

## **2026 MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR COVERAGE OF THE HOUSE OF DELEGATES**

These guidelines are intended to minimize distractions and disruptions while the House of Delegates is in session while allowing appropriate media access to the House Chamber and Delegates.

A media applicant for floor privileges 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 regular, on-site access to House floor sessions. Correspondents must be employed by a news organization whose principal business is the dissemination of original news 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 guidelines for media floor privileges. In addition to completing the application, a letter of introduction from the sponsoring news outlet's chief editor must be included. An applicant's publication must be a general news organization, independent of any institution, foundation or interest group that lobbies the government.

Applicants must not be engaged in any lobbying or advocacy, advertising, publicity or promotion work for any individual, political party, corporation, organization or agency of the government, nor in prosecuting any claim before the Legislature or any state government department. Citizen journalists or anyone employed by a group that lobbies the Legislature will have the same access to members as the general public before and after each session day.

Full-time media floor privilege passes are good for the calendar year; applications must be submitted anew each year. Each applicant must retrieve his own pass must from the Legislature's Office of Reference and Information. New photos are not required each year. One-day media floor privilege passes are available to journalists who are not regularly assigned to cover the West Virginia Legislature. They may be obtained the day they are needed from the Sergeant-At-Arms or the Communications Director for either the House or the Senate.

Media floor privilege passes must be displayed at all times. A pass is NOT required to enter the Capitol complex, 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. Interviews are not permitted inside the Chamber during session, 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start of session or while the House is at ease.

Limited seating in the House Chamber and in committee rooms is available for media on a first-come, first-served basis. Each news outlet will be allotted one seat 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 two press tables located at the front of the House Chamber. Chairs located around the edge of the Chamber and in the back are reserved for legislative staff only. Benches in the vestibule area and sections of galleries overlooking the

chamber may be used and reserved to accommodate media with floor privileges when necessary. Media seating in the Chamber shall not be used as a workspace outside the floor session. The member lounge area behind the Chamber is off limits to media at all times.

Television camera crews should set up in the rear of the chamber, where access to audio equipment is available. No one is permitted to film or record any document or object on the desk of a member unless permission is granted by the member. Media shall not disturb legislators nor legislative staff at any time while the body is in session.

Indecorous conduct, boisterousness, 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. It is considered a breach of decorum to move about the Chamber during floor session or to bring food into the Chamber or committee rooms.

Anyone who takes advantage of floor privileges, including media, must obey all applicable House Rules during sessions. Anyone caught violating House rules or these guidelines is subject to removal from the floor by the Doorkeeper or Sergeant-At-Arms as well as revocation of media floor privileges.