



# ACCURATE REPORTING

AND MEDIA ETHICS



# Accurate Reporting and Media Ethics



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**Accurate Reporting  
and Media Ethics**

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## PREFACE

**T**he media, which plays an important role in individuals exercising their right to information and news and thus in strengthening democracy, fulfils its duty on behalf of the public based on the principle of “providing accurate and timely news to society.” This is possible only if journalism is practiced on the basis of ethical principles and with a professional perspective. Many media organisations have developed and implemented various professional principles in light of this fact.

It is evident from looking at examples from around the world that the principles that fundamentally abide by personal rights, aim for free, impartial journalism based on facts for the public interest, recommend reporting from verified sources, and include feedback mechanisms such as gatekeepers, reporters, editorial teams, and citizen representatives, as well as impartial and rights-based journalism control, are established.

On the other hand, the systematic combination and implementation of these principles is envisaged to significantly improve the accuracy and reliability of journalism.

Based on this foresight, the Presidency’s Directorate of Communications of the Republic of Türkiye issued this guide in light of the principles compiled and systematised within the framework of global examples with a view to assisting media members who strive for accurate reporting.



# INTRODUCTION

The primary media ethics standards are mainly based on code of ethics laid down on the axis of values such as truthfulness, honesty, independence, objectivity, and impartiality. The aim is to establish credibility by means of the code of ethics that should govern media activities. With the speed and prevalence of internet media and social media, the problems and debates surrounding media ethics have shifted to a different dimension, transcending the boundaries of conventional media.

Conventional media, internet media, and social media all face ethical issues related to information pollution, disinformation, fake news, violation of privacy, hate speech, as well as advertising, -copyright, and commercial orientation. Social and internet media, in particular, are environments in which the professional code of ethics is ignored and reputations are eroded, resulting in numerous violations. Unfortunately, abuses and ethical violations have increased in communication settings where non-professional media workers are also involved in content production.

The media, which plays an important role in enabling individuals to exercise their right to receive information and news, thereby strengthening democracy, can only fulfill this function through -professional production that adheres to ethical principles. The systematic application of these principles will reveal the vital role that accurate and reliable journalism plays in democracy.

As expressed by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, “Relaying the -truth to the reader and the viewer in its simplest form is a must for this profession.” The greatest responsibility for upholding media ethics undoubtedly falls on journalists. Members of the press who ad-

here to media ethics will continue to be the guarantors of the profession's prestige and reliability.

I believe that this guide, prepared by the Presidency's Directorate of Communications in light of the principles compiled and systematised within the framework of international examples of media ethics, will be a valuable resource for media professionals and researchers. The guide includes principles categorised under the headings of "Media Membership," "News Source," "Presentation of the News," "Right of Correction or Reply," and "Use of Social Media by Journalists," based on an review of the code of ethics adopted in the field of media worldwide.

I would like to thank everyone who helped with the preparation of this work and wish success to our journalists who uphold media ethics and never deviate from the path of truth.

PRESIDENCY'S HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC OF TÜRKİYE  
**PROF. FAHRETTİN ALTUN**





# 01

## Media Membership







## MEDIA MEMBERSHIP



### Duty

- The primary duty of the media member when relaying news is to disseminate information and opinions on all matters of public interest in consistency with their responsibilities.



### Responsibility

- A member of the media is authorised to and also responsible for monitoring, investigating, evaluating, and disseminating information about events and thus informing, teaching, -enlightening, and guiding people.
- The primary responsibility of a member of the media is to -respect the public's right to know the truth and to provide the public with accurate and thorough information about the facts.
- Regardless of the consequences for themselves, media -members must protect society's right to know and learn the -truth.

- Members of the media must be responsible to the public before their employers and public authorities.
- Members of the media should be aware that they are accountable for everything they write.
- Members of the media should be aware that they will be perceived as media professionals also in relation to their work outside the profession.
- Members of the media should not abuse their freedom of expression or the opportunities afforded by their profession for personal gain, fulfilment of personal desires, or profit for themselves or other people or organisations, and should not use their name and profession for advertising or commercial purposes.
- A media member must not be involved in libel, defamation, and publications in violation of human dignity, must avoid unwarranted accusations, and refrain from bribery or receiving gifts for publishing or concealing certain news reports.
- A media member must not hinder their colleagues from obtaining news, and mislead them deliberately.
- A media member must never plagiarise.
- A media member must not forward their work to a different outlet without their editor's permission.



# Independence

Advertising or sponsorship must never influence an article, comment, or news content, and the media member must not compromise objectivity. Staff of the editorial office must accept assignments exclusively from their supervisors.

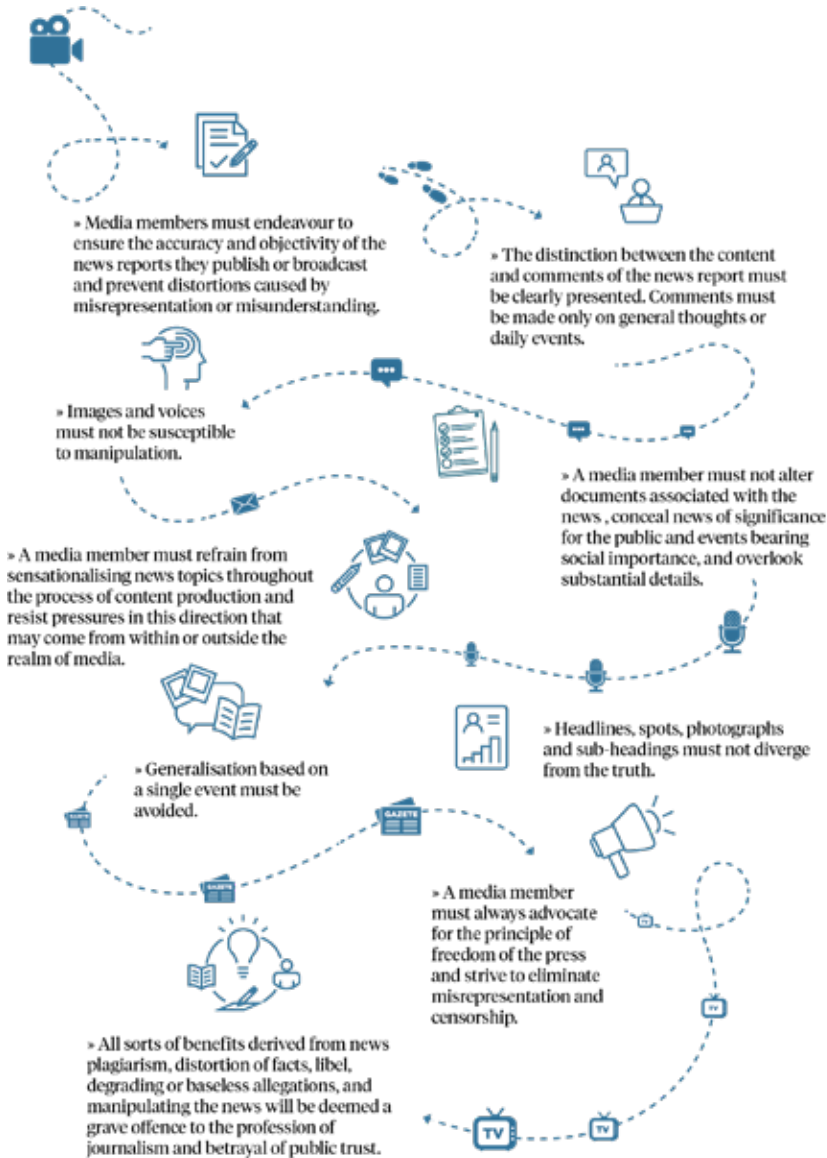
A media member must not accept any direct or indirect pecuniary interest from third parties for the publication of any ideas or news.

Adhering to the principle of freedom of expression in public actions is essential.

Freedom of the press<sup>1</sup> is a key concept within the scope of freedom of expression. The press should enjoy the right to collect, publish, and comment on information without any obstruction.

A media member must not yield to external influence, must resist the media outlet's acts of interference in the news content, and form the content on their own through editorial judgement.

# Factual and Accurate Reporting





## Impartiality



- A media member must endeavour to ensure the accuracy and objectivity of the news reports they publish or broadcast and must prevent distortions caused by misrepresentation or misunderstanding.
- The distinction between the content and comments of the news report must be clearly presented. Comments must be made only on general thoughts or daily events.
- Images and voices must not be susceptible to manipulation.
- A media member must not alter documents associated with the news, conceal news on matters of public concern or social significance, or overlook substantial details.
- Headlines, spots, photographs and sub-headings must not diverge from the truth.
- A media member must refrain from sensationalising news topics throughout the process of content production and resist potential pressures in this direction from within or outside the realm of the media.

- All sorts of benefits derived from news plagiarism, distortion of facts, libel, degrading or baseless allegations, and manipulating the news must be deemed a grave offence to the profession of journalism and betrayal of public trust.
- A media member must always advocate for the principle of freedom of the press and struggle to eliminate misrepresentation and censorship.
- Generalisations based on a single event must be avoided.



## Respect for Universal Human Rights

- A media member must not discriminate against any race, ethnicity, religion, or class or make degrading remarks.
- Utmost care should be taken to ensure that broadcasting services align with morals, safeguarding of the family, as well as the national and spiritual values of the society.





## Credibility

- Media members who abuse the privileges of their profession for self-serving or baseless reasons betray public trust.
- News must not contain surreptitious advertising. Advertisements must be featured distinctively.
- Media members should not consider potential disagreements or personal benefits in their reporting and compromise the principles of reporting.
- The public should be encouraged to voice their complaints against the media and possible mistakes should be accepted and corrected as soon as possible.
- A media member should avoid attitudes and behaviours likely to cause unease among the public in releasing a news report.
- By not releasing a news report of public concern for personal interest or other reasons, the media member will have obstructed the freedom of information of the public.
- A media member must neither manipulate the speech by the interviewee, nor the meaning or purpose of the interview.
- A media member must act with complete honesty and objectivity to ensure the credibility and fairness of the news content published under their signature, alias, or anonymously with their knowledge and approval.



## Fairness

- In producing news content, a media member must respect personal rights, observe the moral rules embraced by the majority of the society, be accountable to the public for the accuracy and fairness of their news reports, and those who are publicly accused must be given the right to reply at the earliest convenience.
- A media member must respect the professional rights of their colleagues and carry out their activities according to the rules of fair competition. A media member must not undermine their colleagues' interests.
- Media members or outlets must not engage in unethical competition to increase commercial income and must not resort to illegal means incompatible with ethical journalism.
- Initiatives that undermine the commercial reputation of other media outlets and unfair competition by extreme price reduction do not comply with journalism ethics.
- A media member must refrain from deliberately and explicitly causing professional harm to a colleague for the sake of competition, and must not act in a way that would hinder the publication of a colleague.







# 02

## News Source



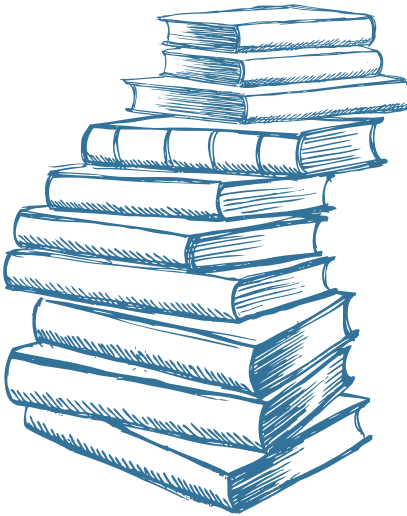




## NEWS SOURCE



### Impartiality, Accuracy and Fairness



- The principle that the news must be based on a source is essential.
- A member of the media must ensure that the information used is accurate, impartial, and fair, and the source of information is reliable.
- No justification exists for the dissemination of unverified or inaccurate information.



## Permission for Interviewing, Recording, and Visuals

- Members of the media must not obtain news and images by intimidation or harassment.
- Members of the media must acknowledge and respect the right of private and legal persons to withhold information and decline to respond to questions without prejudice to their right to information.
- Individuals' private properties must not be filmed without their consent.
- The author's or their inheritors' consent must be obtained before publishing private letters.
- It is ideal to receive the interviewees' approval for the final version of the interview. However, in the event that approval cannot be obtained due to time constraints, the interviewee must be notified in advance of the interview's publication.
- The interviewee must be informed about the circumstances and context in which their statements will be used, such as whether or not they will be published directly or used as a source.
- Violation of the honour and dignity of the bystander, whose images were incidentally obtained, must be avoided when utilising street images.



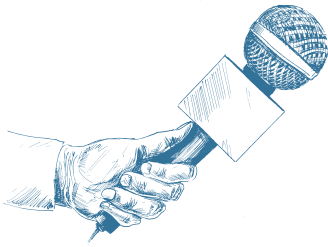


## Transparency

- Media members have the right to professional confidentiality. Nevertheless, they are obligated to guarantee the reliability of the information source.
- A media member must always disclose their identity and profession when collecting information.
- Members of the media must disclose the unverified information and photomontages in their work



## Competent Persons as Source of Information



- The information obtained from a person in distress, in a state of shock, or someone interacting with a member of the media for the first time must be given due consideration by media members.
- A member of the media must not use audio or video recording if the person conveying the information has any objections, is under stress or in a state of shock, or has a physical disability.



## Children, Youth, and Vulnerable Persons as Source of Information

- Minors, youth, and individuals who are not at their full mental or physical capacity or are in a highly emotional state must not be exploited in order to obtain information.
- Children must not be interviewed, photographed, or filmed without the presence of their guardian or parents or the consent of their parents, irrespective of the existence of any factors that may or may not influence a child's personality or behaviour.
- Students must not be approached or photographed at school without the permission of the school administration.
- Children should not be asked questions on complex issues that they cannot answer due to their age.





## Pre-Publication Verification

- The media member is responsible for verifying information obtained from sources.
- A member of the media must fulfil an interviewee's request to check the accuracy of any private information they provided before publishing the interview.
- An editor must verify the accuracy of accusations from various sources before publicising a news item or comment accusing a person.





## Research and Statistics



- The accuracy of the news report must be checked by using all sources and with the utmost care to eliminate any potential errors.
- The facts motivating the source of the news must be examined.
- Members of the media have the right to access any source of information on matters of public concern. If their request to access such information is denied without a valid reason, they reserve the right to notify the public.
- Statistical data must be used within its scope and without distorting its findings.
- The news report must cite the source of the statistical data.



## Confidentiality



- A member of the media must keep confidential news sources as a professional secret.
- No one can force a member of the media to disclose the sources of news.
- A media member must comply with an interviewee's request for their statements not to publicly disclosed.
- This should also hold true for background interviews and briefings with agreed-upon confidentiality.
- Media broadcasters must preserve confidential public information and sources with utmost sensitivity.
- Members of the media cannot use significant confidential information obtained in the exercise of their professional duties to gain personal benefit.



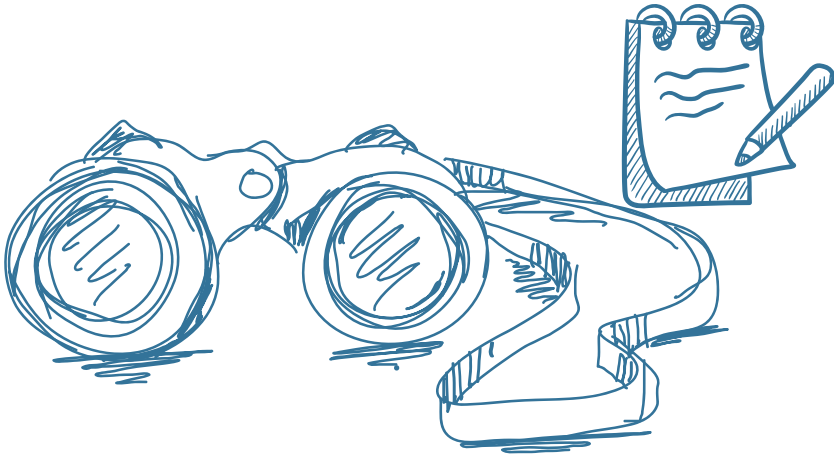
## Plagiarism

- Publicising another journalist's news without citing a source constitutes the offence of plagiarism.
- When using a colleague's work in any manner, a member of the media must consult the author or the owner of the work.
- If a member of the media claims another person's work, in part or as a whole as their own, without citing the original author or the source of the quotation, their professional reputation will be tarnished.
- If an additional source is used in the publication, even if only in part, the source must be cited.





## Illegitimately Acquired Sources

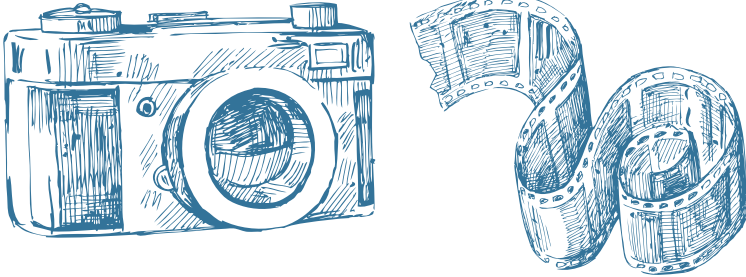


- In journalism, illegitimate methods must not be used to obtain information, photographs, and documents.
- Information and photographs must not be obtained through harassment or stalking.
- A media member must not violate the privacy of the person who is the subject of the news to obtain information, audio, and video.
- Private conversations must not be intercepted to obtain sources, and the images, documents, and information obtained in this manner cannot be published.
- Members of the media must not obtain or attempt to obtain information or photographs through false statements or deception.



## Using Information to Obtain Personal Benefits

- Before such material is made public, a member of the media must not use the information obtained in the course of their duties to obtain personal benefits.
- Media members must not use the confidential information obtained through their profession for the benefit of their relatives either.

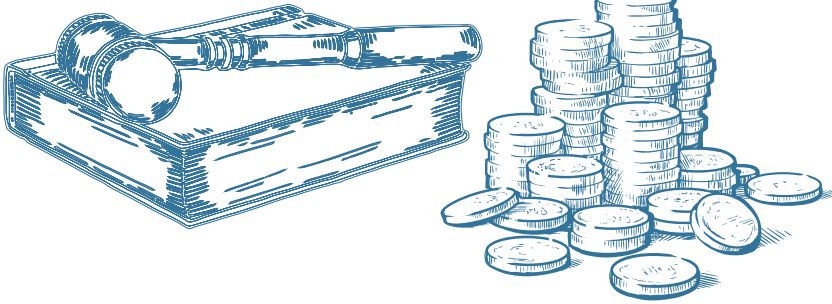


## Currency of Source and Re-enactment

- The currency of the published photograph or image must be explicitly stated.
- The archival nature of the images used must be clearly indicated.
- In re-enactment, this situation should be stated in a way that the audience will understand it.
- Re-enactment must not be misleading.
- In live broadcasts, the term “live” must be explicitly indicated and verbally conveyed.



## Royalties



- For a member of the media, copyright protection is a fundamental moral responsibility.
- The explicit or tacit appropriation of ideas and works, in whole or in part, constitutes an unacceptable breach of responsibility.
- In urgent cases where material is to be taken from other publications without the copyright holder's immediate permission, such material must be used with reasonable brevity and limited citations, and the source must be properly referenced.
- In using or reproducing any substantial part of copyrighted material, special permission should be obtained if the material specifies that such permission is required from the copyright holder.



## Publication Date

- The timeframe set for the publication date must be respected.
- A member of the media must adhere to the source's requirements regarding the publication date of information or documents, excluding those they have directly obtained.



## Use of Language

- In publications, utmost attention must be paid to the compliance of the lexical rules.
- Attention should be paid to the language employed, avoiding vulgar and slang expressions.





# 03

## Presentation of the News







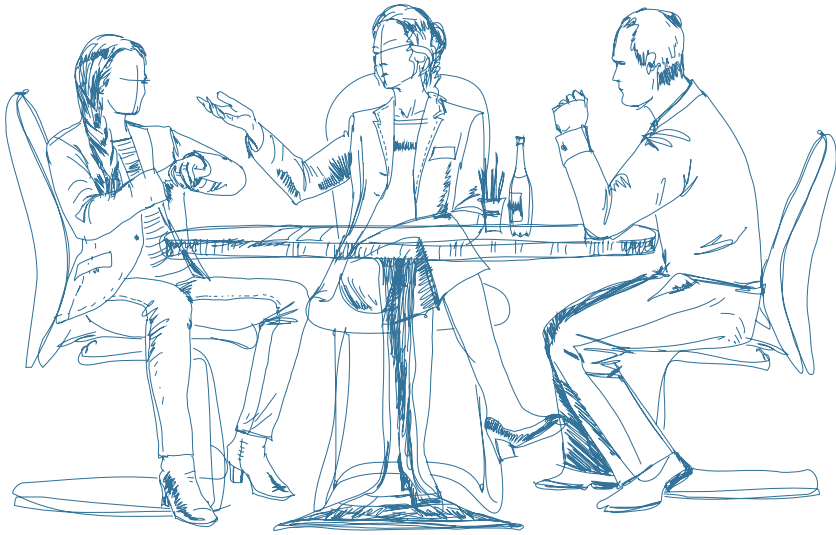
## PRESENTATION OF THE NEWS

### *Presentation of the News in Relation to Interference with Individuals' Right to Privacy and Civil Rights*



### Limits to Freedom of Expression

- Where freedom of expression conflicts with other fundamental rights, it falls upon the editor to determine which right takes precedence.
- In the exercise freedom of expression, individuals' legitimate expectations regarding their privacy must be respected.
- Members of the media must respect the honour and dignity of the individuals they report on.
- Derogatory remarks or comments regarding diseases or physical ailments affecting the person, as well as race, nationality, social group, or gender, must not be included in news reports.
- Members of the media are responsible for abstaining from making derogatory statements that may cause moral or physical injury.



- If the name of the individual is not to be published, the media member must not provide details such as photographs, occupation, status, age, nationality, gender, etc. that could lead to the identification of the individual in question.



## Judiciary News

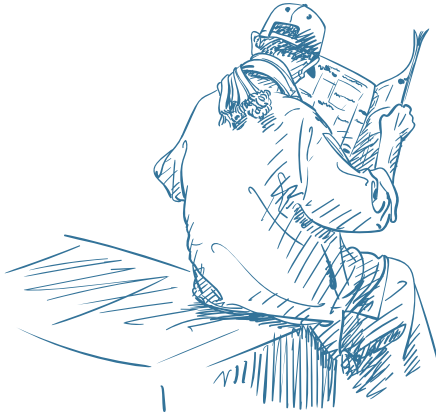
- Members of the media should always respect the principle of presumption of innocence in reporting.
- It is just and proper that the identities of suspects are revealed only after formal charges have been brought against them.
- There should be no initial evaluation of violations, and no bias should be introduced. No speculation should be made on the decision of a court or authority.
- Members of the media must respect the right to a fair trial.
- It is forbidden to declare a suspect guilty before a final judicial decision. The names or photographs of relatives or other individuals who are not involved in a crime should not be included in news reports.

- If a member of the media has previously reported on an individual against whom accusations have been made, an investigation or prosecution is underway, or a lawsuit has been filed, they should also publicise the acquittal of that individual or the dismissal of the charges against them. They should also make reference to all news and previously published articles on the matter.
- Under no circumstances should a member of the press disclose the identity of perpetrators or victims under the age of 18.
- It is not right to blame individuals for their past.
- During the preliminary investigation, reporting that may compromise the investigation should be avoided. Members of the media should not take sides in the judicial process.
- When reporting on the judiciary, crime and criminals should not be praised; criminals should not be heroised or glorified.
- Convicted persons should not be treated as guilty after serving their sentences, and their personal rights and human dignity should be safeguarded in media reporting.



## Victim News

- Victim interviews and photographs should be handled with the before using.



- Members of the media must report with careful consideration of cases that may negatively affect victims, survivors, and their relatives. If the relatives are not informed about the incident, the identities of these individuals must definitely be kept confidential.



## Minor Victims

- A press report on a sexual crime against a minor must not reveal the minor's identity.
- News coverage of minors should be meticulously handled by media members. In cases of homicide involving children as victims, defendants, or perpetrators, especially in instances of sexual harassment that could provoke significant public outrage, it is essential to avoid revealing their identities.
- News regarding children's safety and future must be prepared with caution.
- It is prohibited to disclose the identities of children who have been sexually abused and to publish their photographs.



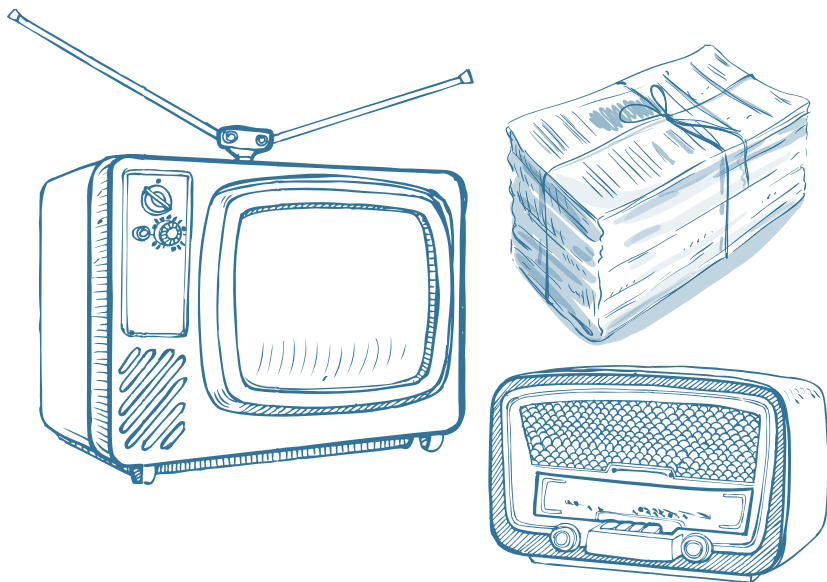
## News on Sexual Inviolability

- News on sexual abuse such as harassment and rape must keep the victim's identity confidential.
- Expressions hinting at the identity of the victim must be avoided.
- News should not include details that could harm the victim.

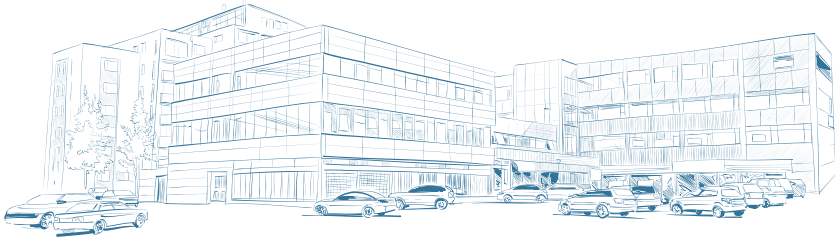


## Suicide News

- Moderation must be exercised in the reporting of names and events in suicide news, and images of the case must not be published.
- The broadcast time of suicide news should be carefully monitored, and news with this content must not be aired during safe harbour hours.
- In presenting news on suicide and suicide attempts, the feelings of relatives and issues related to the individual's private life must be taken into consideration.
- Suicide news should not mention the method of suicide and should report the event with the simplest and most basic information possible, without providing any details.
- Suicide must by no means be glorified or portrayed as a brave act.
- Suicide news should not be featured on the front pages of newspapers, in the headlines of websites, or broadcast on television screens as "breaking news."



- The media organisations should approach the issue similarly on their social media channels.
- Suicide must not be portrayed as a means of solving people's problems; headlines focusing on the notions of suicide and solution must be avoided, and attention must be paid to the journalistic language in this context.
- Suicide incidents must not be glamorised with stories of mystery or romance, and attention should be paid to the risk of suicide being perceived as a popular form of behaviour.
- The portrayal of suicide in a manner that encourages it, so conferring status, fame, reputation, honour, face, etc. to the person who commits suicide, must be avoided.
- A detailed description of the suicide method must be avoided, and similar suicide methods previously utilised in our country or in the world must not be presented in a way that could lead to imitative or copycat incidents.



## Health Status News

- Publications that involve individuals in hospitals and health care institutions must adhere to confidentiality restrictions.
- Physical and mental illnesses and disorders reside are a matter of an individual's privacy. Members of the media must avoid disclosing the names and images of the individual and their family, upholding their confidentiality.

### *Presentation of the News on the Basis of Public Safety and Public Interest*



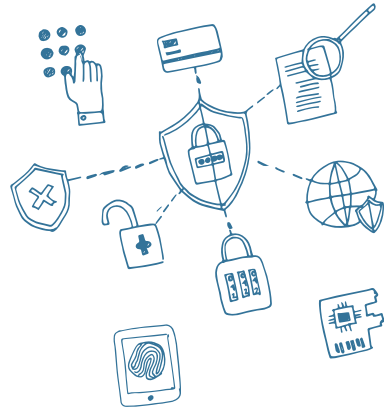
## Prioritization of Public Interest

- Despite the challenges faced by members of the media in their profession, they are obligated to investigate and disseminate news of public interest while ensuring the accuracy of the information within the relevant documents.



## State Secret

- Compliance with legal regulations on keeping state secrets is required.
- Restrictions on the reporting and dissemination of information must be adhered to.



## Terror News

- When violence erupts, the role of obtaining information from state authorities is crucial. To prevent rumour, speculation, disinformation, and unnecessary panic, a consistent flow of information from these sources should be ensured. In such circumstances, the media and the state must work in close collaboration and harmony, with no divergence of interests.
- Broadcasting that encourages criminal conduct or undesired behavior should be avoided.
- The demands of terrorists should be communicated through the discourse of members of the press rather than directly by the terrorists themselves.
- Kidnapping and abduction incidents must not be broadcast live unless strictly required.
- Members of the media should refrain from contacting the aggressor even if they are privy to where the hostages are being held; and assist public officials and relevant professionals in this endeavour instead.

- Members of the media and security forces should notify each other on authorised names at the onset of an incident to facilitate liaison when necessary.
- Any act of terrorism must be reported in a manner that maintains balance and does not overshadow other news of the day.
- No news report should praise or encourage terrorism, depict terrorist organisations as formidable or justified, or convey the menacing and intimidating attributes of terrorist organisations. News content must not depict acts of terrorism, their perpetrators, or victims in a manner that serves the objectives of terrorism.
- The realities of war must not be concealed, and yet, human dignity must be respected.
- Striking images depicting war and atrocities should be published solely for justifiable editorial purposes, without undue emphasis.
- Acts of terrorism must be reported with accuracy, thoroughness, and a sense of editorial responsibility.
- Acts of terrorism should be reported cautiously to avoid inciting public fear and outrage.
- Care should be taken to avoid depicting individuals or organisations in a manner that may render them a target for a terrorist attack.





- Images of blood, severed limbs, wounds, and corpses must not be presented on the screen.
- Sound and visual effects should not be utilised to further aggravate the nature of images.
- The identities of those who have been injured or murdered should not be disclosed without verification.
- Covering crisis situations, such as hostage-taking, piracy, kidnappings, and sieges, requires utmost caution to prevent endangering the lives of the victims. Broadcasting should not be conducted in a way that exposes the operation of security forces, and press activities should be conducted with the methods and within the area designated by the security forces.



## Crisis-Disaster News

- In the event of accidents and disasters, members of the media should prioritise rescue operations for victims and individuals in peril and acknowledge that the importance of human life surpasses the public's right to information. The right of the public to receive news does not justify the unlawful activities of members of the media to obtain news material.
- The rescue of the injured and victims is prioritised over the public's right to information in the event of accidents and disasters.
- Sensitivity and common sense should always prevail in the interactions with survivors of accidents and disasters.
- Members of the media should refrain from harassing those impacted by a crisis or disaster and the vulnerabilities or lack of media awareness of individuals should not be abused.
- Emotional references to the past and colourful and gruesome details should be avoided.





## Economy News



- Members of the media should never exploit the economic and financial information they acquire for their own gain.
- The stock market should not be disrupted by members of the media who disseminate news and events for their own gain.
- Members of the media should not publish articles or news regarding activities that will generate financial gains, nor should they engage in the sale or purchase of stocks that they may have an interest in due to their profession.
- News or information that has not been published in accordance with the economic conditions of the state, municipalities, institutions, corporations, or private persons should not be utilised by members of the media for their own or another individual's benefit.



## Presentation of Violence

- Violence and brutality should not be transformed into events that elicit excitement or fear in society.
- Members of the media should refrain from publishing images and photographs of individuals exposed to shocking or undignifying incidents, as well as going into details of acts of violence and brutality unless it is for the public interest.
- Members of the media should refrain from publishing articles that would glorify or exalt those who resort to violence in the eyes of society.
- Members of the media should not support war, violence, and aggression as purported solutions to international issues and should refrain from contributing to any form of intolerance, be it political, civil, racial, national, or religious. Other states and nations, their democratic traditions, state institutions, cultures, -and moral values must also be treated with the uttermost respect.





- Members of the media should refrain from using expressions that incite violence and are harmful to moral values.
- Images to be published at the outset of acts of violence should be selected with particular care.
- Images of individuals subjected to torture, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment must definitely not be featured in broadcast .
- Moments of death should not be broadcast in a manner that could lead to the exploitation of emotions and set the ground for fear and similar sentiments.
- In broadcasting services, violence should not be the centrepiece of the programme and should not be conveyed to the audience through frequent and extended sequences.
- Violent images should not be projected on screen during children's prime time.
- Violent images that may be deemed overwhelming in the news should be displayed using blur and pixelation techniques.
- Violent images in broadcasts should not encourage the commission of a crime. Violent incidents should not be described in such detail that they could lead to crimes.



## Obscenity

- Broadcasting should not include obscene, vulgar, or humiliating language that could disturb society.
- Media members should not present material designed to promote sadism, violence or obscenity.
- Broadcasting should not feature sounds or images intended to evoke sexual impulses without a sense of shame.
- Media members should care to avoid elements challenging the sense of shame in society or abuse their sexual desires.



## Substance-Tobacco Addiction

- In broadcasting, the risk of addiction should be conveyed with an awareness that it pertains to all segments of society and should not be portrayed as a problem peculiar to a certain economic, educational, or sociocultural group.
- The false and temporary feeling of euphoria addiction instills in the individual should not be emphasised.
- Attributes normalising tobacco and substance abuse should be avoided.
- Addicts should not be denigrated or ostracised.

- Generalisations aimed at specific individuals and institutions should be avoided.
- Unnecessary information leading to inappropriate behaviour should not be provided.
- Messages on how young people can confront and resist negative attitudes, expectations, and peer pressure should be addressed.
- The treatment process should be explained accurately.
- Media communications should be carefully developed to avoid conveying encouraging and intriguing implicit messages.
- The portrayal of addiction as a part of popular culture should be avoided.
- Addictive substances should not be glamourised or portrayed as innocuous.
- The market value of addictive substances should not be discussed.
- Drug enforcement techniques should not be exposed.
- The lifestyles of drug traffickers should not be glamourised.
- The sensational and tabloid aspects of news on addiction should be not be mentioned as they downplay the gravity of the problem and prevent a sensitive approach to the issue.
- Success stories of people who have recovered from addiction should be featured.



## Vulnerable Groups

- News reporting by media members should not lead to the abuse of children, the weak, and people with disabilities, or encourage or incite violence.
- News reporting by media members should not contribute to gender inequality, and broadcasting channels should avoid producing programme content that promotes the oppression and exploitation of women.
- Media members should not associate certain jobs with a single gender and should avoid a sexist approach.
- Media members should refrain from producing content that objectifies and commodifies the human body.
- Women and members of disadvantaged groups should not be portrayed as desperate victims.
- Any content that has a potentially adverse effect on the physical, mental or moral development of children and youth should not be broadcast.





## Officials

- Tremendous caution should be exercised when releasing the names or hints that could lead to the identification of officials, members of judiciary, or police officers.
- News reports should not include the names or images of judges and prosecutors in order not to impair the course of the case or the investigation.
- State officials have the right to keep their personal lives private as long as they do not affect their official duties, and they cannot be deprived of their right to privacy solely because of their duties.



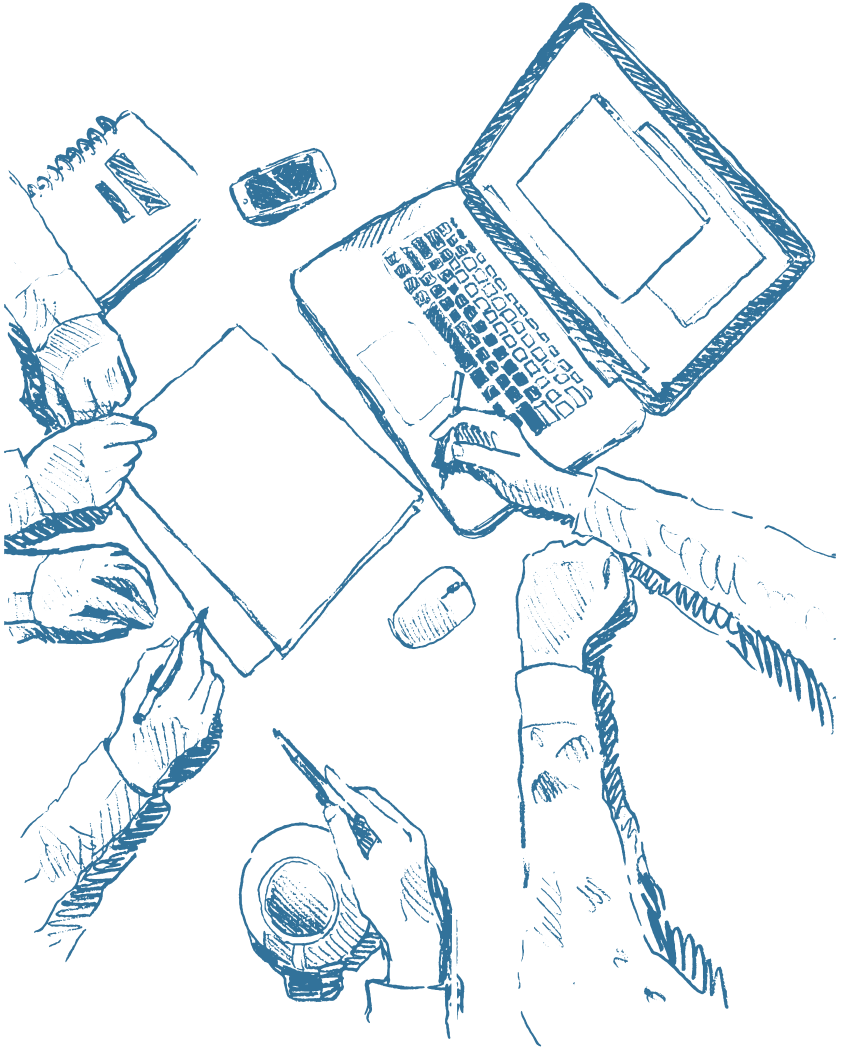
## Refugees

- Broadcasts should not include details regarding refugees' identities, escape routes, and methods that could endanger their families and friends who remain behind.



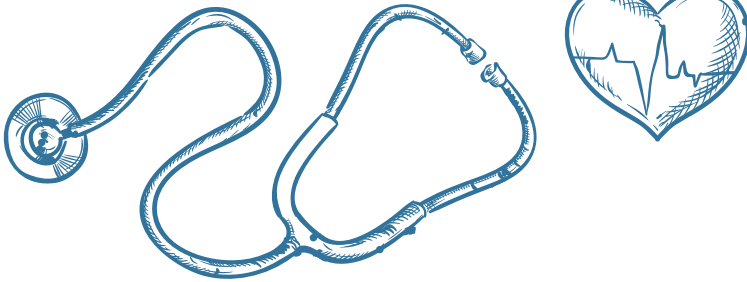
## Discrimination and Incitement

- Race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, geography, disability, physical appearance and social status should never be personalised.
- In the reporting of crime, the fact that a suspect or offender belongs to a particular religious, ethnic, or minority group should only be mentioned if it is necessary to understand the events reported.
- In their reporting, media members should safeguard democratic values, avoid expressions containing violence and hatred, and oppose all forms of discrimination based on culture, gender and religion.
- Media members should uphold national and social values.
- Media members should uphold the dignity and reputation of individuals who are in the spotlight because of their profession. They should not make insinuations or derogatory remarks about a person's race, nationality, skin colour, religion, social origin, physical disability, or illness. This kind of information should only be released if it is required to better understand the subject matter or directly related to the news content.
- Media members should by no means use inappropriate expressions that could be harmful to the mental and physical health of individuals.
- Media members should refrain from creating content that incites social outrage or social hatred.
- Discriminatory and accusatory statements that are unfair to any community that are likely to incite social hatred and mistrust should be avoided.





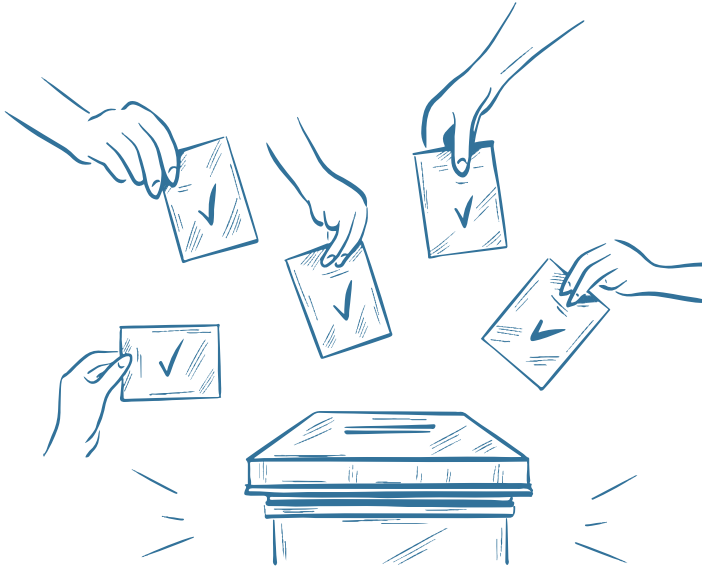
## Health News



- In broadcasting medical subjects, caution should be exercised to prevent sensationalism, which may instill unwarranted fear or false hope, and early findings from research should not be presented as “definitive”.
- Information not verified by eminent scientific sources should not be disseminated.
- The names of commercial medicines and products shouldn’t be presented in a way that could increase their consumption.
- The trade names of pharmaceutical items that have been recalled or withdrawn due to their adverse effects on human health should be disclosed.
- Medical professionals should be consulted when recommending medication. It is essential to ensure that the medical professional in question has no vested interest in the pharmaceutical company they are recommending.
- Media members conducting research, gathering information and visuals in hospitals and medical centres must present their identity and receive permission from authorities for entering restricted areas.
- Unless public interest or patient rights are at stake, audio and video should not be captured in hospitals or similar facilities without the permission of the authorised person.



## Election Campaigns



- Broadcasts during the election should be made in accordance with the Supreme Election Council's decisions.
- News coverage on election campaigns should also feature opinions with which the media organisation disagrees in order to ensure fair broadcasting that safeguards the freedom of information for the public and fosters equal opportunities among political parties.
- The principle of reporting even those that are contrary to one's own opinions applies to the publication of advertisements and announcements related to elections to ensure balanced, impartial, and free journalism.
- Since public opinion polls influence voter preferences during election periods, due diligence should be exercised regarding the reliability of the poll results while reporting them.



## Advertisements

- Advertisements should be presented in a manner that prevents them from being misinterpreted as facts and resulting in misunderstandings.
- Materials bearing hidden advertisements cannot be used.
- Advertisements and announcements whose content is illegal, inappropriate, and does not comply with media ethics cannot be released.
- The circulation of advertisements that harbour unfair competition and discrimination is unacceptable.

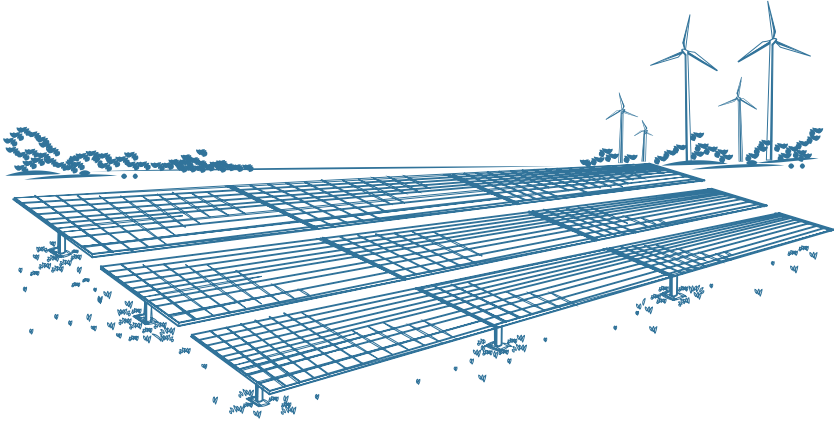


## Publication of Public Opinion Surveys

- It is advisable to disclose the methodology of the surveys (including the number of respondents, the date of the polls, and the name of the person who proposed the poll) when reporting on public opinion surveys.
- Public opinion surveys should include detailed information regarding the location, date, sample, and purpose of the survey, as well as the person conducting it.
- When publishing the results of surveys conducted via news, websites or SMS, it is necessary to specify the method used to obtain these results



## Environmental Protection



- Media members should operate and maintain their broadcasting equipment in accordance with the etiquette rules and the circumstances, ensuring that the individuals in their vicinity are not disturbed.
- In broadcasting, it is imperative to refrain from engaging in actions that might harm animals, the environment, and nature.
- The content of broadcasts should be based on elements that contribute to environmental protection within the scope of sustainable development principles.





# 04

## Right to Correction and Reply







## **RIGHT TO CORRECTION and REPLY**

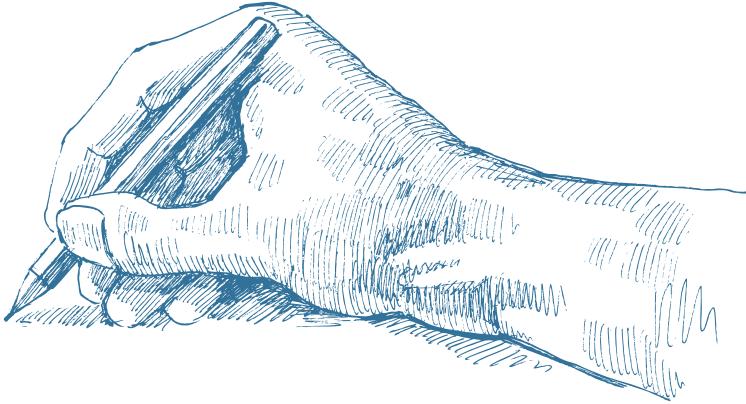


### **Correction**

- Media members are obliged to fulfil all the liabilities of their position and professional conduct and correct any information that has proven to be inaccurate as soon as possible.
- The correction should be implemented in a manner that is readily apparent to the reader or audience.
- The correction must be published in the same format and font size and on the same pages and columns as the news article that is the subject of the correction.
- In the event that the article is published in multiple spots, the correction and reply should be included in all editions in which the work is published.
- A retraction and apology should be issued as soon as it is determined that a material inaccuracy, misleading statement or altered report has been published.



## Readers' Letters



- Periodicals should publish readers' letters in order to encourage readers to express their own opinions and to contribute to the formation of public opinion.
- If readers' letters possess the necessary structure and content to articulate an opinion in a suitable language and are believed to have the potential to influence public opinion, they should be published. In case of any doubt, the editor is obligated to ask the author's opinion.
- Readers' letters should be published together with the sender's name.
- The sender's initials may be published only in exceptional circumstances, as long as they are in accordance with editorial regulations.
- The legal constraints applicable to criminal offences also apply to the publication of readers' letters.
- The publication of readers' letters that contain misleading content is incompatible with the principles of journalism. Editors are also responsible for the design of the column for readers' letters.

- The editor is not obligated to publish every letter received on a controversial issue when they make their column available for readers' letters. However, they should reflect a variety of opinions in a fair and balanced manner.
- The editor has the right to interrupt discussions that are unnecessarily prolonged between the parties.



## Right to Reply



- Freedom of the press includes the right of citizens to be informed on all matters. Even if the editor considers the content of the news and comments to be accurate, he or she should not prevent the exercise of the right to reply, and the decision regarding the issue should be at the reader's discretion.
- Since the person who has passed away does not have the opportunity to exercise the right of correction and reply, contents that contain disparaging remarks about a deceased person should not be published unless they are in the public interest.

- Media members are obliged to inform the public if the person who is the subject of the news cannot be found or does not want to respond.
- Media members should assist the people who are the subject of the news in presenting their perspectives on the story. Media members should not allow the news content to be distorted from the truth, present events from a single perspective or present only a specific part of the facts.
- Media members should carefully determine the timing for exercising the right of reply and ensure that all other arrangements, including the timing, are organised in a manner that enables the right of reply to be exercised in the most effective manner.





# 05

## Use of Social Media by Journalists







## USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY JOURNALISTS



### Responsibility

- Media members should publish their content in accordance with professional ethics and standards while also being aware that their content is newsworthy.
- In order to maintain social harmony, it is imperative that social media users, particularly media members with corporate identities, exercise due diligence when posting.
- Media members and social media users are responsible for what they share and post online.





## User Profile Account

- It is best to refrain from using anonymous accounts that are created to conceal one's identity and exempt oneself from responsibility for their posts. Instead, one should register on social media platforms with a genuine identity that can be legally held accountable and accurately represents the individual's true identity.
- Media members should use their real name in their user profile in order to enhance their credibility.
- Usernames that are consistent with other accounts on all social media platforms should be preferred.



## Copyright

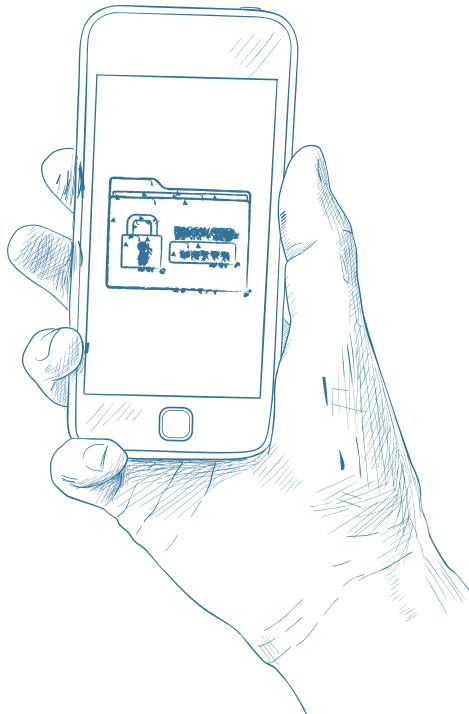


- When selecting images, it is crucial to consider the copyright issue, choose images that are suitable for the subject, and share images according to the nature of the medium to be used.
- The source of the information must be cited in the event of a quotation.



## Credibility of Other Accounts

- It is crucial to remember that social media is a perception management tool, and unknown accounts in the virtual environment should be approached with caution.
- False names and fake accounts are not to be trusted, and their -visibility should not be amplified.
- It's important to recognise that bot accounts typically aim to fabricate a false narrative, fulfil business objectives, and offer -amusement.
- We need to proceed with caution, recognising that there could be profiles in the digital realm that provoke and escalate disputes, disseminate content to alter viewpoints, and disturb -the balance of online interactions.





## Use of Social Media in Crises

- With the awareness that disinformation on social media increases, particularly during times of crisis, and that the virtual environment is used very effectively for provocation, it is critical to be aware of disinformation in situations such as a terrorist act, natural disaster, or social event.
- When disseminating content sourced from others, it is imperative to verify its accuracy and remain vigilant against disinformation campaigns.
- It is important to remember that all content on social media is a claim and should be assessed in this context. Unconfirmed information should not be disseminated. It is essential to adhere to statements from authorised individuals, official institutions, and organisations to ensure information accuracy, thereby preventing the propagation of disinformation and lies.
- During sensitive periods, it is essential to refrain from disseminating content that may induce fear and anxiety within society while exercising common sense throughout this -process.

- In crisis situations, it is of great importance for relevant institutions to use their social media accounts effectively and to trust the authorities of the official state institutions and -organisations.
- In addition to edited visuals and documents designed to misinform users on social media, it is essential to exercise caution regarding rumours, hearsay, voice recordings, and random posts. Information acquired from social media should be verified against sources from official institutions and organisations.
- Prior to disseminating a news item, it is essential to evaluate its significance and potential impact, followed by an appropriate review process.
- In crisis situations, it is imperative to refrain from sharing photographs of individuals affected by an event, including those who have died or been injured. Sensitivity is essential to uphold the rights of these individuals and to prevent social outrage.





## Language and Discourse



- An integrative, respectful language that is devoid of hate speech and insults should be used in social media posts.
- The right to privacy, which is the basis of human dignity and one of the most important universal values, should not be violated.
- Violent and threatening content should not be shared or expressed.
- Actions such as revelation, harassing, and cyberbullying must be avoided.
- In order for differences to be perceived as richness on social media, it is necessary to take individual measures and establish an environment of social peace and understanding.
- Utilising, disseminating, or enabling discriminating, harassing, distressing, racist, ethnic, religious, or physically offensive and insulting words constitutes a criminal offence.





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# ACCURATE REPORTING

## AND MEDIA ETHICS

The Presidency's Directorate of Communications created "Accurate Reporting and Media Ethics" as a guide with principles compiled and systematised within the context of global examples to help media professionals who have made accurate reporting their mission in their work.

This guide, the product of a major effort and the most comprehensive publication in the field, serves as an essential resource for media professionals and researchers in their struggle for truth. Under categories such as "Media Membership," "News Source," "Presentation of the News," "Right of Correction or Reply," and "Use of Social Media by Journalists," the guide covers principles drawn from the code of ethics recognised in the media industry globally.

We are especially interested in generating public recognition of this high-quality guide, which we have compiled in accordance with global examples and have made accessible to our media and nation.

