



CONSELHO DE IMPRENSA DE TIMOR LESTE

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR JOURNALISM

In the era of online-media, as that of the traditional media, social media has an important role in spreading information and as a means of communication. Social media not only has changed the way society communicates, but also changed the way media and journalists operate with its interactivity and immediacy. Media enthusiasm on social media carries a number of issues related to media professionalism and journalism ethics. With reference to the Timor-Leste's Press Law and Journalism Code of Ethics, in an effort to promote the media integrity and the reinforce the journalists responsibility, Conselho de Imprensa, in consultancy with media organizations, association of journalists and the general public, produced the Social Media Guidelines for Journalism, as follows:

CHAPTER I

GENERAL PART

Article 1^o SCOPE

1. The scope of this guideline as follows:

- a. This guideline is intended for media, individual journalists, and journalistic work.
- b. In this guideline media refers to companies or organization that produces journalism work.
- c. Social media are interactive internet based platforms that facilitate the creation and sharing of information, ideas, interests and other forms of expression, such as Facebook, Google+, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snap chat, Twitter, WhatSapp, etc.
- d. Users are individuals that have accounts and access on social media platform that could create, share, and post information content.
- e. User-generated content constitutes text posts or comments, digital photos or videos, and data generated through online interactions.

Article 2^o

THE ROLE OF MEDIA

1. The role of media on this guideline as follows :
 - a. In relation to social media content, the role of the media is producing news-stories, reports, or articles that in line with journalism principles as stipulated in the code of ethics (endorsed by Press Council of Timor-Leste).

- b. Media becomes a clearing house of information, in which filtering and selecting information according to the public needs and interests.
- c. Media can produce news-stories, which are sourced from social media that is considered appropriate and useful for the public.
- d. Trending topics and interesting issues in social media that are raised by the media as news-stories must go through a professional editorial process and in line with journalism ethics
- e. Media regulates user generated content and public's comment section

CHAPTER II
Article 3.⁰
MEDIA CONDUCT

1. The media conduct as follows :
 - a. In relations to the social media content, only information that are newsworthy or worth quoting to be considered as a source of information.
 - b. Media needs to get information directly from the sources, and use social media content only as additional sources of information.
 - c. Media must make sure before handing that social media account as the news-source is credible and clearly identified.
 - d. Media should always confirm news information, stated clearly when the news still needs further verification.
 - e. Media reserve the right to edit or delete the user generated contents or comments that are deemed inappropriate.
2. Media Manages Its Own Media Social Accounts:
 - a. Media must ensure that only designated, and approached social media account manager and or officer that be able to post information on its social media accounts.
 - b. Media does not post comments or opinions, except editorial opinions, in its social media accounts.
 - c. Media must immediately revoke posting or delete comments that are deemed inappropriate.
 - d. Media must immediately correct the information posted that is not accurate.
 - e. Media does not post information that contains violence, sadism, and pornography

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CHAPTER III
Article 4.^o
JOURNALISTS CONDUCT

1. When using social media as news source
 - a. Use social media posting as a news background, not as the main source of information.
 - b. Verify the authenticity of the social media accounts that is used as a news source
 - c. Confirm directly the veracity of the information posted
 - d. Photos, pictures and videos must be checked to ensure authenticity
 - e. Must refrain from quoting directly statements that was posted by politicians in their social media accounts.
 - f. Must ensure there is balance in quoting political statement when the sources are from politician's social media accounts.

2. When posting status or comments in personal social media accounts
 - a. Refrain from posting partisan political views or show political affiliation.
 - b. Do not post attributes and symbols of political parties.
 - c. Do not post photos, images, or video that violates the journalist code of ethics.
 - d. Do not post statements that are considered hate speech and political statements that threaten public order.
 - e. Do not post slander, sadistic and obscene statements
 - f. Do not post statements, images, photos or video that shows prejudice and hatred towards certain ethnicity, religion, race, community, or encourage acts of violence.
 - g. Do not discriminate on the basis gender and language.
 - h. Respect the dignity of the weak, the poor, and the mentally or physically disabled or handicapped.
 - i. Stated disclaimer when posting sensitive or controversial information.

CHAPTER IV
Article 5.^o
PUBLIC COMPLAINT AND FINAL

1. Member of public can complain to Conselho de Imprensa related to the material or content of social media accounts belong to media companies and individual journalists who are

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considered violating this guideline. Complaints are resolved through mediation and adjudication.

2. Written warnings and sanctions can be applied to the media and journalists who are deemed to have violated this guideline.

Final
Article 6.º
TAKING INTO EFFECT

This guideline takes into effect, since the day of the approval in the plenary of the press council.

Dili, 4 January 2019

Approved by member of Timor-Leste Press Council

1. **Virgílio da Silva Guterres:** 
Chair Person
2. **José Maria Ximenes:** 
Member
3. **Hugo Maria Fernandes:** 
Member
4. **Paulo Adriano da Cruz Araújo:** 
Member
5. **Francisco Belo Simões da Costa :** 
Member