



EL PASO COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROCEDURE

For information, contact Institutional
Effectiveness: (915) 831-6740

CR-7 Communicating as a College Employee

APPROVED: April 2, 2024 **REVISED:**
Year of last review: 2024
AUTHORIZING BOARD POLICY: CR

Classification: Institutional

Responsible Vice President or Associate Vice President: Associate Vice President of External Relations, Communication & Development

Designated Contact: Associate Vice President of External Relations, Communication & Development

OBJECTIVE: To ensure proper and professional communication whether in person, electronic or digital communication, written expression, published materials, or any other form or method of communication. To outline a process for handling and addressing communications of college employees that are libelous or defamatory or are otherwise in violation of any privacy rights, EPCC policy or procedure, or applicable local, state, or federal law.

PROCEDURE:

I. General:

Employees represent the college and regularly communicate information in fulfilling their college roles and duties. When communicating or creating content for or on behalf of the college, employees should do so in a manner that is not libelous, defamatory, or in violation of any privacy rights, EPCC policy or procedure, or applicable local, state, or federal law. Students should follow all guidelines outlined in the Student Handbook regarding communication.

II. Communicating as an Employee for or on Behalf of the College

- A. Employees are representatives of the college and are responsible for communicating professionally and factually at all times when fulfilling their professional duties.
- B. Information that is shared or created by employees should be timely, accurate, appropriate and relevant to its intended audience. Employees should verify the accuracy of any information prior to sharing or communicating.
- C. All employee communications must be in compliance with all applicable Board Policies and College Procedures.
- D. Employee communications may be subject to public information, privacy, and record retention laws.
 - 1. Employees must protect confidentiality and proprietary information when communicating.
 - 2. Employees cannot share confidential or proprietary information about EPCC or its students, employees, or other individuals to third parties without proper consent.
 - 3. Employees shall adhere to all college privacy and confidentiality policies and laws, including but not limited to FERPA, HIPAA, and NJCAA.
- E. Employees are responsible for ensuring any type of communication or content created, displayed, or published by or for EPCC is not libelous or defamatory or is otherwise in violation of any privacy rights, EPCC policy or procedure, or any applicable local, state, or federal law, including, but not limited to:
 - 1. [Executive Order No. GA-44](#), relating to addressing acts of antisemitism in institutions of higher education;

2. [Section 51.9315\(c\)\(2\)](#) of the Texas Education Code that provides that students should not participate in, and higher education institutions should not allow, expression that is unlawful or disrupts the operations of the institution.
- F. Employees must communicate and create content in compliance with all applicable intellectual property laws.
- G. As outlined in [GC-1 District Spokesperson, News and Media Inquiries](#), only those designated as an official spokesperson can make an official statement on behalf of the college to the media.

III. Unprofessional or Inappropriate Communication

- A. EPCC reserves the right to deny use of employee email or other forms of communication and/or EPCC controlled channels when there is a reason to believe a violation of EPCC Policy or Procedure has occurred.
- B. Any alleged violations will be referred to the appropriate Cabinet Representative and Employee Relations for further investigation and adjudication under EPCC's employee conduct procedures.
- C. Allegations that any content created, displayed, or published by EPCC is libelous or defamatory or is otherwise in violation of any privacy rights, EPCC policy or procedure, or any applicable local, state, or federal law should be directed to the Associate Vice President of External Relations, Communication & Development for investigation and possible removal.
- D. EPCC will immediately remove, to the extent possible, content that is found to be libelous or defamatory or is otherwise in violation of any privacy rights, EPCC policy or procedure, or any applicable local, state, or federal law.
- E. Nothing in this procedure should be construed to be contrary to any rights to freedom of expression or concerted activity.