

****Best Ethical Practices****

Be Proactive

- 1. Send out a press advisory:** At least two weeks prior to Veteran's Day, send a press advisory to the local media. Use a media contact list that you have established. This contact list must be all inclusive and should not exclude and media outlets generally considered to be the major players in your local media. In addition, this advisory should be published on some sort of public website so that it has been equally offered to any media organizations who may be out of the realm of the typical local media players.
- 2. Monitor media interests:** As mentioned in the preface, media interest in the issue of a new generation of veteran's with PTSD and accompanying homeless scenarios is likely to be a lingering news media story that is likely to continue. In an attempt to assist facilities residents, it is important to show respect of the First Amendment while at the same time ensuring that privacy rights are not being violated through unexpected media visits.
- 3. Establish guidelines:** As the proactive measures persists, and as calls of media interest come about. While being courteous and respectful; share your concerns for the privacy rights of the veterans that are currently using your facilities functions. From experience, journalist are generally understanding and respectful of concerns about media law and ethics. And, for the most part, they are human and can be worked with.
- 4. Media information packets:** Even if your press advisory has not garnered any interest, be prepared. Keep media information packets available to be sure to share the true issues concerning your facility that you know best. And include Veteran's Day information as well.

Be Reactive

- 1. Be Aware:** Given the issue of rising homelessness occurring within the new generation of combat veterans, it is a safe assumption that on Veteran's Day the media is likely to show interest and perhaps even show up unannounced at your facility. Assume that this is the case, and prepare accordingly. Keep an eye out to ensure that veteran privacy is being honored.
- 2. Be courteous but clear:** Even if some journalist have had ample opportunity to contact you but did not, let it go. As unannounced media organizations arrive do your best to accommodate them while at the same time be stern in your dealings with them. Just because they have arrived late, does not usurp their responsibility to you and the veterans at your facility. Make it clear to them that honoring privacy is taken very seriously at your facilities and that while they do have First Amendment protections, your facilities trespass and privacy rights are equally important to be respected.

Figure 3: Best Ethical Practices