

CRISIS RESPONSE AND MEDIA SUPPORT

ANONYMOUS SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Recent weeks have seen a significant increase in social media accounts soliciting and posting anonymous reports of sexual misconduct, intolerance and homophobia where individuals and related organizations are being named.

Consider the following if your chapter or a member is named in a post:

A TIMELY INTERNAL RESPONSE IS KEY

- ▶ Send brief messages to your advisors (and/or district chief) and members alerting them of the situation. In your email to advisors, seek additional guidance. To members, remind them of the following:
 - 1 | The chapter will coordinate a response with advisors and the Administrative Office.
 - 2 | The chapter president is the sole chapter spokesman.
 - 3 | Members should not engage with the post or rush to judge a brother.
 - 4 | Existing accountability processes will be initiated if and when appropriate.
- ▶ The Kai Committee should follow up on posts alleging misconduct by a member but **should not rush to judgment**. Brothers must be able to explain/defend himself before decisions are made about his status in the chapter. Being shamed on social media hurts, and the committee should keep the **well-being of named brothers** top of mind in their interactions.

DON'T RUSH WHEN DECIDING WHETHER THE CHAPTER SHOULD RESPOND PUBLICLY

- ▶ After a chapter is named, commenters will likely call for a public statement, but **don't be rushed**. Thoughtfulness and accuracy trump timeliness in this case.
- ▶ Temporarily making **chapter profiles private or turning off comments** on all posts may help alleviate the emotional urge to instantly respond/defend.
- ▶ Evaluate the substance of the post to determine if a statement is necessary. Social posts remain relevant for a relatively short period of time. Depending on the severity of the allegations in a post, **a statement may not be warranted**.

IF A PUBLIC RESPONSE IS WARRANTED, IT SHOULD BE GENUINE AND VALUES-BASED

- ▶ Avoid the temptation to offer a verbose or overly severe response. Chapters should **not unnecessarily admit guilt or inadvertently assume responsibility**.
- ▶ Ground any response in truth and a commitment to being a positive member of your campus community, an ally, and **to living out Beta's core values**.
- ▶ If warranted, few things are more meaningful than a **sincere apology**.
- ▶ If stating actions your chapter is taking in response, **don't make promises you can't keep**. You can't promise inappropriate behavior will never happen again, for instance, since member actions are out of chapter leadership's control.
- ▶ Matters of sexual assault and intolerance should be **referred** to local law enforcement, the appropriate campus office or brought to the chapter president's attention and then filed in an **incident report**.



WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

Before making a public response, we highly recommend **all statements be coordinated through the Administrative Office**. General Fraternity dues help to provide your chapter access to timely, professional media counsel through Beta's communication department. In serious matters like these, don't go it alone. We're here to help — no matter the issue. Contact Director of Media Relations **Justin Warren** (214.909.4849) for assistance.

▶ MEDIA PROTOCOL

The Administrative Office is available to assist chapters with managing media requests in a responsible and timely way.

If a media inquiry is received, **don't panic**. The following steps will help to navigate the media engagement process for the chapter president:

STEP 1: ACKNOWLEDGE THE REQUEST

Within minutes, acknowledge the reporter's request and thank them for their inquiry. Request time to gather your thoughts before making an official statement and determine the reporter's:

- ▶ Name
- ▶ Media outlet
- ▶ Contact information
- ▶ Deadline

Request to receive their questions in writing, if possible.

STEP 2: CONTACT THE ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

Immediately contact Communication Department staffer **Justin Warren** (214.909.4849) with details of the inquiry. He will promptly work with you to craft an official statement or interview response.

STEP 3: PLAY BY THE RULES

The Fraternity has one goal in media engagement: ensuring the safety of our members and protecting the operation and reputation of the chapter.

To do this, spokesmen should abide by the following rules of engagement:

- ▶ Be quick. Be helpful. Be honest.
- ▶ Decline on-camera, telephone or live interviews, unless approved by the Administrative Office.
- ▶ Never answer a question with "no comment." It's perfectly acceptable to say "I don't know" (if it's true).
- ▶ Do not draw conclusions, speculate, lay blame or admit liability.
- ▶ Avoid mentioning names.