



Oman Journalists Association

Media Code of Conduct in the Sultanate of Oman

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Oman Jovnalist Association



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Media Code of Conduct in the Sultanate of Oman

We, the journalists and media professionals in the Sultanate of Oman, triggered by our belief in the importance and crucial role of the media; and conscious of our responsibilities and duties towards the society, its institutions, members and the media profession; and assertive of our right to receive, process, publish and broadcast information without obstacles and express opinions freely in light of the provisions of the code of professional conduct, the Basic Law of the State (1996) and the public rights and duties enshrined in section three of this code; declare our commitment to practice our profession and carry out our duties in accordance with the following general principles, rights and professional duties:

[First : General Principles]

- 1- Recognize the right of society and members of the public to knowledge as an inherent right that cannot be compromised or bargained for the sake of private or individual interests.
- 2- Defend freedom of expression in the media and various publishing platforms.
- 3- Adhere to the main professional standards in publishing and broadcasting.
- 4- Protect the profession of journalism and media from exploitation for personal gain.
- 5- Preserve the confidentiality of sources of information if a promise of this sort has been made.
- 6- Promote national unity, respect religious beliefs and combat racial, sectarian or factional strife.
- 7- Consolidate the principles of the rule of law, support justice and re-

spect judicial rulings.

- 8- Avoid fueling hatred, discrimination based on age, gender, race, color, belief, sect, health or psychological status.
- 9- Respect the general interest of society, protect national security and protect State institutions.
- 10- Respect communal morality and Omani cultural heritage.
- 11- Respect universal values and cultural diversity and promote world peace.
- 12- Respect the right of privacy.
- 13- Respect the right of individuals and institutions to respond to and to correct whatever is published or disseminated in media outlets about them.

[Second : Professional Rights]

These include the right to:

- 1- Access information and news, as well as non-restricted official documents from proper sources.
- 2- Cover events, attend public meetings, conferences, seminars, parliamentary sessions and open court hearings without restrictions.
- 3- Provide physical and legal protection for the journalist and the media professional while doing their work; maintain their dignity and protect their personal safety and the safety of their instruments.
- 4- Ensure that the journalist's and the media professional's as well as their family members' physical and psychological safety and security are not compromised due to what they publish or broadcast.
- 5- Protect the right of the journalist and media professional to resort to their professional conscience, and to reject any form of coercion to make them take stances contradicting with their convictions and the ethical values of the media profession.
- 6- Ensure that journalists and media professionals are not threatened

or blackmailed to publish what contradicts with their professional conscience, and ensure that they are not insulted or assaulted due to their work.

- 7- Ensure the right of the journalist and media professional to express their opinion on the editorial policy of the institution in which they work.
- 8- Ensure that the journalist and media professional are not transferred from the institution where they work to another or to a non-journalism profession or from an editorial department to another within the same institution without their consent.
- 9- Ensure the right of the journalist and media professional to be promoted to the highest editorial positions.
- 10- Ensure the right of the journalist and media professional to receive continuous training and qualification.
- 11- Ensure that the journalist and media professional are not deprived of carrying out their work, or are prevented from writing and publishing without any logical reason.
- 12- Ensure the right of the journalist and media professional to express their opinion in the medium outlet where they work within the framework provided by the medium itself.
- 13- Protect the journalist and media professional from arbitrary dismissal from the institution in which they work due to their opinions.
- 14- Ensure the right of the journalist and media professional to earn a fair wage, get a fair reward for their efforts and an appropriate compensation in case of halting the newspaper or shutting down the broadcasting station.
- 15- Ensure the right of editors in chief of newspapers and various broadcasting channels to determine what is to be published and make editorial decisions accordingly; and ensure their right to be protected from pressure exerted by owners of such media outlets.

(Third : Professional Duties)

Media professionals shall:

- 1- Avoid confusing editorial and advertising material, make editorial advertisements clearly distinct, and avoid bringing, editing or profiting from advertisements.
- 2- Separate the work of journalism from the work of public relations, and avoid confusing their practices.
- 3- Avoid mixing news with opinions and check accuracy through documenting information.
- 4- Avoid anonymity of sources, and check attributing words and actions to known sources whenever available.
- 5- Avoid using illegal methods to extract information.
- 6- Avoid attributing journalism and media material to people other than their owners, and clearly refer to the source when quoting others.
- 7- Fulfill promises concerning non-disclosure of information source, and avoid publishing information that the source did not authorize to publish.
- 8- Ensure diversity in presenting views on events and public issues, and avoid bias.
- 9- Avoid tackling investigations or court proceedings of cases in ways that influence the course of the investigation or trial, or mislead justice; and comply with the decision of the judiciary authority to prohibit publishing in certain cases.
- 10- Not publish the names or photos of the accused or detained in connection with criminal investigation, unless a final court ruling against them is issued; and do not publish the names and photos of the ac-

cused or convicted in juvenile crimes.

- 11- Not disclose the identity of victims of sexual assault, or publish or broadcast what would help to identify them; and avoid focusing on ordinary people or filming them without their consent, whether in public or private property.
- 12- Not publish or broadcast rumors or news or information confirmed to be incorrect or damaging to the national interest.
- 13- Respect the right of people to maintain the privacy of themselves, their families, their homes, their health conditions and correspondences; and avoid exposing the private life of any person for the purpose of defamation or distorting their reputation or achieving special benefits or making unjust and unsubstantiated accusations.
- 14- Not accept money or gifts from local or foreign parties for the purpose of publishing or broadcasting specific information or for withholding the publishing or broadcasting of such information; and avoid paying sources or witnesses to obtain information from them in an unethical manner.
- 15- Observe collegial and professional responsibilities both on individual and institutional levels, guard and maintain the integrity of the profession, promote professional solidarity among journalism and media colleagues; and undertake to defend their interests, rights and to improve their professional and moral status.

Muscat on Monday 30th Oct. 2017