

Joint Statement on the Importance of Journalism Ethics

Ethics Week 2025

As a coalition of organizations dedicated to supporting and advancing journalism, we stand united in reaffirming the essential role of ethical journalism in a functioning democracy. At a time when government actions and rhetoric increasingly seek to undermine and delegitimize principled practitioners of our profession, we call on policymakers, community leaders and the public to recognize and defend the critical importance of ethical reporting.

Journalists producing evidence-based reporting have long served as watchdogs, holding the powerful accountable and giving voice to the less powerful. Through rigorous adherence to ethical principles — including accuracy, fairness, transparency and independence — journalists earn the trust of their audiences and fulfill their duty to inform the public. The [Society of Professional Journalists' Code of Ethics](#) serves as a cornerstone for these principles, providing guidance for journalists striving to maintain integrity in their work.

However, ongoing efforts to erode public trust in journalists through misinformation, intimidation and obstruction threaten not only the press but also the public's right to know. When government officials dismiss factual reporting, restrict access to information, or retaliate against journalists who uncover uncomfortable truths, they undermine the very foundations of our democracy.

SPJ has designated April 14-18 as Ethics Week to serve as a reminder of the responsibilities that journalists carry and the standards that guide their vital work. It also is an opportunity to emphasize that ethical journalism is not a political act; it is a public service. Attempts to delegitimize responsible reporting do not diminish its value; instead, they underscore the importance of a resilient, independent press that remains steadfast in its pursuit of truth.

We urge all members of the public to critically evaluate the information they consume, support credible news organizations and recognize the immense effort that ethical journalists put into their reporting. Likewise, we call on government officials to respect the role of a free press and refrain from rhetoric or actions that endanger journalists or impede the public's access to accurate information.

As a coalition, we will continue to stand in solidarity with journalists who uphold the highest ethical standards. We pledge to advocate for policies that protect press freedom and defend against efforts to silence or intimidate reporters and news organizations.

During this Ethics Week and beyond, let us reaffirm our commitment to principled journalism and the enduring value it brings to our society.

Signed,

Society of Professional Journalists

- SPJ Professional Chapters of:
 - Connecticut
 - Georgia
 - Hawaii
 - Houston
 - Minnesota
 - St. Louis

AAN Publishers

American Society of Journalists and Authors

American Society of Magazine Editors

American Society of Media Photographers

Arab and Middle Eastern Journalists Association (AMEJA)

Asian American Journalists Association (AAJA)

Associated Collegiate Press

Association of Foreign Press Correspondents

Association of Health Care Journalists

Authors Guild

Coalition For Women In Journalism

Education Writers Association (EWA)

Indigenous Journalists Association

International Society of Weekly Newspaper Editors

International Women's Media Foundation

Journalism & Women Symposium (JAWS)

Journalism Education Association

National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ)
National Association of Hispanic Journalists (NAHJ)
National Association of Science Writers
National Federation of Press Women
National Press Photographers Association
National Scholastic Press Association
New England Newspaper and Press Association
New York News Publishers Association
NLGJA: The Association of LGBTQ+ Journalists
North Dakota Newspaper Association
Online News Association
Park Center for Independent Media, Ithaca College
Project Censored
Public Media Journalists Association
Quill and Scroll
Radio Television Digital News Association
Rebuild Local News
Reporters Without Borders (RSF)
SAG-AFTRA
Society for Advancing Business Editing and Writing (SABEW)
Society for Features Journalism
Society of Environmental Journalists
Student Press Law Center
The American Jewish Press Association
The Media and Democracy Project
The National Press Club
The NewsGuild of New York

The NewsGuild-CWA

Writers Guild of America East