



Media Guidelines 2026-2027 Academic Year

Our Commitment

Horry-Georgetown Technical College (HGTC) recognizes the important role of the news media in informing the public about the College, its educational programs, students, employees, initiatives, events and impact on the communities it serves.

The Office of Public Relations & Communications is committed to working professionally and cooperatively with members of the media and providing accurate, timely and appropriate information while protecting student and employee privacy, maintaining campus safety and complying with applicable federal and state laws.

Media Contact Information

The Office of Public Relations & Communications serves as the primary point of contact for media inquiries involving Horry-Georgetown Technical College.

Nicole Hyman

Chief Public Relations & Communications Officer

Horry-Georgetown Technical College

Phone: 843-902-3838

Email: nicole.hyman@hgtc.edu

Members of the media should contact the Office of Public Relations & Communications for media inquiries, interview requests, official statements, campus access, photography or video requests, and assistance with College-related news coverage.

For breaking news or urgent media inquiries outside regular business hours, please contact Nicole Hyman at the number listed above.

Working with the Media

Members of the media are encouraged to direct requests for information, interviews, statements, photographs, video or campus visits to the Chief Public Relations & Communications Officer.

When additional expertise is needed, Public Relations & Communications will coordinate with the appropriate College administrator, faculty member, staff member or other subject matter expert to provide information or facilitate an interview when appropriate.

College employees who receive media inquiries regarding College business should refer those inquiries to the Office of Public Relations & Communications to help ensure the media receive accurate, consistent and timely information from the appropriate College representative.

HGTC will provide information that is publicly available as promptly as reasonably possible. The College will comply with applicable federal and state laws governing privacy and public information, including the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

Media Inquiries and Interview Requests

Media interview requests involving College officials, faculty, staff or students should be coordinated through the Office of Public Relations & Communications.

Public Relations & Communications will work with the requesting journalist and appropriate College representatives to determine availability, location, timing and other logistical considerations.

Participation in media interviews by students is voluntary. Student information protected by FERPA or other applicable laws will not be released without appropriate authorization or another lawful basis for disclosure.

Employees speaking on behalf of HGTC should coordinate with Public Relations & Communications before participating in interviews concerning official College matters. Employees speaking solely in their personal capacity should not represent their individual views as official positions of the College.

Media Access to Campus

HGTC welcomes media coverage of College programs, events and activities while maintaining an environment that supports instruction, College operations, privacy and campus safety.

For purposes of media access, College property includes both publicly accessible areas and areas that are nonpublic or restricted because of their instructional, administrative, operational, safety, privacy or security functions.

Publicly accessible areas may include outdoor common areas and other locations generally open to students, employees, visitors or members of the public during normal operations.

Nonpublic or restricted areas may include classrooms while instruction is taking place, laboratories, clinical environments, administrative and employee workspaces, offices, areas secured by access controls and other locations not generally open to the public.

Members of the media seeking access to nonpublic or restricted areas of an HGTC campus or facility for news coverage should contact the Office of Public Relations & Communications in advance.

Advance coordination allows the College to assist with parking, identify appropriate locations for interviews and photography, arrange access to facilities when appropriate, protect student and employee privacy and minimize disruption to instruction and College operations.

Media access to classrooms, laboratories, offices, clinical environments and other nonpublic or restricted areas requires appropriate authorization.

When circumstances warrant, a representative of Public Relations & Communications or another designated College employee may accompany media representatives while they are in nonpublic or restricted areas.

Media representatives are expected to comply with reasonable safety, security and operational requirements applicable to College facilities.

Nothing in these guidelines is intended to restrict lawful access to public areas or public meetings.

Photography, Video and Recording

Photography, filming and recording associated with organized media coverage should be coordinated with the Office of Public Relations & Communications when conducted in classrooms, laboratories, offices, clinical settings or other areas where privacy, safety, instructional or operational concerns may exist.

The College will take reasonable steps to protect students whose information or images may not be disclosed under applicable law or College policy.

Media representatives should avoid disrupting classes, College operations, events, or pedestrian and vehicle traffic while photographing or recording on campus.

Additional restrictions may apply in clinical environments, laboratories and other areas where safety requirements, patient privacy, contractual obligations or other legal considerations apply.

Student Privacy and FERPA

HGTC is committed to providing accurate and timely information while protecting student privacy in accordance with FERPA and other applicable federal and state laws. College employees and spokespersons will not disclose confidential student information, including protected education records, disciplinary information or other personally identifiable information, except as permitted or required by law.

When a situation involves a student or students, the College may provide general information about the matter, the College's response and applicable policies or procedures when doing so does not disclose protected student information.

Questions concerning the release of student information should be directed to the appropriate College officials and, when necessary, legal counsel.

Personnel and Employee Matters

HGTC respects the privacy rights of its employees and complies with applicable laws governing personnel information.

The College generally does not comment publicly on confidential or nonpublic aspects of individual personnel matters.

When appropriate, HGTC may provide information that is public under applicable law or provide general information regarding College policies, procedures or institutional responsibilities without disclosing confidential personnel information.

Media inquiries involving personnel matters should be directed to the Office of Public Relations & Communications.

Coverage of College Events

Members of the media interested in covering College-sponsored events are encouraged to contact Public Relations & Communications in advance so appropriate arrangements can be made.

Certain College events may be open to the public, while others may be designated as employee-only, student-only, invitation-only or otherwise closed to the general public. Events designated as employee-only, student-only, invitation-only or otherwise nonpublic are not open to media coverage unless specifically authorized by the College. Media representatives seeking clarification regarding whether an event is open to media coverage should contact the Office of Public Relations & Communications.

For events open to media coverage, Public Relations & Communications can assist with parking, access, interviews, photography and other logistical needs.

Media Identification and Credentials

Media representatives seeking media-specific access, reserved media seating, entry to nonpublic or restricted areas, or access to events requiring authorization may be asked to provide professional identification or media credentials.

The Office of Public Relations & Communications will coordinate media access and credentialing when necessary based on the nature of the event or activity.

Coverage of Area Commission and Other Public Meetings

Members of the media and public are welcome to attend meetings of the Horry-Georgetown Technical College Area Commission and other College meetings that are open to the public in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

The College will establish reasonable access procedures for public meetings, including the time at which the meeting room will open to attendees. Access to a public meeting does not provide access to nonpublic or restricted areas of the College before, during or after the meeting.

Designated seating areas may be established for members of the public and media to maintain safe access, preserve sightlines and support the orderly conduct of the meeting.

Photography and audio or video recording are permitted subject to reasonable, viewpoint-neutral procedures established by the College and applicable to all attendees.

The College may designate locations for recording equipment and establish reasonable parameters regarding flash photography, auxiliary lighting, tripods, movement in aisles or other activity that could interfere with the safe and orderly conduct of the meeting.

All attendees are expected to comply with applicable College policies and reasonable meeting procedures. Activity that materially interferes with or disrupts the orderly conduct of the meeting may be addressed in accordance with established College policy.

Interviews with Commission members, College officials, employees or guests should generally take place before or after the meeting or during an appropriate recess.

Requests for interviews with individuals serving in an official College capacity should be coordinated through the Office of Public Relations & Communications. This protocol does not restrict the right of members of the media to attend or cover meetings that are open to the public.

When the Area Commission enters executive session in accordance with South Carolina law, members of the public and media will be required to leave the meeting room until the public session resumes.

Meeting agendas and other materials available to the public may be obtained through the College's official channels.

Crisis and Emergency Communications

During an emergency or crisis, the safety of students, employees, visitors and emergency personnel is the College's highest priority. The Office of Public Relations & Communications will coordinate official media communications in collaboration with College leadership, Public Safety, emergency responders and other appropriate officials.

Verified information will be provided as quickly as circumstances reasonably allow through appropriate College communication channels. During an active emergency, members of the media should not enter restricted areas or interfere with emergency operations. Media representatives must comply with instructions from law enforcement, Public Safety, emergency management personnel and other authorized officials regarding access, staging and safety.

When appropriate, the College may establish a designated media staging area and identify an official spokesperson for media briefings and interviews.

Media representatives are encouraged to rely on official College communications for verified information during rapidly developing situations and to direct questions to the Office of Public Relations & Communications rather than contacting individual departments involved in the emergency response.

Public Safety and Law Enforcement Incidents

When an incident involves an active law enforcement investigation, certain information may be controlled or released by the law enforcement agency with jurisdiction. The College will coordinate with appropriate law enforcement agencies when determining what information HGTC can release.

The College will not release information that could compromise an active investigation, jeopardize safety or violate applicable privacy laws.

Media Access and Conduct

Media representatives are expected to comply with applicable laws, generally applicable College policies and reasonable safety, security and operational instructions while on College property.

Media representatives who enter nonpublic or restricted areas without authorization, interfere with College operations or fail to comply with reasonable safety or security instructions may be asked to relocate or leave the affected area, as permitted by law and applicable College policy.

Questions or concerns regarding media access should be directed to the Office of Public Relations & Communications.

Accessibility and Accommodations

HGTC is committed to providing access to College programs, events and public meetings consistent with applicable law.

Members of the media who require an accommodation related to covering a College event, activity or public meeting are encouraged to contact the Office of Public Relations & Communications in advance so reasonable arrangements can be coordinated.

College Photos, Videos and Other Media Resources

The Office of Public Relations & Communications may be able to provide approved photographs, video, background information, fact sheets and other materials to assist members of the media.

Media organizations interested in using College-produced photographs, video or other content should contact Public Relations & Communications regarding availability, attribution and appropriate use.

Freedom of Information Act Requests

Horry-Georgetown Technical College is committed to transparency and public access to records in accordance with the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Chapter 4, Title 30 of the South Carolina Code of Laws.

The Chief Public Relations & Communications Officer serves as the College's designated FOIA Officer. Requests for public records under FOIA should be submitted by email to FOIA@hgtc.edu.

Media inquiries and FOIA requests are separate processes. The Office of Public Relations & Communications will respond to routine media inquiries when information is readily available and appropriate for release. Requests seeking public records or documentation may be handled through the College's formal FOIA process.

Additional information regarding FOIA requests, including applicable procedures, timelines and fees, is available through the College's established FOIA process. Questions regarding FOIA requests may also be directed to FOIA@hgtc.edu.

Accuracy, Clarifications and Corrections

HGTC is committed to providing accurate information to the public and news media. If the College becomes aware of a significant factual error involving information attributed to HGTC, Public Relations & Communications may contact the news organization to provide clarification or request a correction.

Likewise, members of the media are encouraged to contact Public Relations & Communications if they need clarification or verification of information attributed to the College.