

# HOW TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE



A press release is an official announcement from an organization to its key stakeholders, including the news media, the public, or others.

A press release is an opportunity to share news and connect with an audience you care about. A press release is also often called a "press statement," a "news release," or a "media release."

## WHEN SHOULD I ISSUE A PRESS RELEASE?

A press release should be issued when there is valuable information that you would like to communicate to an audience. This may include:

- Judicial or key leadership hires
- Judicial vacancies
- Judicial awards or accolades
- Statistics on the courthouse
- Changes to the administration of the courthouse (e.g., resuming in-person trials, new courthouse hours, courthouse closures)
- New courthouse programs
- Annual reporting

This list is not extensive and additional opportunities to broadcast news will arise. When this happens, you should consult with your Chief Judge to determine if the information warrants an announcement.

## HOW SHOULD I FORMAT A PRESS RELEASE?

A press release should provide the news media and general public with as much information as they need to understand the story without embellishment or unneeded content.

Press releases should be written in simple, active language that a member of the general public can easily understand. They should also be short – one or two pages tops.

# HOW TO WRITE A PRESS RELEASE

## HOW TO FORMAT A PRESS RELEASE:

- Place your logo at the top of the page
- Draft the headline in all caps; keep it short and include active verbs
- Include the date and location where the news is being generated
- Include the news hook (i.e., what makes the story newsworthy or why people should want to read it) in the opening line
- Add 2-5 additional paragraphs that provide background and valuable supporting details, summarizing the who, what, where, when, and why in the first paragraphs
- Include a quote from the Chief Judge, a member of the leadership team, or someone who has been impacted by the news
- If you're including data, bulleted facts and figures can improve readability

## HOW DO I DISTRIBUTE A PRESS RELEASE?

Press releases should be posted on your Court's website. They should also be posted on your social media platforms and shared with a contact list of local news media and relevant court stakeholders (e.g., local government bodies or professional associations).

When deciding whom to distribute the release to, consider what people and organizations have a stake in the news or will be impacted by it. Then make sure it gets in front of them.

Please also share all press releases with the Illinois Supreme Court's Communications Department at [Communications@IllinoisCourts.gov](mailto:Communications@IllinoisCourts.gov).

## QUESTIONS?

If you have questions, please contact the Illinois Supreme Court's Communications Department at [communications@illinoiscourts.gov](mailto:communications@illinoiscourts.gov).



# SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

[LOGO]

[Month, day, year]

## PRESS RELEASE HEADLINE

Press release subhead

**City, state** – [Court name] announced today [news hook]. [Additional key points, including the who, what, where, when, and why in the first paragraphs].

[Quote from the Chief Judge, a member of the leadership team, or someone who has been impacted by the news.]

[Paragraphs including supporting details.]

[Paragraphs including supporting details.]

[Bulleted list of facts and figures, if relevant:

- Datapoint 1
- Datapoint 2
- Datapoint 3]

[Final summarizing information.]

**(FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT: [Name], [Title] at [Phone] or [Email].)**

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