

MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR COVERAGE OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES

These guidelines are intended to allow access to the House of Delegates and its members while minimizing distractions and disruptions of the House while in session.

An applicant for press credentials must establish to the satisfaction of the Speaker or any such representative he or she may appoint that the applicant is a full-time, paid correspondent who requires on-site access to legislative members and staff. Correspondents must be employed by a news organization whose principal business is the dissemination of original news and opinion of interest to a broad segment of the public, and which has published continuously for 18 months.

Freelance and contract employees must apply for credentials through a sponsoring publication, broadcast outlet or website that meets all media guidelines for coverage of the House of Delegates. In addition to completing the application, a letter of introduction from the sponsoring news outlet's chief editor must be included.

Applicants must not be engaged in any lobbying or paid advocacy, advertising, publicity or promotion work for any individual, political party, corporation, organization or agency of the government, or in prosecuting any claim before the Legislature or any government department and will not do so while a member of the credentialed media. An applicant's publication must be editorially independent of any institution, foundation or interest group that lobbies the government, or is not principally a general news organization.

Press passes are good for the calendar year, and applications must be submitted anew each year. New passes must be retrieved each year from the Legislature's Office of Reference and Information, but new photos are not required each year.

Temporary press passes are available from the Sergeant-At-Arms or Communications Directors for either the House or the Senate. Press passes must be displayed at all times. Media credentials are NOT required to enter the Capitol building, nor is it required to conduct interviews in the Great Hall area just outside the entrance to the House Chamber. The House Communications Director is available to help facilitate interviews with all members upon request.

Limited seating in the House Chamber and in committee rooms is available for credentialed media on a first-come, first-served basis with each news outlet using one seat per meeting unless otherwise permitted in an extenuating circumstance by the Speaker or any such representative he or she may appoint. There are six seats available at the press tables located at the front tables in the House Chamber. Chairs located around the edge of the Chamber are reserved for legislative staff only. If additional seating is required, sections of galleries overlooking the chamber may be reserved to accommodate the press.

Television camera crews should set up in the rear of the chamber, where access to audio equipment is available. Photographers and television camerapersons may not film or record any document or object on the desk of a member unless permission is granted by the member.

Indecorous conduct, boisterousness or unbecoming language, audible remarks, unnecessary conversation, laughter, or gestures will not be permitted by credentialed members of the media while in the House Chamber and committee rooms.

Anyone who take advantage of floor privileges, including media, must obey all applicable [House Rules](#) during sessions. Anyone caught violating House rules is subject to removal from the floor by the Doorkeeper or Sergeant-At-Arms.

Those rules include the following:

- Reporters must wear professional business attire during floor sessions. This includes suit coats and ties for men. Khakis and slacks are acceptable; jeans are prohibited.
 - House rules exempt video and still image photographers from business attire requirements while covering events in the House Chamber, in recognition of the nature of their daily workflow. However, reporters who double as photographers are asked to abide by business attire requirements.
- Reporters are not permitted to approach lawmakers at their desks for any reason while session is taking place nor while the House is at ease. Press should wait to approach members until after a recess or adjournment is declared. Any questions during the floor session should be directed to the House Communications Director.