

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF TIMOR-LESTE
MINISTRY OF STATE ADMINISTRATION
TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT FOR ELECTORAL ADMINISTRATION
(STAE)

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEDIA PROFESSIONALS

Pursuant to sub-paragraph c), Article 8, of Law No. 5/2006 of 28 December, combined with paragraph 2, Article 67, of Law No. 7/2006 of 28 December, THE NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION approves the following to have the force of a code:

Scope

The present code of conduct shall govern the acquisition of the status, the exercise of the functions, as well as the rights and the duties of media professionals.

Media professionals

For the purposes of the present code, media professionals shall refer to journalists and correspondents of the written press and the radio and television broadcasting stations, whether public or private, exercising their functions in Timor-Leste.

Accreditation of media professionals

1. Media professionals interested in participating in the electoral coverage shall request STAE to grant them accreditation enabling them to enter polling centres, polling stations, and tabulation stations.
2. Accreditation shall be granted against the filling out of an identification form available at STAE to be accompanied by a photograph and a copy of the professional identification.

Rights of media professionals

In covering the electoral process, media professionals shall have the following rights:

- a) The right of access to electoral information sources, pursuant to the present code;
- b) The right to security conditions guaranteed by the political power to enable them to exercise their functions;
- c) The right to preserve secrecy of the information source, pursuant to the law;

- d) The right to be respected by the candidates, political parties, political coalitions, and other electoral agents.

Right of access

The right of access provided for in the previous item shall be exercised in the following terms:

- a) For purposes of media coverage, media professionals shall have the right to accede to places where up-dating of voter registration is taking place, as well as to places where the whole electoral process takes place, including presentation of candidacies, electoral campaigning activities, voting, counting of votes and tabulation of results.
- b) The right of access allows media professionals to assist to the counting of votes and to the tabulation of votes at polling stations and district and national tabulation stations respectively, without prejudice to the provisions of the following norms.
- c) During the voting, media professionals shall not collect images nor in any manner whatsoever get close to the ballot boxes in a manner that compromises vote secrecy.
- d) Prior to initiating reporting in polling centres and polling stations, media professionals shall obtain authorization from the President of the polling station in order to avoid disturbing normal functioning of the polling centre.

Duties of media professionals

In covering the electoral process, media professionals and media organs shall:

- a) Act with rigour and professionalism, complying with the electoral laws and regulations, and promoting democratic principles;
- b) Contribute to the holding of free and fair elections by promoting the dissemination of news based on concrete facts and on unbiased opinions;
- c) Guarantee equal access to, and exposition of, all candidates, political parties and coalitions;
- d) Confirm all the information to be published, it being possible to demonstrate its veracity at any time, and maintain impartiality and independence in covering facts;
- e) Differentiate the activity of candidates from the activity of holders of political power organs in the exercise of their functions;

- f) Respect the privacy of people;
- g) Differentiate a piece of information from a piece of opinion;
- h) Abstain from interfering into electoral operations;
- i) Publish complete and accurate electoral information without manifesting preference for any candidate, party or coalition;
- j) Ascribe collected statements to the respective authors;
- k) Refuse gifts, favours or special treatment from candidates, parties, or coalitions and their representatives;
- l) Not use language that is defamatory, calumnious, or aggressive, nor language that incites to violence or that discriminates people, namely on the basis of colour, race, origin, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, political or religious choice, and mental or physical disability.

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR MEDIA PROFESSIONALS

In the exercise of the electoral media coverage, media professionals must:

- a) Act with rigour and professionalism, complying with the electoral laws and regulations, and promoting democratic principles;
- b) Contribute to the holding of free and fair elections, promoting the dissemination of news based on concrete facts and on opinions free of assumptions;
- c) Guarantee equal access and exposition to all candidates, political parties and coalitions;
- d) Confirm all the information to be published, it being possible to demonstrate its veracity at any time, and maintain impartiality and independence in the media coverage of facts;
- e) Differentiate the activity of the candidates from the activity of the holders of political power organs in the exercise of their functions;
- f) Respect the privacy of people;
- g) Differentiate a piece of information from a piece of opinion;
- h) Abstain from interfering into electoral operations;
- i) Publish complete and accurate electoral information without manifesting preference for any candidate, party or coalition;
- j) Ascribe collected statements to the respective authors;
- k) Refuse gifts, favours or special treatment on the part of candidates, parties, or coalitions and their representatives;
- l) Use language that is not defamatory, calumnious, or aggressive, nor language that incites to violence or that discriminates people, namely on the basis of the colour, race, origin, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, political or religious choice, and mental or physical disability.

Code proposed by STAE

Tomás do Rosário Cabral
Director of STAE

Approved in Dili on

By the National Electoral Commission

No.	Name	Signature
1	Maria Domingas Fernandes Alves	
2	Faustino Cardoso Gomes	
3	Joana Maria Dulce Vítor	
4	Maria Angelina Lopes Sarmiento	
5	José Agostinho da Costa Belo	
6	Silvestre Xavier Sufa	
7	Lucas de Sousa	
8	Teresinha Maria Noronha Cardoso	
9	Tomé Xavier Jeronimo	
10	Deolindo dos Santos	
11	Vicente Fernandes e Brito	
12	Sérgio de Jesus Fernandes da Costa Hornai	
13	Pe. Martinho Germano da Silva Gusmão	
14	Arif Abdullah Sagran	
15	Manuela Leong Pereira	