

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our organization is presenting ourselves and our mission with a unified voice that aligns with our vision, mission, guiding principles, and rules of engagement. As such, these are the documents from which the Leadership Team will take guidance on addressing communications.

This policy applies to communication from:

- Leadership Team members
- Organizing Team co-leads
- General members if they may be reasonably associated with WE CAN in the communication

This policy applies to communication from your personal e-mail account that is:

- Initiating direct outreach to individuals or organizations related to racial justice efforts or issues outside of your role as a member of WE CAN
 - Example: Writing an op-ed about racial justice related topics in the region or reaching out to a school or police representative about the work of their organization.
- In response to events, efforts, incidents, or circumstances that affect WE CAN or are related to racial justice efforts or issues
 - Example: E-mailing or calling a police department leader after an incident of racial injustice.
- Communicating about WE CAN-sponsored events, efforts, incidents, or circumstances
 - Example: E-mailing or calling a guest speaker from a WE CAN event to address concerns with their presentation.

Communication standards:

- Include a formal disclaimer addressing your role in WE CAN and whether you are communicating on behalf of WE CAN or not.
 - Examples:
 - “I currently am an organizing team co-lead in the West County Community Action Network (WE CAN). In writing this letter, I am not representing WE CAN. My views expressed here do not represent those of the group and shouldn’t be considered as a statement from WE CAN.”
 - “As you know, I’m a co-lead for WE CAN. For the purposes of this conversation, I’m not representing them at all. I’m just talking with you from my own individual perspective.”

- Use professional titles and formal names for those you're addressing (i.e. Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft rather than "Jay Ashcroft").
- Send the correspondence to the Leadership Team as soon as possible so they are aware of any communication that may become public or affect the work of WE CAN with the intended audience.

Additional communication guidance:

- If you receive or see correspondence about WE CAN that is painting the organization in a negative light and/or has potential to create conflict that impacts WE CAN's work, please share it with the Leadership Team at your earliest convenience.
- If a correspondence is about racial justice efforts in the region but not specifically about WE CAN, feel free to respond in your capacity as WE CAN or as an individual using the appropriate disclaimer about whether or not you're speaking on behalf of the group. Feel free to pass this along to the Leadership Team to keep them informed about new opportunities or lines of conversation.
- If a correspondence seems inflammatory, problematic, or otherwise stressful or indicting, please send them to the Leadership Team BEFORE responding to the initiator of conversation.
 - Note: Feel free to deflect blame for a slower response time by telling someone "I will need to consult with the Leadership Team of WE CAN prior to responding to your message. I'll get back with you as soon as I can."

Additional notes:

- While we have no restrictions on personal social media use or commentary, you may wish to provide a disclaimer such as adding "My opinions do not represent those of my community organizations or employers." in your Facebook or Twitter biographies if you'd like to make others aware of this.
- When sending correspondences or notices of correspondences to the WE CAN Leadership Team, please send them directly to wecanstl@gmail.com. The Leadership Team will then disseminate it to any other members of WE CAN whom it may affect.