

Journalists' Guidelines for Dealing with the Police

Police and Media both have legitimate professional objectives and functions which should be respected, understood and appreciated by both parties in order to achieve a successful and mutually beneficial working relationship.

1. Journalists in official contact with police should carry professional identification while performing their duties. Usually, a press ID card including the name and photo of the journalist and the name, address, logo and stamp of the media outlet are sufficient.
2. Journalists should follow procedures established by the police if and when accessing legitimately restricted areas.
3. Journalists may be required to seek approval from police or other authorities for access to special sites (e.g. crime scenes or security installations), and may be subject to specific restrictions on behavior at these sites (e.g. no photos). To the fullest extent possible, terms of access should be determined in advance.
4. Journalists should adhere to the Codes of Conducts in force in Kosovo in the conduct of their work.
5. Journalists should take the utmost care to report truthfully and avoid publishing inaccurate, misleading or distorted material. Journalists should also avoid intentionally or knowingly publishing material that might jeopardize legitimate police actions and/or investigations.
6. Journalists have an obligation to protect confidential sources of information if subject to police questioning. Journalists, like all residents of Kosovo, have a right to engage a lawyer if they are under police interrogation.
7. Journalists have specific responsibilities in revealing the identity of crime victims. The identities of children under the age of 18, whether as victim or alleged perpetrator of a crime, should be protected until the police release the names. Victims of hate crimes, and especially victims of domestic violence or rape, should not be identified without the victim's permission. The identity of deceased crime victims should only be released after the immediate family has been informed and after formal identification has taken place.
8. Journalists who are ordered to hand over material obtained through legitimate journalistic activity may demand documented authorization from police.

If court order or warrant authorizes it, police may temporarily confiscate material, which might serve as evidence in criminal proceedings. These materials must be turned over to the Court for safekeeping or for safekeeping by other means established by the Court. In any case, such material should not be used for reporting purposes until legal opinion is obtained.



Police Guidelines for Dealing with the Media

Police and Media both have legitimate professional objectives and functions which should be respected, understood and appreciated by both parties in order to achieve a successful and mutually beneficial working relationship.

1. Police should deal with journalists knowing their rights, including: The right of freedom of expression and the right to freedom of movement, including the right to travel unhindered while fulfilling their professional duties. Journalists cannot be arrested or detained without legal reason.
2. Police cannot require journalists to register with the police in conducting their work unless special access (e.g. to a crime scene) is needed. Journalists should not enter legitimately restricted areas that are clearly marked or posted by the designated authorities.
3. Police cannot interfere with or penalize journalists for pursuing their legitimate professional activities if those activities are conducted in accordance with laws applicable in Kosovo.
4. Police cannot confiscate professional equipment or materials from journalists unless a court order or warrant authorizes it. Materials which are to be confiscated under the Criminal Code or which might serve as evidence in criminal proceedings may be temporarily confiscated and turned over to the Court for safe keeping.
5. Police may only request journalistic identification when journalists seek interviews, information or access to places or events that are open to journalists but closed to the general public. Professional identification including journalists' name and photo, and the name, address, logo and official stamp from a media outlet are sufficient to establish professional credentials.
6. Police identification should be made available to any resident of Kosovo requesting it. All local police and persons provisionally authorized to exercise policing powers should carry identification issued by their police agency.
7. Police cannot compel journalists to reveal their confidential sources of information.
8. Police should take particular care to investigate all acts, actual or threatened, of violence, intimidation or harassment directed against media personnel or involving destruction of media property.