

## Code of Ethics for Journalists and Reporters

### Sample 1: Australian Journalist Association CODE OF ETHICS

*Respect for truth and the public's right to information are fundamental principles of journalism. Journalists describe society to itself. They convey information, ideas and opinions, a privileged role. They search, disclose, record, question, entertain, suggest and remember. They inform citizens and animate democracy. They give a practical form to freedom of expression. Many journalists work in private enterprise, but all have these public responsibilities. They scrutinise power, but also exercise it, and should be accountable. Accountability engenders trust. Without trust, journalists do not fulfil their public responsibilities. MEAA members engaged in journalism commit themselves to*

- **Honesty**
- **Fairness**
- **Independence**
- **Respect for the rights of others**
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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.

**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.*

Source: <http://www.australian-news.com.au/codethics.htm>

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**Sample 2: Singapore National Union of Journalists' Code of Professional Conduct**

1. Every member shall maintain good quality of workmanship and high standard of conduct.
2. No member shall do anything that will bring discredit on himself/herself, his/her union, his/her newspaper or other news media or his/her profession.
3. Every member shall defend the principles of freedom in the honest collection and dissemination of news and the right of fair comment and criticism.
4. Every member shall realise his/her personal responsibility for everything he/she prepares for his/her newspaper or other news media.
5. Every member shall report and interpret the news with scrupulous honesty.
6. Every member shall use only honest methods to obtain news, pictures and documents.
7. No member shall accept any form of bribe whether for publication or suppression nor permit personal interest to influence his/her sense of justice.
8. Every member shall respect all necessary confidence regarding sources of information and private documents.
9. Every member shall keep in mind the dangers in the laws of libel, contempt of court and copyright.
10. Every member shall observe at all times the fraternity of their profession and shall never take unfair advantage of a fellow member.

The above excerpt was taken from Code of Ethics of Various Journalists' Unions in Asia

Source: <http://www.medialaw.com.sg/ethics/jcode.htm>