

## **Guidelines Concerning News Media Access in the Idaho State Capitol**

These guidelines are intended to summarize existing House & Senate Rules concerning press access in the Statehouse. These guidelines do not supersede any existing rules. Applicable rules are:

- Joint Rule 14
- House Rules 26, 70 and 72
- Senate Rules 20 and 46
- Capitol Correspondents Bylaws

**1. Accreditation:** The Capitol Correspondents Association is the accrediting agency for members of the news media covering the Legislature. (Joint Rule 14)

**2. Access and Identification:** Accredited correspondents shall be identified by wearing brown badges. Correspondents wearing these badges are entitled to admittance to the floor of the House and the Senate, including during sessions and call of the chamber, and access to the press seating areas on the floor, on either side of the speaker's or president's desk. Seating in the press area on the floor will be allocated to accredited correspondents on a first come basis and in the spirit of cooperation. Correspondents have full access to the hallways surrounding the perimeter of the chambers during sessions. Correspondents also have access to hallways and elevators. Correspondents shall also have access to the tunnel in order to get to the Legislature Live Control Room in the JRW building basement.

**3. Cameras:** Correspondents are entitled to film, record or photograph both from the floor press desk area and from the 4th floor gallery in either house, and to be admitted to the private gallery on request for purposes of filming or photographing; no flash photography is permitted.

**4. Joint Sessions:** During joint sessions, including for the State of the State address, additional chairs may be added to the press seating area to accommodate correspondents covering the session as needed, though seating still will be allocated on a first come basis and in the spirit of cooperation. It also is desirable to place additional chairs in the press seating areas in the House or Senate when a major debate or other event draws larger than usual numbers of correspondents.

**5. Dress Code:** For admittance to the floor of the House or Senate, the dress code for correspondents is similar to that required of legislators. Camera operators may be permitted on the floor without jackets if otherwise suitably attired, including shirt and tie for males; at no time shall jeans be worn.

**6. Committee Rooms:** In committee hearing rooms, seating for members of the news media shall be offered at one or two of the small tables at the front of the audience seating area, when possible. This seating will be allocated to accredited correspondents on a first come basis and in the spirit of cooperation. Members of the press also may be seated in the audience and may access electrical outlets as needed. Camera operators may set up near the A/V (Audio-Video) plug-in boxes in each committee room to access feeds when needed, and may stand or sit elsewhere in the room to film, as long as they do so without interfering with the committee's proceedings. Correspondents may go behind the committee members' seating areas to film or photograph those testifying to the committee when needed with prior consent of that committee chairman. Correspondents may film, photograph or record committee hearings; no flash photography is permitted.

**7. Media Room:** Accredited capitol correspondents may make use of the press work space in the garden level of the state capitol.

**8. Presiding Officer:** The presiding officer may make ad hoc modifications to these guidelines to maintain decorum.

*Updated 11/28/20*