



## **Southern California Broadcasters Association Radio and Television Public Service Media Guide**

### **Information regarding Public Service Announcements**

The following list of suggestions was prepared in conjunction with SCBA member stations. Strict adherence will encourage use of your material.

### **Spot Lengths**

- 10 second spot has approximately 20 words
- 20 second spot has approximately 50 words
- 30 second spot has approximately 75 words
- 60 second spot has approximately 150 words

### **THE FOLLOWING DO NOT QUALIFY AS PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

1. Announcements of commercial events for which the premiere performance only goes to charity.
2. Fund-raising efforts sponsored by a non-incorporated group.
3. Controversial issues, e.g. political, or religious content. (This material may lend itself to editorial or public affairs programs).

**INFORMATION CARD:** A copy of the Information Card must accompany any spot being sent to stations that appeals for funds or fundraising event in the City of Los Angeles. SCBA does not issue these cards. To inquire, call the **Charitable Service Dept. at: (213) 978-1144**

**IMPORTANT:** On all fund-raising spot copy running 60 seconds or longer, when an Information Card has been issued, the following line must be included: "This solicitation is made in compliance with the Los Angeles Police Commission." For TV, this statement can be either audio or video. The Charitable Service Number must appear at the lower left corner of the copy. The SCBA identification number should be at the lower right of all copy.

### **DO'S AND DON'TS**

- Use 8 ½ by 11 white bond paper.
- One announcement per sheet, typed
- Upper and lower case type preferred, double spaced
- Punctuate simply for easy reading on air.
- Do not hyphenate at the end of a line
- Use no abbreviations
- Fold sheets together, do not staple pages
- Do not mention prizes to be given away
- Do not mention any profit making company
- Label tape case
- Include start and stop date on script and tape case
- Generic copy, (no event to promote) label as "ongoing"
- Stop date must be day before the event

**When soliciting donations** other than money, arrange for collections at a non-commercial place of business. No station will donate free airtime to a commercial establishment.

*To obtain this publication at any time, please send a self addressed stamped 6X9 or larger envelope with 83 cents postage to:  
SCBA, 5670 Wilshire Blvd. #1370 Los Angeles, CA 90036, or  
download information from [www.scba.com](http://www.scba.com), Public Service section.*

## **COPY WRITING SUGGESTIONS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **BEFORE YOU WRITE YOUR ANNOUNCEMENT:**

1. WRITING FOR BROADCAST IS SALESMANSHIP - AND YOU CAN'T SELL UNLESS YOU ARE COMPLETELY INFORMED ABOUT YOUR "PRODUCT."
2. YOUR JOB IS TO OVERCOME THE LISTENER OR VIEWERS **APATHY** - **CREATE INTEREST** IN YOUR STORY - **MOTIVATE** THE LISTENER TO **DO** SOMETHING.
3. DETERMINE THE OBJECTIVE OF THE TOTAL CAMPAIGN - THE SPECIFIC GOALS OF THE RADIO AND TV SPOTS.
4. LIST ALL OF THE PERTINENT FACTS TO BE INCLUDED, **IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE**.
5. DECIDE ON THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU WANT TO SAY.
6. THINK HOW YOU WOULD SAY IT IF YOU WERE SAYING IT FACE-TO-FACE TO ONE PERSON THEN WRITE IT THAT WAY.

### **AFTER YOU WRITE YOUR ANNOUNCEMENT:**

1. READ IT ALOUD. HOW DOES IT SOUND? IS IT NATURAL OR DOES IT SOUND STILTED? IS IT BELIEVABLE? DOES IT SOUND LIKE SOMEONE TALKING OR SOMEONE READING?
2. DID YOU GRAB THE LISTENERS ATTENTION IN THE FIRST FEW SECONDS?
3. DID THE ANNOUNCEMENT DELIVER THE MAIN IDEA QUICKLY? CLEARLY? COMPLETELY? OFTEN ENOUGH TO STICK IN THE MIND?
4. DID YOU REGISTER THE KEY FACTS ABOUT YOUR PROJECT OR YOUR ORGANIZATION STRONGLY? DID YOU MENTION THE NAME AT LEAST THREE TIMES IN A 60-SECOND SPOT, AT LEAST TWICE IN ANY SHORTER SPOTS?
5. IS THE INFORMATION SPECIFIC ENOUGH TO GET YOUR IDEA ACROSS?
6. DOES YOUR ANNOUNCEMENT MAINTAIN INTEREST FROM BEGINNING TO END?

II

Send the **complete** Public Service Packet at **one** time.

**FILM:** 16mm sound on film, optical track.

**VIDEO TAPE:** 1" or 2" high band color. (Check station list.)

**TAPE:** (for radio): 7-1/2 IPS (IPS = inches per second). In the copy, identify sponsor. Please label both the box and the tape. Indicate contents on the tape. Put the start and stop dates on the box and include a script. Make sure tape is re-wound and ready for audition.

**STATIONS WILL NOT TRANSFER TAPES**

**Public Affairs Shows:** Please watch and listen to the show of your interest before sending any material to the show for Public Affairs time. Any questions pertaining to the jargon, call any Radio or TV Public Service Director.

**NOTE:** MOST TELEVISION STATIONS DO NOT, AS A MATTER OF PRACTICE, RETURN FILM OR SLIDES THAT HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED. MATERIAL OF ANY KIND MAY NOT BE RETURNED.

**STATIONS WILL NOT USE AN ANNOUNCEMENT THAT DOES NOT CONFORM TO THEIR SPECIFICATIONS.**

**PLEASE BE CONSIDERATE** WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH STATION PUBLIC SERVICE DIRECTORS. THEY HAVE VERY BUSY JOBS - AND HUNDREDS OF ORGANIZATIONS SEND THEM MATERIAL.

**IT WILL BE TO YOUR ADVANTAGE** TO LISTEN AND WATCH FOR YOUR SPOTS. DO NOT EXPECT THE STATIONS TO SUPPLY YOU WITH INFORMATION AS TO WHEN THEY WERE USED.

**Before Submitting PSA'S in Spanish, Asian, or any other language, or PSA's that you wish to have translated to another language at the station, please review these questions.**

- 1.) Do you want to reach that particular ethnic community?
- 2.) Will it benefit that community to hear your PSA?
- 3.) Is there someone available at your organization that speaks that language to take calls when they come in?

**If you answered NO to any of these questions, it would not be to your advantage, or the listeners to have your PSA broadcast in a different language.**

Send SCBA one copy of your **written announcement only**, preferably a 60-second sample. **DO NOT SEND TAPES, FILM, VIDEO TAPES OR SLIDES. MATERIALS WILL NOT BE RETURNED.**

ATTN: LaFERN WATKINS, Dir. of Community Affairs  
SCBA (SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA BROADCASTERS ASSOCIATION)  
5670 WILSHIRE BLVD. SUITE 1370  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90036

III

# LIVE COPY FORM FOR PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

**FOLLOW THESE PROFESSIONAL GUIDELINES TO HELP YOUR WRITE COMPLETE AND EFFECTIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS.**

1. **GET ATTENTION:** You can't tell or sell anyone anything unless you first get the listeners attention.

2. **DEVELOP INTEREST:** Promise a benefit, emotional or actual, and show how the listener will gain.

3. **DEMONSTRATE:** Give, with facts and information, reasons why the listener should do what you want done. Offer rational reasons to support an emotional decision.

4. **ASK FOR ACTION:** Tell the listener where to go, what to do, when what to do, when to do it. Say "write in," "come in," "send money," or just plain "listen" to your story

**REMEMBER:** You can only get 140 to 150 words into a 60-second spot, 70 to 150 words in a 45-second spot, and 70 to 75 in a 30-second spot, and proportionately less in shorter announcements. Make every word count. Write and re-write.

**ALSO:** Your announcements must be submitted to the stations on 8-1/2 by 11 bond paper. When they must be submitted varies from station to station. (see requirements on following Public Service List)

**PSA SAMPLE SPOT ANNOUNCEMENT**

**ORGANIZATION**

American Heart Assn.  
3550 Wilshire Blvd.  
Los Angeles 90010

**CONTACT**

Bob Jones  
Radio/TV Contact  
213-555-4231

Start Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Stop Use: \_\_\_\_\_

**Reading Time: 20 seconds**

Are you serious about your health? Do you have a question about diet? How does your eating habits affect your health? Your local Heart Association wants to hear.

Call us on our diet line! (555) 555-2345.

We are fighting for your life.

\_\_\_\_\_ SOCIAL SERVICE #  
(if fundraising)

\_\_\_\_\_ SCBA FILE #