

# Press Regulation, Editorial Standards and Protecting the Public

A presentation for  
**The Social Workers Union**

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# What is IPSO?

IPSO (the Independent Press Standards Organisation) is the independent regulator of most of the UK's newspapers and magazines.

With legally enforceable contracts, we regulate 90+ publishers who publish 1,500+ print titles and 1,100 + websites.

We work to uphold high standards of journalism and to hold the press to account. Supporting the public and protecting individual rights is essential to our work.



# ipso...

ipso.  
independent  
press standards  
organisation

UPHOLDS. EDITORIAL STANDARDS

ADVISES. THE PUBLIC ON THE RULES THE PRESS MUST FOLLOW

RUNS. A 24-HOUR ANTI-HARASSMENT LINE

PROVIDES. GUIDANCE FOR EDITORS AND JOURNALISTS

INVESTIGATES. AND MEDIATES COMPLAINTS



# Editors' Code of Practice

Clause 1

**Accuracy**

Clause 5

**Reporting suicide \***

Clause 9

**Reporting of crime \***

Clause 13

**Financial journalism**

Clause 2

**Privacy \***

Clause 6

**Children \***

Clause 10

**Clandestine devices  
and subterfuge \***

Clause 14

**Confidential sources**

Clause 3

**Harassment \***

Clause 7

**Children in sex cases \***

Clause 12

**Discrimination**

Clause 15

**Witness payments in  
criminal trials**

Clause 4

**Intrusion into grief  
or shock**

Clause 8

**Hospitals**

Clause 11

**Victims of  
sexual assault**

Clause 16

**Payments to criminals**

There may be exceptions to the clauses marked \* where they can be demonstrated to be in the public interest.

# Accuracy (Clause 1)

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- The press must take care not to publish inaccurate, misleading or distorted information or images, including headlines not supported by the text.
- A significant inaccuracy, misleading statement or distortion must be corrected, promptly and with due prominence, and — where appropriate — an apology published.



# Privacy (Clause 2)\*

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- Everyone is entitled to respect for their private and family life, home, physical and mental health, and correspondence, including digital communications.
- Editors will be expected to justify intrusions into any individual's private life without consent.
- Account will be taken of the complainant's own public disclosures of information and the extent to which the material complained of is in the public domain.



# Harassment (Clause 3)\*

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- Journalists must not engage in intimidation, harassment or persistent pursuit.
- Journalists must not persist in questioning, telephoning, pursuing or photographing individuals once asked to desist; nor remain on property when asked to leave and must not follow them.
- If requested, Journalists must identify themselves and whom they represent.



# Intrusion into grief or shock (Clause 4)



- In cases involving personal grief or shock, enquiries and approaches must be made with sympathy and discretion and publication handled sensitively.
- These provisions should not restrict the right to report legal proceedings.

**See also: Clause 5 and reporting on suicide**



# Children (Clause 6)\*

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- All pupils should be free to complete their time at school without unnecessary intrusion.
- Children under 16 must not be interviewed or photographed on issues involving their own or another child's welfare unless a custodial parent or similarly responsible adult consents.
- Editors must not use the fame, notoriety or position of a parent or guardian as sole justification for publishing details of a child's private life.

**See also: Clause 7 and the reporting of children in sex cases**



# Discrimination (Clause 12)

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- The press must avoid prejudicial or pejorative reference to an individual's race, colour, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or to any physical or mental illness or disability.
- Details of an individual's race, colour, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental illness or disability must be avoided unless genuinely relevant to the story.



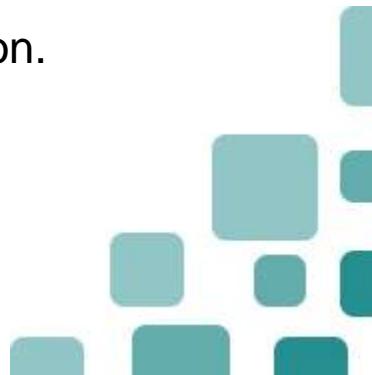
# The Public Interest (\*)

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- Detecting or exposing crime, or the threat of crime, or serious impropriety.
- Protecting public health or safety.
- Protecting the public from being misled by an action or statement of an individual or organisation.
- Disclosing a person or organisation's failure or likely failure to comply with any obligation to which they are subject.
- Disclosing a miscarriage of justice.
- Raising or contributing to a matter of public debate.

Editors invoking the public interest will need to demonstrate they considered this **BEFORE** publication.



# IPSO Guidance

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IPSO's Standards Team monitors complaints to identify issues and trends in editorial standards.

This often leads to new guidance and resources for reporting on important topics.

Guidance is produced through an extensive research and consultation process with expert stakeholders.

Court reporting  
Deaths and inquests  
Due prominence  
Major incidents  
Religion  
Sex and gender identity  
Sexual offences  
Social media  
Suicide



# Court reporting and press standards



## Journalists can

- Report on a death.
- Attend court proceedings and report anything that has been said.
- Publish details of anyone involved in a court case (including name, age and address).
- Publish photos of those involved in a court case.

## Journalists should not

- Identify a victim of sexual assault.
- Identify a friend or relative of a criminal.
- Publish protected or restricted information.
- Disregard children's potentially vulnerable positions.

Call us on **07799 903 929** for cases requiring immediate intervention.



# Social media and press standards

## **Journalists can**

- Contact the public via social media.
- Publish information, photos and comments from social media profiles, forums or blogs.
- Publish information which is in the public domain.

## **Journalists should not**

- Publish inaccurate or unverifiable information.
- Publish information taken from private profiles.
- Publish private information – even if there are no privacy settings.
- Intrude into personal grief or shock.
- Intrude into a child's welfare.
- Name victims of sexual offences.

Call us on **0300 123 22 20** for specific advice.



# Speaking to the press

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It is an individual decision about whether to speak to the media or not. Some people chose to talk with journalists to:

- Provide information and to establish accurate reporting of a story.
- Raise awareness and campaign for important issues.
- Pay tribute to loved ones.

There is no obligation for someone to speak to the press.

- Tell the journalist clearly that they do not want to speak to them. **If journalists are asked to stop their activities, the Code says they must.**
- Pin a short note to the door.
- Changing answerphone and email automatic messages.
- Log out of social media.

**Contact us for advice!**



# Private Advisory Notices (PANs)



We can issue **Private Advisory Notices (PAN)** immediately across the industry, including broadcasters and non-regulated outlets.

- For cases requiring immediate intervention.
- To enable people in distressing circumstances to circulate a request not to be contacted.
- To communicate a concern about a potential or ongoing breach of the Code.

Although non-binding, PANs are confidential and extremely effective.

A PAN request can be made on behalf of a member of the public as long as we have:

- Confirmation of their agreement.
- Information on: **WHO WHY WHAT WHERE** and **WHEN**



# What if we think the Code has been breached?



IPSO provides a **free** complaints-handling service.

## We can investigate complaints

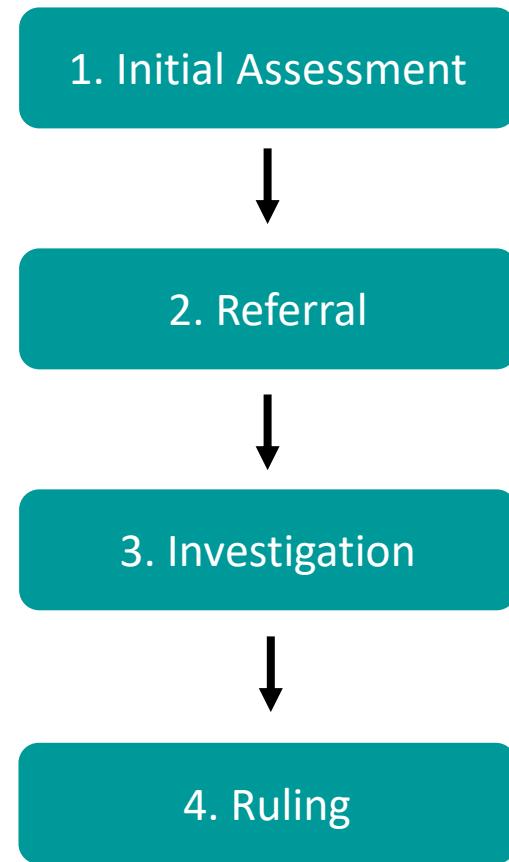
- About editorial content.
- Made under specific clauses of the Code.
- Made within 4 months of a printed article's publication
- Made within 12 months of an online article's publication.
- Made on behalf of people directly subject to the press coverage – with written consent.

## We cannot

- Make a publication take an article down.
- Make a publication provide compensation.
- Take forward complaints from people who are not directly subject to the press coverage.



# Complaints process



## Our tips for making a complaint:

- Keep notes and screenshots of any emails or correspondence with the publication.
- Send us a link or copy of the article under complaint.
- Specify the part of the Code you are complaining about.
- Remember that the complaints process is confidential between IPSO, the complainant and the publication.

**If you need any assistance with any of the complaints process, you can contact us.**

# IPSO is here to help



- We publish regular information to help people understand the rules which newspapers and magazines must follow.
- We can provide advice for engaging with the press, including on journalists' behaviour and publications.
- We can issue Private Advisory Notices for people in urgent situations.
- We provide support and mediation for complainants throughout the complaints process.
- You can ask for advice and make complaints on someone's behalf – as long as we have confirmation of consent.

**Do not hesitate to contact us!**

0300 123 22 20

[inquiries@ipso.co.uk](mailto:inquiries@ipso.co.uk)

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# Questions?

