

Earned media toolkit for the AHAR

Please contact Lauren Barnes with any questions at lbarnes@community.solutions

Proactive Earned Media Plan

- Create a proactive media plan to help control the narrative
 - Write a localized key message that:
 - Highlight the community's progress on solving homelessness (examples: population-level reductions, sustaining functional zero, achieving real-time, by-name data, joining Built for Zero, etc.)
 - Provide broader context about local challenges and contributing factors for any PIT population-level increases
 - Outline the solutions that would help the community make more progress
 - Explain the degree to which the point-in-time count can represent the *current and whole* picture of homelessness within the community
 - Identify and equip community-wide spokespeople with key messages
 - Reporters will often want more than one source for their story. Have a main spokesperson for the results, but work with your homelessness response team to see who else can do interviews and reinforce the key messages.
 - [Here are media tips and best practices](#)
 - Write a press release with the results contextualized alongside the key messages identified in step one
 - Create a targeted media contact list with reporters who have worked with your organization before and/or cover homelessness in your community.
 - Send individualized email media pitches to the reporters. Strong media pitches include:
 - A personal intro that shows you have done your research on that reporter and outlet
 - Succinct pitch with story details
 - Who is available for interviews
 - Specific ask to cover the story[Here is an example media pitch on the PIT results.](#)
 - Distribute the press release through the organization's owned channels (social media, website, a newsletter, etc.)
- Have a protocol for responding to inbound media requests. In addition to having an affirmative media plan, it's important to have policies and protocols in place for how

to engage with the media when they reach out to staff for interview requests on their own.

- [You can view an example media protocol plan here.](#)