

Virgin Islands Bar Association

Policy on Representation of the Bar and Communication with the Media

Representation.

The President or his designee shall express the policy of the Bar Association as determined by the Board of Governors. No other member or employee may represent the Bar or a division, section, committee, board, task force, or commission before a legislative body, court or governmental agency, unless specifically authorized by the Board of Governors.

Briefs.

If representation of the Bar Association requires the filing of a brief, it shall be reviewed by the Board of Governors or its designees and approved by the Board before it is filed.

Personal Views of Members.

Any member who, when making public utterance, permits himself to be identified as having an official connection with the Bar Association or one of its divisions, sections, committees, boards, task forces, or commissions shall, if the policy of the Bar Association on the subject matter of the utterance has been determined by the Board of Governors, fairly state that policy and, if he expresses views at variance with it, clearly identify the variance as his personal views only. If there has not been, or if he has no knowledge of, any such policy determination, he shall nevertheless identify his utterance as his personal views.

Media.

The Virgin Islands Bar Association President is the official spokesperson for the organization and the Board of Governors. The President-Elect may act as the spokesperson for the organization if the President is incapacitated or unavailable. When authorized by the President, the President-Elect or Executive Director may speak on behalf of the organization.

Board members who are not designated as a VIBA's spokesperson should clearly indicate they are not speaking on behalf of the organization if he or she communicates with the news media on law-related issues. Board members should alert the President or President-Elect when they communicate with the media in their role as a board member.

VIBA employees should ask the following questions when they receive a call from the media:

- What is the name, title, and contact information of the person calling?-
- What media organization does the person work for?
- What is the subject of the article?

- Who else has been contacted for comment?
- When is the deadline for comment?
- When will the story be published?
- Will the information be published in print or broadcast?
- May we have an opportunity to review the article prior to it being published?
- The bar employees may ask any other specific questions that they may have.

These steps will help provide the best possible service to media while also ensuring the organization portrays itself in a positive, accurate and strategic manner.

September 3, 2013