

The OSCE Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
Guidelines for cooperation between Police and Media

During the performance of their professional tasks and in the interest of the public, the police and the media realize cooperation and create responsible, professional and partnership relations and practices based on understanding, trust and proactive approach. Transparency of work, equal treatment of all media and journalists in the access to information and protection of rights of journalists are the basis of this cooperation. These guidelines represent the most important standards stemming from international documents and domestic legal framework and are not binding.

The police and the media shall comply with positive legal regulations.

1. The police shall respect the rights of journalists, in particular:
 - right to freedom of expression and right to freedom of movement,
 - right of journalists not to be deprived of their liberty in an illegal manner in relation to the performance of their professional duties,
 - right to print, distribute and sell publications, broadcast programs and publish content on the Internet, without sanction or interference by the police, authorities and third parties.
2. The police may not require journalists to register with them during their work, unless a special permit is required (e.g. a crime scene). Journalists must not access the places which are fenced or marked with purpose, especially if there is a risk of endangering or obstructing the police work.
3. The police may not obstruct or sanction journalists for performing professional tasks. Journalists have the right to take photographs, record, make notes, observe, conduct interviews and / or make reports in each public place, and thereby they are not required to ask for a special permission from the police and other competent authorities. This includes the right of journalists to record and photograph police officers in the exercise of their police powers.
4. The police may not seize equipment or materials from journalists unless it is the execution of a court order. Materials and equipment seized in accordance with applicable law and which may serve as evidence in court proceedings may be temporarily seized and handed over to the court for safekeeping.
5. The police must not use methods of coercion and intimidation of journalists to reveal the source of information.
6. The police may require journalists to show press credentials when requesting the access to places or events which are open to journalists but closed to the public i.e. where access is restricted. Press credentials containing a name, a photograph, as well as the basic information about the media or association of journalists, are sufficient to establish a

professional identity.

7. Journalists should be enabled to report freely on all types of public gatherings before, during and after the gatherings. Media representatives should not be required to be formally accredited to cover a public gathering, unless required by the interests of safety of journalists or participants.
8. If it is necessary to establish a cordon or protective fence during the police action, the police shall, as far as possible, provide an appropriate place for reporting. Journalists should still have the access to all places as well as the general public.
9. Police officers are obliged to identify themselves by showing official police ID card or badge at the request of a journalist or a person to whom police powers are exercised, or to disclose their name and family name or the number of police badge.
10. The police shall take all measures to establish the facts and circumstances of violence, threats, intimidation or harassment of journalists and the media, in relation to the performance of their professional tasks, or in case of destruction of medical equipment and devices.