

# Guidelines for Photo Submission



## WHY DOES THIS GUIDE EXIST?

As media and marketing professionals, it is our desire to produce the highest quality product we can to help our clients meet their goals. Whether the intent is a community update on Facebook or a printed invitation, we love using photos from our community staff members and residents. You can help us in that effort by providing digital art files using the following guidelines.

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## CAMERA SETTINGS & USAGE

When possible, hiring a professional photographer is always the safest bet. However, because of availability, budget, or time constraints, this may not always be possible. In that event, this simple guide will give you a few tips that should help your staff or residents provide what we need in order to print the best photo possible.

**Use a professional camera. If your department has a DSLR camera available, this should be your first choice.** Some basic adjustments may need to be made before you begin. (See **Image Quality Settings**) If you do not have access to a DSLR camera, a quality point-and-shoot can work. If you absolutely don't have any other choice, a modern cell phone known for its camera quality, such as the iPhone 6, is preferred.



High-Quality Cell Phone Camera

**NOT IDEAL, BUT OK**



Digital Point-and-Shoot

**BETTER**



DSLR (Digital Single-Lens Reflex)

**BEST**

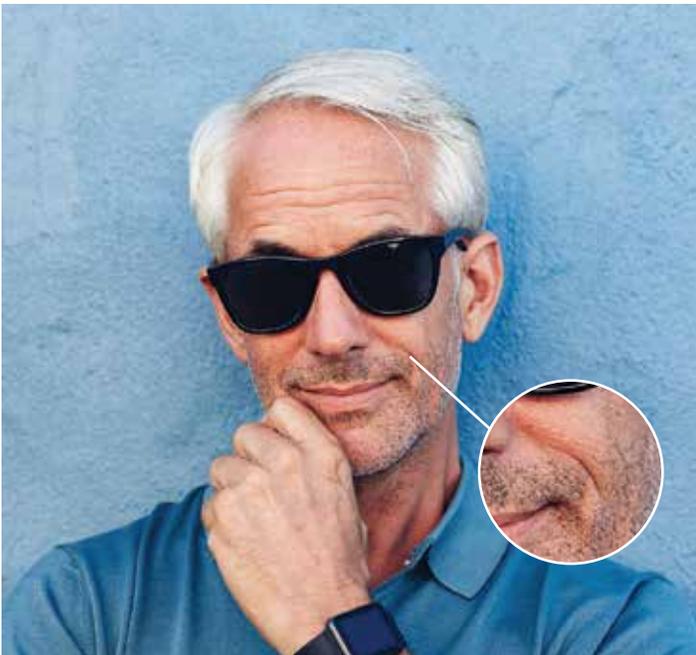
## IMAGE QUALITY SETTINGS

**Make sure to set the camera to capture the highest resolution image possible.** Most cameras have an option to choose the image quality, similar to the example shown here. **If in doubt, always select the highest quality available.** We can always downsize it on our end if we need to.



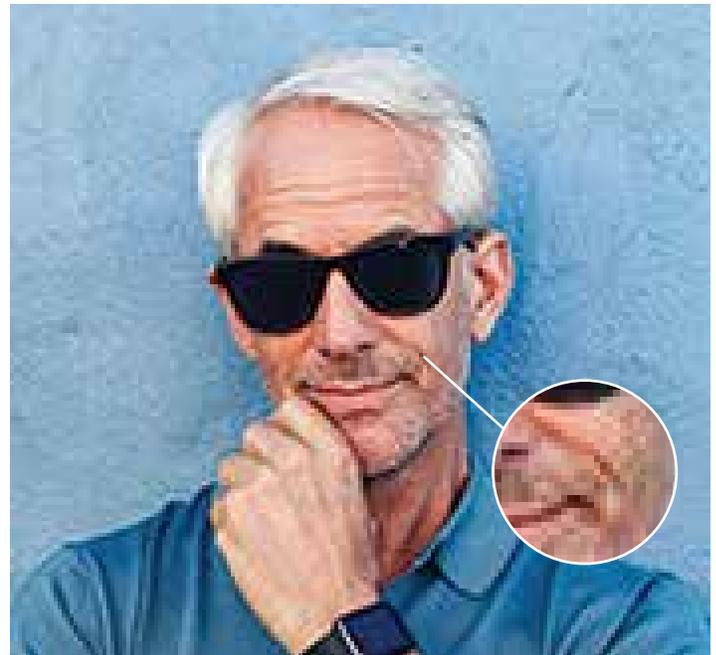
## RESOLUTION

Although technology has improved screen resolution, creating crisp HD images that are sharp and stunning, this doesn't translate to printing. For most commercial printers, an image has to have enough pixels per inch to print with clarity. The fewer pixels in an image, the less information the printer has to work with, thus resulting in a jagged or blocky image. See example below.



300 DPI (dots per inch) High-Quality Image

**ACCEPTABLE**



72 DPI (dots per inch) Low-Quality Web Image

**NOT ACCEPTABLE**

**How a photo looks on your screen has little bearing on its usability for print.** Use this formula if you're not sure: pixels divided by resolution = printable size. Thus, an image of 1280 by 960 pixels—each divided by 300 dpi—gives a print size of about 4 by 3 inches.\* That would be just marginally large enough for most article illustrations but unusable as a spread, cover, or larger image. Again, we prefer photos as large as your camera can take them, so even with 5- or 8-megapixel cameras, shoot at the highest possible resolution.

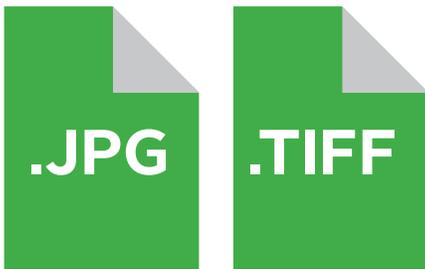
Dimensions (pixels)	Max Size at 300 dpi Perfect for High Quality Printing (inches)
1280 x 960	4 x 3
2048 x 1536	7 x 5
3008 x 2000	10 x 7
3264 x 2448	11 x 8
3872 x 2592	13 x 9
4290 x 2800	14 x 9
4920 x 3264	16 x 11
5488 x 4245	18 x 14
6496 x 4872	22 x 16

**\*NOTE:**

This does not mean that you need to change the image to 300 dpi. In fact, we'd prefer if you didn't. But please be sure to check this chart to confirm that your image will print at a reasonable size. Ideally, we'd like to have it be above 7x5 size.

**FILE FORMATS**

For photographs, please send JPG or TIFF files only.



**ACCEPTABLE**



**NOT ACCEPTABLE**

## LIGHTING & BACKGROUND

Where possible, natural lighting is almost always preferred because of its authentic look. Flash photography tends to flatten images, create awkward shadows, and blow out skin tones. If possible, move your subject near a well-lit window, preferably without direct sun. Beware of distracting backgrounds that are busy. Simple, colorful backgrounds are best for headshots.



### BEST - NATURAL LIGHTING

- Colorful but non-distracting background
- Subject is not right against the wall
- Close to natural lighting, but not in direct sun
- Cropped to subject



### NOT IDEAL, BUT OK - FLASH

Here, the flash:

- Flattens the tone, causing a flat image
- Adds unnatural tint to skin
- Creates halo shadow on wall behind



### UNACCEPTABLE SILHOUETTED

**CAUSES:** Cameras that are set on AUTO compensate for the brightness of outside, causing indoor subjects to be under-exposed, resulting in silhouetted subjects.



### OKAY, BUT NOT IDEAL FLASH-FILLED

Using a flash here, can help fill the subject with light, thus properly exposing the subject.



### DIFFERENT ANGLE BEST OPTION

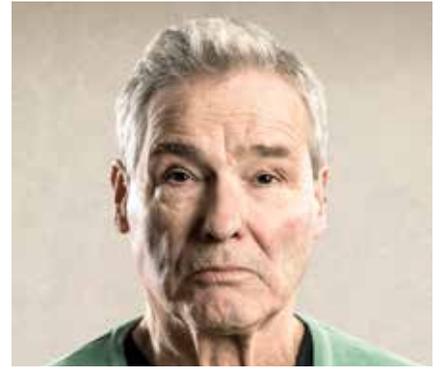
Asking the subject to pose elsewhere, or simply moving to a different angle can prevent the silhouetting effect and lead to properly lit photos.

## FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

If possible, encourage your subject to smile, maybe by mentioning something they enjoy. A genuine smile is always preferable to a serious or even non-descript facial expression.



**YES.**



**NO.**

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## VARY YOUR SHOTS

**Remember, the more photos we have to choose from that are different, the better.** In shots that need to tell a story, follow the rules above and take several shots of the activity, from different angles, different distances, getting closer details as well as wider shots. See some examples below. **Try to take at least some of all these types of shots.**



### WIDE

**PROS:** Shows entire setting and context. Enables more subjects to be photographed at one time

**CONS:** Hard to distinguish individuals when printed at small sizes. Does not show much detail. Flash may not light entire room.



### MEDIUM

**PROS:** Helps distinguish subject from the group. Better shows facial expressions. Easier to light.

**CONS:** May result in poor cropping. By itself, it does not necessarily explain the context.



### TIGHT

**PROS:** Makes the subject matter more intimate. Shows detail. Supports wider and medium shots.

**CONS:** May not clarify what the story is about. Some lenses get blurry at short distances.

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If you have any other questions regarding file size, resolution, or camera settings, please do not hesitate to email our Creative Director, Holly Searcy, at [hsearcy@retirement.org](mailto:hsearcy@retirement.org). Thank you!