

# PRINCIPLES OF ETHICAL JOURNALISM

TEGNA is committed to the **highest ethical standards** and dedicated to the **principles of truth, independence, public interest, fair play and integrity**. These principles apply to everything we do, from gathering information to reporting and producing content. To apply these principles, **stop, think and get input from a variety of perspectives**. If you are unsure about something, ask. **Mistakes are best avoided by working together**.

All employees who gather, report, produce and distribute news and information on any platform must read and familiarize themselves with this document, the **TEGNA Ethics Policy and the Social Media Policy**.

## TRUTH

- **Report the news accurately, thoroughly and in context** on all platforms.
- Whenever possible, **work to stop the spread of provably false information**. Label false information clearly and in context. When correcting falsehoods, avoid amplifying misinformation.
- **Vet sources, verify facts and challenge your own assumptions** before reporting news. Hold factual information on all platforms to the same standards of accuracy.
- **Hold government and law enforcement sources to the same accuracy standards as other sources**, and verify official reports by seeking multiple perspectives and sources.
- **Seek sufficient understanding** of the communities, individuals and stories we cover to inform the public. Be persistent in the pursuit of the whole story.
- **Be honest**. Do not mislead sources, story subjects or the public.
- Attribute information received from others, and be transparent with sourcing. **Never plagiarize**.
- Keep your **word**.
- **Do not misstate** your identity or intentions.
- Do not intentionally **slant the news**.
- Always value being **accurate over being first**.

## INDEPENDENCE

- Remain free of outside interests, investments, business relationships or personal relationships that may **compromise the credibility** of our news reports.
- **Avoid potential conflicts of interest** and improper obligations to news sources, newsmakers and advertisers. Avoid even the **appearance of a conflict of interest** as a journalist.
- Do not use your position as a journalist or social media accounts **for personal profit**.
- Promptly **disclose potential conflicts of interest** to news managers.
- **Do not accept gifts, meals, entertainment or anything of value** from any individuals or organizations that may be covered by our stations.
- **Be transparent** about paid or sponsored content. **Differentiate advertising from news**.
- Do not allow sponsors of news to **determine, change or restrict content**.
- **Do not make political contributions**, participate in political advocacy or publicly share political views.
- **Do not engage in political commentary** on any platform without prior management approval.
- When commentary is approved, it should be **clearly identified and differentiated from news**.

# PUBLIC INTEREST

- Uphold and defend the **First Amendment**.
- **Be vigilant watchdogs** of government and institutions that affect the public. Fight to ensure that the public's business is conducted in public.
- Provide the news and information that people need to function as **effective citizens**.
- **Seek solutions** as well as expose problems and wrongdoing.
- **Be inclusive**. Make editorial decisions with input from a **variety of voices that reflect your community**. Seek multiple perspectives from sources of different backgrounds.
- Cover all communities **with respect and balance**. Seek various perspectives within communities.
- Create content and provide news coverage that is representative of the **diverse viewpoints** and **perspectives of the community** you serve.
- Provide **editorial and community leadership**.
- Seek to **promote understanding** of complex issues.
- Be **advocates** for our communities.

# FAIR PLAY

- Treat people with **dignity, respect and compassion**.
- Identify race and ethnicity **evenly and only when relevant and critical** to understanding the story.
- Be fair when covering initial criminal allegations; **minimize harm**, and **be judicious when using mugshots**, including considering if your newsroom will cover a case to resolution.
- **Be fair** with people unaccustomed to dealing with the media.
- **Correct errors** promptly.
- **Explain our journalistic processes** to our audience.
- Seek **all sides** relevant to a story.
- Use unnamed sources as the sole basis for broadcast or published information only as a last resort when it **best serves the public's right to know**, and only with prior management approval.

# INTEGRITY

- Act **honorably, transparently and ethically** in dealing with news sources, the public and our colleagues.
- **Obey** the law, including applicable FCC regulations.
- Use technological tools with skill and thoughtfulness. Do not **skew facts, distort reality or sensationalize events**.
- Do not report something known to be **false** or manipulate images or sound in **misleading ways**. Do not present images that are re-enacted without informing the audience.
- Use hidden cameras or similar techniques only if there is **no other way to tell a significant story effectively**, and only with management approval.
- **Take responsibility** for your decisions and consider the possible consequences of your actions.
- Always do the **right thing**.