

VIRGINIA DIVISION UNITED DAUGHTERS OF THE CONFEDERACY MEDIA POLICY

The following is the Media of Virginia Division, United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) and applies to all inquiries received from radio, television, newspapers, and magazines. The policy has been developed to provide proper guidance for all members of Virginia Division. All members should be aware of the policy and adhere to it.

This policy was developed in response to the repeated negative portrayals of the UDC by the media. We must exercise care and protect the image of our organization. Our public image needs to be professional and unified.

Experience has taught us that we have more to lose by cooperating with the media than we do by not cooperating. Our compromise is to provide a release to the media so that our message is provided in a controlled manner, providing the information that we wish to communicate to the public, without providing an opportunity for the message to be altered to a preconceived notion of our organization and its members. We must not engage in a game where the outcome is predetermined. Unfortunately, our culture has shifted against us and we must act accordingly.

1. For each newsworthy item that the Division President determines should be addressed, she will issue a press release. It will be posted on PR.com, posted on the Virginia Division Facebook page, posted on the Virginia Division UDC Website, and emailed to our Media List.
2. **All press inquiries should be directed to our new media email (this will be set up once the policy is approved).**

The official media release is our ONLY comment. That, and that alone, is all that we will provide to members of the media who request comment.

3. No one is authorized to comment as a member of the Division or the UDC in general without the express permission of the Division President. Please remember that any tapes, CDs, DVDs, or videotape products provided to the media must be pre-approved by the Division President.
4. In the rare case anyone ever appears on camera, she needs to be properly attired and have a prepared, approved statement that is read. We DO NOT enter into debates, make unsubstantiated claims, and give the media any opportunity to control the situation and make us look unprofessional.
5. The media wants you to panic when they contact you. That almost guarantees them a response. Each of us needs to think of a request from a reporter, TV investigator, or journalist like a phone call from a telemarketer. You don't HAVE to pick up the phone because it rings.
6. If you find yourself being contacted by anyone from the media, DO NOT PANIC. Simply provide the Division email for press inquiries. It is not an emergency. Contact the Division President using the information provided above and take the perceived burden off your shoulders. Panic causes people to make mistakes. Remember to take a deep breath and follow the chain of command.
7. There are a number of words and phrases that should never appear within or next to our comments, including references to slavery, Nazis, Dylan Roof, and Charlottesville.