



the union

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The BAJ Code of Conduct

Introduction

Respect for truth and the public's right to information are fundamental principles of journalism. Journalists give a practical form to freedom of expression but with freedom comes responsibility, accountability and the expectation of integrity. These principles are enshrined in the Editor's Code (edition of January 2018) and are outlined in the BAJ code of conduct.

1. **Independent Press:** Members shall respect and adhere to the principles of a free and independent media, the individual's right to free speech and the right of the public to be informed.
2. **Honest Reporting:** Members shall report and interpret honestly and always aim for accuracy, fairness and disclosure of all essential facts.
3. **Accuracy:** Whilst aiming for accuracy, should inaccuracies be identified, especially if they are damaging, members should take all possible measures to make corrections.
4. **Fact and Comment:** Members shall distinguish between comment, conjecture and fact and make it clear when they are reporting information or opinions (as per the Editors' Code of Practice).
5. **Obtaining information:** Members shall not seek to obtain or publish material acquired by using hidden cameras or clandestine listening devices; or by intercepting private or mobile telephone calls, messages or emails; or by the unauthorised removal of documents or photographs; or by accessing digitally-held information without consent. Engaging in misrepresentation or subterfuge, including by agents or intermediaries, can generally be justified only in the public interest and then only when the material cannot be obtained by other means. Members are referred to the Editor's Code of Conduct for guidance on the determination of the public interest.

6. **Privacy:** Members shall not encroach the private life of a person, their grief or distress unless justified to do so in accordance with the guidelines of the Editor's Code of Practice regarding public interest.
7. **Sources:** Members accept that they have a moral obligation to protect confidential sources of information and material acquired in their work as journalists.
8. **Inducements:** Members shall ignore threats and refuse inducements to influence, distort or suppress information and shall not allow personal interest or any belief, commitment, payment, gift or benefit to undermine the accuracy, fairness or independence of their work.
9. **Bias:** Members shall not place unnecessary emphasis on the characteristics of a person likely to lead to discrimination, hatred, derogatory behaviour to be exhibited, or likely to cause hurt or offence to be suffered by reference to age, gender, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, creed, legal status, disability, family relationships, sexual orientation, physical or intellectual disability.
10. **Commercial endorsement:** Members shall disclose any financial or other rewards as a result of the reporting of services or products unless undertaken as part of employed work on a significant publication.
11. **Children and Vulnerable Adults:** Members will adhere to the Editor's Code when seeking to interview this group, in particular in connection with suicide, grief, hospital visits, children in sex cases and reporting of criminal cases.
12. **Originality:** Members shall be responsible for keeping up to date with the latest copyright laws and respect the work of authors and creators by producing original work and refraining from infringing the intellectual property rights of others.



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