- **Proximity** – Topics relating to your audience’s community have a higher news value
- **Impact** – The more people your story affects, the higher the news value
- **Prominence** – Public figures have a higher news value than others
- **Human Interest** – Stories that have an emotional appeal have a higher news value
- **Currency** – Topics that are currently in the public spotlight have a higher news value
- **Conflict** – Relevant debate is newsworthy
- **Bizarreness** – Unusual or uncommon events are newsworthy
- **Timeliness** – Recent happenings have a higher news value than earlier events

## Writing Your Press Release

Keep in mind that the media receive multiple press releases each day. Accordingly, your press release must stand out and get right to the point of its purpose. Here are a few general tips to remember while creating your press release, ones that journalists will appreciate:

- **Conciseness** – not wordiness
- **Specifics** – not generalities
- **Objective facts** – not promotional writing
- **Honesty** – not dishonesty
- **Candor** – not evasion

Another way to make the media receptive to your press release is to write it using the rules of journalistic style. The Associated Press (AP), a leading international news agency, sets the standard principles of journalistic writing each year in its stylebook, which is referenced worldwide by members of the media. While the *Associated Press Stylebook* includes hundreds of usage rules, below are some of the most important ones:

- Except for dollar amounts, spell out numbers one through nine and use figures for numbers 10+
  - one, five, eight, 15, 46, 10 million
- When providing a list, no Oxford comma (no comma before the word *and* in a list)
  - Press releases are cost-efficient, informative, and concise.
- No superscripts when writing dates
  - The event is May 8 at 3:30 p.m.
- Spell out the word *percent*
  - The school has a 96 percent enrollment rate.
- Compliment vs. complement
  - Compliment – Denotes praise or the expression of courtesy
  - Complement – Denotes completeness or the process of supplementing something

The cost of the *Associated Press Stylebook* is \$15–\$20, a nominal amount compared to the value of having the proper guidelines available to effectively reach the media.

## Parts of a Press Release

While each press release must be uniquely intriguing, they all should follow standard formatting rules. Your press release must be single-spaced with an extra space between paragraphs. Paragraphs should not be indented. Be sure to include the following:

- Headings
- Headline
- Dateline
- Body
- Slugs

## Headings

The heading of a press release indicates to the media what the document is, when it should be released, and who to contact for more information. In addition to your company's letterhead or logo, your press release must include the following in the heading:

- NEWS RELEASE
- FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (or indicate a future date – FOR RELEASE: Date)
- FOR MORE INFORMATION (followed by contact information)



Neighborhood Resources  
**MADISON**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**For more information:**  
**Contact:** Ally Spinelli  
**Phone:** (608) 454-3333  
**Email:** ASpinelli@neighborhoodresources.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Neighborhood Resources Appoints International Homeownership Influencer Ricardo Jimenez to Direct Community Outreach**  
*Will Lead Homeownership Initiatives in Urban Communities*

**MADISON, Wis. (March 10, 2018)** – Neighborhood Resources - Madison, Wisconsin's largest HUD approved housing counseling agency, announces the addition of Ricardo Jimenez to the newly crafted role of Director of Community Outreach. In his new position, Jimenez will develop, direct and manage Neighborhood Resources' programs that work to increase homeownership in urban communities throughout the Greater Madison area.

"I've always wanted to work for an organization who truly thrives in giving back to underserved communities," said Jimenez. "Being able to leverage my experience working globally to provide minorities with home buying power with Neighborhood Resources' communal initiatives will surely be rewarding for all involved."

Jimenez brings over 20 years of industry experience to his new role with steadfast results including implementing homeownership programs in urban communities in Los Angeles, Seoul, Moscow and Beijing. Most recently, Jimenez served as President of Communal Affairs for Worldwide Housing Solutions, overseeing the company's 3,592 housing resource agencies.

**About Neighborhood Resources - Madison**

Serving as Wisconsin's largest HUD approved Housing Counseling Agency, Neighborhood Resources – Madison was established in 1967 with one goal - connecting underserved communities with access to homeownership. Now in its 50<sup>th</sup> year, Neighborhood Resources – Madison's network of over 350 housing resource agencies have helped more than 12,000 families transition from renters to homeowners. Learn more at [www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison](http://www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison) or call (608) 454-3331.

###

## Headline

The headline plays a major role in gauging the success of your press release. It must be both attention-grabbing and intriguing to entice the journalist to read further. A headline provides a summary of the story's locality and main takeaway with no punctuation, unless asking a question.

Logistically, your headline is centered on the page below your company's logo or letterhead. Capitalize only the principal words, and boldface the entire headline. Here are some rules to follow:

- Capitalize the first and last words of your headline
- Capitalize all verbs (including infinitives), nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, and some conjunctions
- Don't capitalize articles, prepositions, or conjunctions that have fewer than four letters
- Prepositions with four or more letters are capitalized.

Compelling, Correctly Title-Cased Headline Example

**HUD Charges Bank of America With  
Discriminatory Lending Practices in South Carolina**

Passive, Incorrectly Title-Cased Headline Example

**Bank Of America Was Charged With  
Discriminatory Lending Practices By HUD**

## Dateline

The dateline indicates the location of the event or the place where the story originated. While some cities are prominent enough to stand alone, in general, the city must be all capitalized followed by the abbreviated state. The date in parentheses follows. The entire dateline must be bolded. Once you are ready to begin your story, insert a dash after your date. You can find the complete list of AP style state and month abbreviations and stand-alone cities in the References section of this guide.



### NEWS RELEASE

**For more information:**

**Contact:** Ally Spinelli

**Phone:** (608) 454-3333

**Email:** ASpinelli@neighborhoodresources.com

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Neighborhood Resources Appoints International Homeownership Influencer Ricardo Jimenez to Direct Community Outreach**  
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#### **About Neighborhood Resources - Madison**

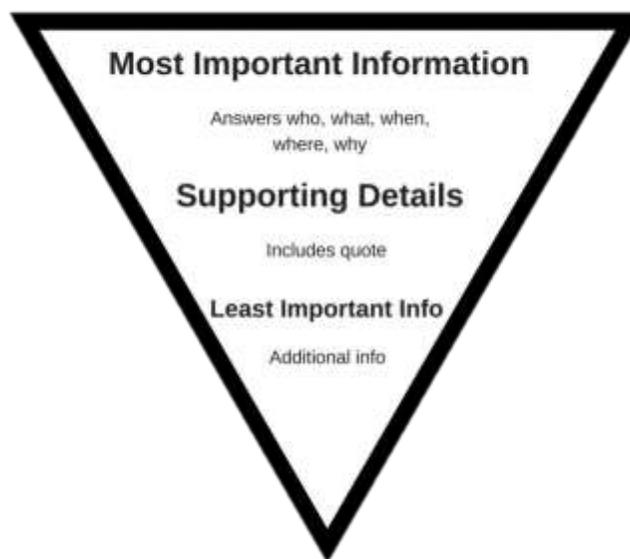
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###

## Body

The body of your press release should be written in an inverted pyramid style. Introduce the most important information in the first paragraph and convey less essential details in each successive paragraph. To be fully effective, your first paragraph (also known as the lead) must answer the five Ws: who, what, when, where, and why. Include no more than two or three sentences in your first paragraph, remembering to make every word count.

Strategically placed, supporting details follow the lead paragraph. These supporting details can include a quote from someone who adds credibility, color, or emotion to your story. Use the following infographic for reference.



## Quotes

The quote is the one place to editorialize your press release using opinion rather than objective facts. However, your quote must add value to your story and be properly attributed. According to the *Associated Press Stylebook*, when attributing quotes, capitalize a person's title if it comes before the person's name, and use lower case for a title that follows a person's name. Use "said" in combination with the appropriate attribution. All punctuation goes inside the quote marks. Use the following example for reference.

"We've conducted exhaustive research in the targeted neighborhoods and have found consumers want to own their home but due to credit history, are denied," said Ricardo Jimenez, director of community outreach. "Recovery750 allows us to directly challenge this matter, positively impacting the lives of families throughout Madison."

## Boilerplate

A company boilerplate further informs the reader about the organization or company distributing the information. It is typically one paragraph that summarizes what your business does and includes the street address, general phone number, and URL of the website. Refer to HUD's boilerplate below when creating your HCA's original boilerplate.

### HUD Digital Boilerplate

#### About HUD

HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. More information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) and <http://espanol.hud.gov>.

## Slugs

When ending your press release, make sure to include all appropriate slugs or indicators. Necessary slugs include either "-30-" or "###" (centered) to indicate the end of your document. If your press release exceeds one page, add "– more –" at the bottom of your first page to indicate to the journalist that there is an additional page. At the top of your second page and aligned to the left, include the press release's headline or a shortened version of it.

## Things to Remember

- **Be Accurate** – Stick to the facts; keep it newsworthy
- **Be Precise** – Write with inverted pyramid in mind. What's most important?
- **Be Concise** – Limit the number of sentences; make every word count
- **Provide Context** – Names and organizations may need clarification
- **Edit, Check, and Proofread** – No typos or errors; everything written agrees with AP guidelines

## What Your Final Press Release Should Look Like

Below is an example of what your formatted press release should look like. When you are finished, save your press release as a Word document that can be edited. The majority of journalists work with PC software and need to be able to cut, paste, and edit your press release content for their specific use.



HCA LOGO/LETTERHEAD

**NEWS RELEASE HEADING**

**For more information:**  
**Contact:** Ally Spinelli  
**Phone:** (608) 454-3333  
**Email:** ASpinelli@neighborhoodresources.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE HEADING HEADLINE**

**Neighborhood Resources Appoints International Homeownership Influencer Ricardo Jimenez to Direct  
 Community Outreach  
 Will Lead Homeownership Initiatives in Urban Communities**

**DATELINE**

**MADISON, Wis. (March 10, 2018)** – Neighborhood Resources - Madison, Wisconsin's largest HUD approved housing counseling agency, announces the addition of Ricardo Jimenez to the newly crafted role of Director of Community Outreach. In his new position, Jimenez will develop, direct and manage Neighborhood Resources' programs that work to increase homeownership in urban communities throughout the Greater Madison area.

**BODY**

"I've always wanted to work for an organization who truly thrives in giving back to underserved communities," said Jimenez. "Being able to leverage my experience working globally to provide minorities with home buying power with Neighborhood Resources' communal initiatives will surely be rewarding for all involved."

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**About Neighborhood Resources – Madison BOILERPLATE**

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###  
**SLUG**

## Pitching Your Press Release

Now that you've finished writing your press release, you are ready to email your press release to the media contacts you have already identified on your list who might be interested in receiving your information. According to surveys, 93 percent of media professionals prefer email for receiving press releases. However, *do not* send your press release as an email attachment. To reduce the incidences of viruses, most journalists will not open email attachments from sources they do not know. Instead, copy and paste the entire press release into the body of the email. If you are including an image (such as a photo of a new hire), embed that as well.

As previously mentioned, journalists, bloggers, editors, and local TV networks receive multiple press releases each day. So somehow, your release must stand out. To do that, you can include a customized introduction to draw attention to and create an opportunity for direct communication. Successfully introducing (or pitching) your press release to your list of media contacts takes time and careful thought, but following these instructions will help ease the process.

### Parts of a Pitch

While there is no standard to follow when pitching your press release, in general, you can follow the format below:

1. Create a compelling email subject line
  - Entice the journalist to open your message
2. Tell a story
  - Why did you choose to target this reporter or publication?
3. Tell the purpose of the pitch
  - How does the story fit with his or her work? Continue telling the story.
4. State your terms of offer
  - What do you have to give? Is there a deadline?
5. State what will happen next
  - How will you follow up? Will you call? By when?
  - Thank them for their time and consideration
  - Include your contact information

## Sample Email Pitch

**SUBJECT: HUD Partners with Colleges Across the Nation to Promote Informed Housing Decisions**

Hi Jane Doe,

Focusing on preparing graduates for the economic burdens that come after college, your YoungProfessionals blog provides college-aged students with effective financial tips. In fact, just last month your blog featured and promoted managing one's nest egg at an early age. As such, I wanted to personally let you know about HUD's latest college-based "Young and Informed" initiative, its upcoming August 1, 2020 release date, and our partnership with 100 colleges across the nation to promote informed housing decisions.

HUD's Young and Informed program features an interactive 30-minute course, simulating how one's current actions affects long-term credit based decisions including owning a home. Beginning the 2020-21 school year, schools in partnership will equip each classroom with a HUD "Young and Informed" decisions simulator, promoting informed housing decisions while encouraging students to take smart actions now.

Introducing your readers to HUD's "Young and Informed" initiative and our effort to promote informed housing decisions in schools, we are able to provide you with one or both of the following:

- An exclusive download of HUD's "Young and Informed" software for you and your family to personally learn and implement informed housing decisions.
- An interview with HUD's "Young and Informed" Director, Jamison Doe, who worked for over a year planning and collaborating with schools in partnership to promote informed housing awareness.

I plan to follow up soon. In the meantime, if you have any questions or need additional information, please respond to this email or call me at (123) 456-7891. Thanks in advance for your interest.

John Doe  
For HUD  
JohnDoe@HUD.com



# Templates

Following are press release templates and finished examples you can use to create common announcements. Copy and paste them, and then customize the sample templates for your purposes to send a press release to your media contacts.

# New Hire Press Release Template

Insert your  
HCA's logo here

## NEWS RELEASE

**Contact:** [Your Name]

**Phone:** (xxx) xxx-xxxx

**Email:** xxxxx@xxx.xxx

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**[Your HCA's name] Appoints [name of new hire] to [position]**

**[CITY, STATE] [(DATE)]** – [Your HCA's name] announces the addition of [name of new hire] to [position]. In [his/her] position, [new hire's last name] will [responsibilities of new position].

"[Quote from new hire]," said [new hire's name]. "[Continue telling the story with an additional quote from new hire]."

[Describe how new hire's background strengths relate to current position].

### **About [your HCA's name]**

[When was your organization established? What are your organization's initiatives? What's an interesting fact about your HCA?] Learn more at [Your HCA's website and/or phone number].

###

## New Hire Press Release Example



### Neighborhood Resources MADISON

#### NEWS RELEASE

**Contact:** Ally Spinelli  
**Phone:** (608) 454-3333  
**Email:** ASpinelli@neighborhoodresources.com

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Neighborhood Resources Appoints International Homeownership Influencer Ricardo Jimenez to Direct Community Outreach**  
*Will Lead Homeownership Initiatives in Urban Communities*

**MADISON, Wis. (March 10, 2018)** – Neighborhood Resources - Madison, Wisconsin’s largest HUD-approved housing counseling agency announces the addition of Ricardo Jimenez to the newly crafted role of director of community outreach. In his new position, Jimenez will develop, direct, and manage Neighborhood Resources’ programs that work to increase homeownership in urban communities throughout the Greater Madison area.

“I’ve always wanted to work for an organization that truly thrives in giving back to underserved communities,” said Jimenez. “Being able to leverage my experience working globally to provide minorities with homebuying power with Neighborhood Resources’ communal initiatives will surely be rewarding for all involved.”

Jimenez brings over 20 years of industry experience to his new role with steadfast results, including implementing homeownership programs in urban communities in Los Angeles, Seoul, Moscow, and Beijing. Most recently, Jimenez served as president of Communal Affairs for Worldwide Housing Solutions, overseeing the company’s 3,592 housing resource agencies.

#### **About Neighborhood Resources – Madison**

Serving as Wisconsin’s largest HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency, Neighborhood Resources – Madison was established in 1967 with one goal: connecting underserved communities with access to homeownership. Now in its 50th year, Neighborhood Resources – Madison’s network of more than 350 housing resource agencies have helped more than 12,000 families transition from renters to homeowners. Learn more at [www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison](http://www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison) or call (608) 454-3331.

###

# New Service Press Release Template

## NEWS RELEASE

Insert your  
HCA's logo here

**Contact:** [Your Name]  
**Phone:** (xxx) xxx-xxxx  
**Email:** xxxxx@xxx.xxx

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**[Your HCA's name] Introduces [name of service followed by a brief description of the overall goal in offering the service]**

**[CITY, STATE] [(DATE)]** – [Your HCA's name] continues its plan to [why your HCA is offering this service] by introducing [service followed by a detailed description].

“[Quote about the new service from credible HCA member],” said [HCA member's name, lowercased title]. “[Continue telling the story with an additional quote about the benefits of the new service from the same HCA member].”

[Include details about the new service. It can be in paragraph form or bullets as shown in the New Service Press Release Template Example].

[Your service] is scheduled to roll out by [date]. For more information, visit [new service's webpage – not your HCA webpage as that is included below in your company's boilerplate].

### About [your HCA's name]

[When was your organization established? What are your organization's initiatives? What's an interesting fact about your HCA?] Learn more at [Your HCA's website and/or phone number].

###

# New Service Press Release Example



## NEWS RELEASE

### Neighborhood Resources MADISON

**Contact:** Ally Spinelli  
**Phone:** (608) 454-3333  
**Email:** ASpinelli@neighborhoodresources.com

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Neighborhood Resources Introduces New Credit Building Program Recovery750 *Guarantees Qualified Participants a 750 Credit Score in Just One Year***

**MADISON, Wis. (May 19, 2018)** – Wisconsin’s largest HUD-approved housing counseling agency, Neighborhood Resources – Madison, continues its plan to increase homeownership in urban communities by introducing Recovery750, a credit-building program designed to provide direction and support for inner-city residents who hope to become homeowners but have adverse credit histories. Through the organization’s partnerships with various regional and national credit reporting agencies, qualified participants are guaranteed a 750 credit score in just one year.

“We’ve conducted exhaustive research in the targeted neighborhoods and have found consumers want to own their home but due to credit history, are denied,” said Ricardo Jimenez, director of community outreach. “Recovery750 allows us to directly challenge this matter, positively impacting the lives of families throughout Madison.”

Before being paired with a Recovery750 credit control supervisor who develops a customized credit recovery plan, participants must meet the following requirements:

- Live in these targeted zip codes for a minimum of three (3) consecutive years: 53711, 53713, 53714, 53715, 53716, 53717
- No negative marks on credit history in the last ninety (90) days
- A household income of < \$35,000/year
- < 500 credit score
- A minimum of one (1) dependent

Recovery750 launches June 1, 2018. For more information, visit: [www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison/Recovery750](http://www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison/Recovery750).

#### **About Neighborhood Resources – Madison**

Serving as Wisconsin’s largest HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency, Neighborhood Resources – Madison was established in 1967 with one goal: connecting underserved communities with access to homeownership. Now in its 50th year, Neighborhood Resources – Madison’s network of more than 350 housing resource agencies have helped more than 12,000 families transition from renters to homeowners. Learn more at [www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison](http://www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison) or call (608) 454-3331.

###

# Event Press Release Template

## NEWS RELEASE

Insert your  
HCA's logo here

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: [Your Name]

Phone: (xxx) xxx-xxxx

Email: xxxxx@xxx.xxx

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**[Your HCA's name] to host [event name]**  
**[Brief purpose of event]**

**[CITY, STATE] [(DATE)]** – [Your HCA's name] has announced plans to host [event name] in an effort to [event's purpose]. The [adjective to describe event] event will be held [date, location, additional necessary details].

"[Quote supporting event's purpose from credible HCA member]," said [HCA member's name, lower cased title]. "[Continue telling the story with an additional quote about the value of the event from the same HCA member]."

[Continue detailing event with additional information here. It can be in paragraph form or bullets as shown in the Event Press Release Template Example].

For more information, visit or RSVP by [deadline date] at [event landing page – not your HCA webpage as that is included below in your company's boilerplate].

### About [your HCA's name]

[When was your organization established? What are your organization's initiatives? What's an interesting fact about your HCA?] Learn more at [your HCA's website and/or phone number].

###

## Event Press Release Example



### NEWS RELEASE

## Neighborhood Resources MADISON

**Contact:** Ally Spinelli  
**Phone:** (608) 454-3333  
**Email:** ASpinelli@neighborhoodresources.com

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### Win a Three-Bedroom House at Neighborhood Resources – Madison’s Recovery750 Launch Event

**MADISON, Wis. (March 10, 2018)** – Neighborhood Resources – Madison, Wisconsin’s largest HUD-approved housing counseling agency, announced it will be raffling a fully renovated, three-bedroom home to one family in need at the launch event for its new credit repair program, Recovery750. The raffle will take place on June 1, 2018, from 11 AM to 4 PM at Neighborhood Resources – Madison’s main office located at 4122 W. Allied Dr., Madison, Wisconsin 53711.

“We’ve worked for nearly four years working with various credit reporting agencies planning and developing Recovery750,” said Vice President of Community Affairs Mariah Klain. “We wanted to make the launch memorable while also impacting the lives of a family in the targeted community. What better way to do that than give away a house?”

To qualify for the Recovery750 home raffle, participants must live in the targeted zip codes (53711, 53713, 53714, 53716, or 53717) for a minimum of three (3) consecutive years and have the following:

- Credit score < 500
- Minimum of one (1) dependent
- Household income of < \$35,000/year

Recovery750 is a credit-building program designed to provide direction and support for inner-city residents who hope to become homeowners but have adverse credit histories. To learn more, visit [www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison/Recovery750](http://www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison/Recovery750).

### About Neighborhood Resources – Madison

Serving as Wisconsin’s largest HUD-approved Housing Counseling Agency, Neighborhood Resources – Madison was established in 1967 with one goal: connecting underserved communities with access to homeownership. Now in its 50th year, Neighborhood Resources – Madison’s network of more than 350 housing resource agencies have helped more than 12,000 families transition from renters to homeowners. Learn more at [www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison](http://www.NeighborhoodResources.com/Madison) or call (608) 454-3331.

###



# References

## Headline Capitalization

Do Capitalize	Don't Capitalize
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First and last words</li> <li>• Verbs</li> <li>• Nouns</li> <li>• Pronouns</li> <li>• Adjectives</li> <li>• Adverbs</li> <li>• Some conjunctions</li> <li>• Words with three or more letters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An</li> <li>• And</li> <li>• But*</li> <li>• By*</li> <li>• For</li> <li>• In*</li> <li>• Nor</li> <li>• Of</li> <li>• On*</li> <li>• Or*</li> <li>• So*</li> <li>• The*</li> <li>• To*</li> <li>• Up*</li> <li>• Yet*</li> </ul> <p>*Depends on how the word functions in the title</p>

## Dateline Abbreviations

Cities That Stand Alone in Datelines	
• Atlanta	• Milwaukee
• Baltimore	• Minneapolis
• Boston	• New Orleans
• Chicago	• New York
• Cincinnati	• Oklahoma City
• Cleveland	• Philadelphia
• Dallas	• Phoenix
• Denver	• Pittsburgh
• Detroit	• St. Louis
• Honolulu	• Salt Lake City
• Houston	• San Antonio
• Indianapolis	• San Diego
• Las Vegas	• San Francisco
• Los Angeles	• Seattle
• Miami	• Washington

AP Style Month Abbreviations
• Jan. (January)
• Feb. (February)
• Aug. (August)
• Sept. (September)
• Oct. (October)
• Nov. (November)
• Dec. (December)
*Spell out all other months

AP Style State Abbreviations		
• Ala. (AL)	• Md. (MD)	• N.D. (ND)
• Ariz. (AZ)	• Mass. (MA)	• Okla. (OK)
• Ark. (AR)	• Mich. (MI)	• Ore. (OR)
• Calif. (CA)	• Minn. (MN)	• Pa. (PA)
• Colo. (CO)	• Miss. (MS)	• R.I. (RI)
• Conn. (CT)	• Mo. (MO)	• S.C. (SC)
• Del. (DE)	• Mont. (MT)	• S.D. (SD)
• Fla. (FL)	• Neb. (NE)	• Tenn. (TN)
• Ga. (GA)	• Nev. (NV)	• Vt. (VT)
• Ill. (IL)	• N.H. (NH)	• Va. (VA)
• Ind. (IN)	• N.J. (NJ)	• Wash. (WA)
• Kan. (KS)	• N.M. (NM)	• W.Va. (WV)
• Ky. (KY)	• N.Y. (NY)	• Wis. (WI)
• La. (LA)	• N.C. (NC)	• Wyo. (WY)