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# Journalism ethics and standards

Journalistic ethics and standards comprise principles of ethics and good practice applicable to journalists. This subset of media ethics is known as journalism's professional code of ethics and the canons of journalism.[1] The basic codes and canons commonly appear in statements by professional journalism associations and individual print, broadcast, and online news organizations.

So while various codes may have some differences, most share common elements including the principles of truthfulness, accuracy, objectivity, impartiality, fairness, and public accountability, as these apply to the acquisition of newsworthy information and its subsequent dissemination to the public.

Like many broader ethical systems, the ethics of journalism include the principle of limitation of harm. This may involve the withholding of certain details from reports, **such** as the names of minor children, crime victims' names, or information not materially related to the news report where the release of **such** information might, for example, harm someone's reputation.

Journalism's codes of ethics are intended to ensure reliability of reported information by defining acceptable practices; and provide guidelines about circumstances to avoid that could interfere with, or appear to interfere with, the reliability of reported information. Circumstances to avoid include conflicts of interest. The guidelines assist journalists in identifying and dealing with ethical dilemmas. When **such** circumstances cannot **be** avoided, they should **be** disclosed so that recipients of reported information can judge potential bias in the reporting. The codes and canons provide journalists with a framework for self-monitoring and self-correction.

Journalism is guided by five values:

- Honesty: journalists must **be** truthful. It is unacceptable to report information known to **be** false, or report facts in a misleading way to give a wrong impression;
- Independence and objectivity: journalists should avoid topics in which they have a financial or personal interest that would provide them a particular benefit in the subject matter, as that interest may introduce bias into their reporting, or give the impression of **such** bias. In cases where a journalist may have a specific financial or personal interest, the interest should **be** disclosed;
- Fairness: journalists must present facts with impartiality and neutrality, presenting other viewpoints and sides to a story where these exist. It is unacceptable to slant facts;
- Diligence: a journalist should gather and present pertinent facts to provide a good understanding of the subject reported;
- Accountability: a journalist must **be** accountable for their work, prepared to accept criticism and consequences.

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