

# JOURNALIST CODE OF ETHICS

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Respect for truth and the public's right to information are fundamental principles of journalism. Journalists search, disclose, record, question, entertain, comment and remember. They inform citizens and animate democracy. They scrutinise power, but also exercise it, and should be responsible and accountable.

MEAA MEMBERS ENGAGED IN JOURNALISM COMMIT THEMSELVES TO:

- ◆ HONESTY
- ◆ FAIRNESS
- ◆ INDEPENDENCE
- ◆ RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS



## GUIDANCE CLAUSE

Basic values often need interpretation and sometimes come into conflict. Ethical journalism requires conscientious decision-making in context. Only substantial advancement of the public interest or risk of substantial harm to people allows any standard to be overridden.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

**w: [meaa.org/meaa-media/code-of-ethics](http://meaa.org/meaa-media/code-of-ethics)**

**p: MEAA Member Central 1300 656 513**

**f [facebook.com/withmeaa](https://facebook.com/withmeaa)**

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Authorised by Erin Madeley  
Chief Executive, Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance

## Journalists will educate themselves about ethics and apply the following standards:

- 1** Report and interpret honestly, striving for accuracy, fairness and disclosure of all essential facts. Do not suppress relevant available facts, or give distorting emphasis. Do your utmost to give a fair opportunity for reply.
- 2** Do not place unnecessary emphasis on personal characteristics, including race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, age, sexual orientation, family relationships, religious belief, or physical or intellectual disability.
- 3** Aim to attribute information to its source. Where a source seeks anonymity, do not agree without first considering the source's motives and any alternative attributable source. Where confidences are accepted, respect them in all circumstances.
- 4** Do not allow personal interest, or any belief, commitment, payment, gift or benefit, to undermine your accuracy, fairness or independence.
- 5** Disclose conflicts of interest that affect, or could be seen to affect, the accuracy, fairness or independence of your journalism. Do not improperly use a journalistic position for personal gain.
- 6** Do not allow advertising or other commercial considerations to undermine accuracy, fairness or independence.
- 7** Do your utmost to ensure disclosure of any direct or indirect payment made for interviews, pictures, information or stories.
- 8** Use fair, responsible and honest means to obtain material. Identify yourself and your employer before obtaining any interview for publication or broadcast. Never exploit a person's vulnerability or ignorance of media practice.
- 9** Present pictures and sound which are true and accurate. Any manipulation likely to mislead should be disclosed.
- 10** Do not plagiarise.
- 11** Respect private grief and personal privacy. Journalists have the right to resist compulsion to intrude.
- 12** Do your utmost to achieve fair correction of errors.