

Media Protocol

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Purpose

This Media Protocol (“the Protocol”) will guide media access to the proceedings of the Public Order Emergency Commission (POEC) and the way Commission staff will interact with members of the media.

The Commission is committed to sharing information with members of the media and with the public in a timely, transparent, and accessible manner.

All matters relating to media coverage of the Commission’s proceedings are subject to the sole discretion of the Commission and the Commissioner.

Respect for witnesses and all other participants at the public hearings, and the hearing process itself, is paramount. Any aggressive behaviour or harassment by an accredited journalist towards another journalist, counsel, a party, Commission staff and contract partners, Library and Archives Canada staff, or a member of the public will not be tolerated, and may result in the loss of accreditation and/or expulsion from the hearing venue.

An accredited journalist’s failure to abide by the terms of the Media Protocol may result in the revocation of their accreditation, among other things.

Webcast

The Commission will provide webcasts of public hearings on its website daily and will provide regular updates on its social media channels. In addition, transcripts and recordings of all public hearings will be archived on the Commission’s website.

- English: <https://publicorderemergencycommission.ca/>
- French: <https://commissionsurletatdurgence.ca/>

Portions of the Commission’s webcasts (audio and video) may be re-broadcasted as part of conventional news coverage. Media outlets are permitted to share hyperlinks to the Commission’s live webcast page and the page of archived videos on the Commission website.

Social Media

Twitter: [@POECommission](https://twitter.com/POECommission) (English) and
[@CommissionEDU](https://twitter.com/CommissionEDU) (French)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Public-Order-Emergency-Commission (English) and
www.facebook.com/CommissionEDU (French)

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/poec-cedu/>

Contact Information

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COVID-19

The Commission requests that media attending Public Hearings comply with any public health order measures that are in effect.

Media Inquiries

Inquiries by members of the media should be addressed to [Michael Tansey](mailto:Michael.Tansey@poec-cedu.gc.ca) or [Marie-Claude Gagné](mailto:Marie-Claude.Gagne@poec-cedu.gc.ca).

Hours of operation are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Eastern time, Monday to Friday. Depending on workload and availability, e-mails may be answered after the conclusion of regular working hours. The Commission will strive to acknowledge all media requests within two (2) hours of receipt.

Commission staff will make every effort to respond to media inquiries on the same day as they are received, or within the journalist's deadline, depending on the complexity of the request, the time of day the request is received and workload. Media relations staff will provide updates to journalists on their requests if it is not possible to meet these standards.

Media Interviews

The Commissioner will not conduct any interviews. Commission counsel may be available to journalists from time-to-time.

Journalists may request interviews with Commission witnesses; however, it will be up to the witness to determine if they want to speak with members of the media. Journalists are invited to make their own arrangements with counsel and/or witnesses brought to the Commission by Parties who have standing at the Commission.

Interviews may not be conducted inside the hearing room or in the foyer immediately outside the hearing room. A scrum area is available in the foyer of the Library and Archives Canada (LAC) auditorium, to the east of the building's main foyer (to the left after entering the building).

Media email list

The Commission maintains an e-mail list of journalists who wish to receive updates about the work of the Commission and copies of notices, media advisories and news releases issued by the Commission. To be added to the list, please contact [Michael Tansey](mailto:Michael.Tansey@poec-cedu.gc.ca) or [Marie-Claude Gagné](mailto:Marie-Claude.Gagne@poec-cedu.gc.ca).

Public Hearings

The Commission's public hearings will be held in the Bambrick Room, on the main floor of the LAC headquarters, located at 395 Wellington, Ottawa, Ontario.

Information about the schedule of public hearings and the witnesses scheduled to appear is available on the Commission's website. The Commission anticipates posting each week a list of witnesses scheduled to appear the following week. The witnesses and the timing of their appearance may change at the Commission's discretion.

Closed Proceedings

Under exceptional circumstances, the Commissioner may decide to hold a hearing in a closed setting (in-camera). If the Commissioner decides to hold a closed hearing, the Commission will endeavour to release as much information as possible on the reason the hearing is not open to the public or the media.

Security Screening

All members of the public who wish to attend the Commission's public hearings will be required to undergo a security screening each time they enter the venue. Accredited journalists will not be required to undergo daily security screening. Accredited journalists may not enter any non-public areas, except the dedicated media space.

Media Accreditation

Accreditation is required for members of the media who wish to have access to the dedicated media room at the hearing venue and the dedicated seating for the media.

To receive accreditation, members of the media are required to complete an [online application form](#), which will be processed within two (2) business days. Journalists who seek accreditation will be required to provide the Commission with information to confirm their status as working journalists. The following documents will be required by the Commission:

- A letter of assignment from an organization's bureau chief or editor.
- In some cases, journalists may be required to provide additional information to be granted accreditation.

Accredited journalists are required to abide by the terms outlined in the Commission's Media Protocol (this document). Failure to abide by the terms of the Protocol could result in the revocation of accreditation. The Protocol may be updated from time-to-time; the version that is posted on the Commission's website shall be considered the current version that they must abide to.

Accredited journalists will be issued Commission media credentials, which must always be visible when inside the secure area of the Commission's premises. Accredited journalists must also carry a second

piece of government-issued photo ID (health card, driver's licence, or other media credentials) at all times. Media accreditation is non-transferable.

Media who choose not to be accredited will be able to cover the Commission's proceedings by following the proceedings on-line.

Documents

Media relations staff will make every effort to provide key documents to journalists who request them on the same day as they are tabled. In some instances, this may not be possible. Requests to receive documents prior to their availability on the Commission's website should be addressed to [Michael Tansey](#) or [Marie-Claude Gagné](#) and must be accompanied by the 11-character (3 letters and 8 digits) document ID number that will be visible on documents when they are displayed in the hearing room during the public hearings.

Designated media areas in the hearing room

Several designated media areas will be available to members of the media in the hearing room.

Designated areas will be available for television cameras. Videographers are only permitted to operate their equipment from within the designated media areas. They must be in place prior to the start of testimony of each witness – they will not be permitted to enter the hearing room and set up their equipment while a witness is testifying. Members of the media are advised to allow sufficient time to set up their equipment prior to the beginning of testimony of each witness.

Space for journalists in the hearing room is limited. Twenty seats have been reserved for members of the media. The reserved seats will be assigned to journalists by lot on a daily basis. If the public seating area of the hearing room is not full on any given day, additional journalists may be given access to them.

Media may not move around the hearing room while the hearing is underway. Media must wait for a break in the proceedings (i.e., between witnesses) before moving equipment.

On some days, the size of the designated media areas may not be large enough to accommodate demand. In these instances, TV networks will be asked to work together and set up pool arrangements. Arrangements for pool feeds will be facilitated by members of the Parliamentary Press Gallery Secretariat.

No auxiliary lighting, including flashes, may be used in the hearing room while the hearing is underway.

Recording of audio & video feeds

Recording of hearings by accredited media will be permitted from designated media areas in the hearing room.

Media are not permitted to operate recording devices (video, audio or still photography) in a way that obstructs the entrances or pathways of the location or room.

The Commissioners' and/or Counsel's notes must not be filmed or photographed.

The Commission will provide a streamed, live feed of the public hearings through its website. Recordings of Commission hearings will also be archived on the Commission's website.

A broadcast quality video feed will be available to television networks. Contact [Michael Tansey](#) or [Marie-Claude Gagné](#) for details.

Still photographers

Still photographers are permitted to take photographs during the proceedings from designated positions on either side of the hearing room.

No more than six still photographers will be permitted in the room at the same time (three on either side of the room). Photographers are encouraged to use silent equipment (mirrorless cameras) to avoid disrupting the proceedings.

Media working area

A media room will be available to accredited journalists, which will include large television monitors to follow the proceedings at public hearings. Wi-fi and access to audio and video feeds will be available in the media room. Each seat in the media room will also include access to a power bar.

Scrums and unilateral positions

Scrums and interviews are not permitted in the foyer outside of the hearing room. A designated scrum area is available inside the secure area, in the foyer of the Auditorium (to the west of the main entrance).

In addition, unilateral positions for television networks are available in the foyer of the auditorium. Contact [Michael Tansey](#) or [Marie-Claude Gagné](#) for details.

Use of mobile electronic devices

The use of cellular telephones and other electronic devices will be permitted during Commission proceedings to receive and transmit messages and e-mails provided that the sound is turned off and they do not disrupt proceedings.

Media and members of the public are not permitted to live-cast on social media inside the hearing room when the Commission is in session. Media may transmit information about the proceedings while they are underway for publication and by other means (including Twitter, texting, email, etc.), unless the Commission advises otherwise.

Commercial reproduction

No commercial reproduction of video, audio or still photographs from the Commission's hearings is permitted.

Agreement to abide by the Media Protocol

All journalists accredited by the Commission agree to familiarize themselves with the contents of the Media Protocol and abide by its terms. The Media Protocol may be updated from time-to-time. The version that is posted on the Commission's website shall be considered the current version.

Journalists must also be aware of the following sections of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Proceedings (revised September 23, 2022), available at:

<https://publicorderemergencycommission.ca/documents>

(8) The Commissioner shall deal with a breach of these Rules as he sees fit including, but not restricted to, revoking the standing of a Party, and imposing restrictions on the further participation in or attendance at (including exclusion from) the hearings by any Party, legal representative, individual, or member of the media.

(106) In the exercise of the Commissioner's discretion, he may, among other measures:

(d) Direct that a witness not be identified in the public records and transcripts of the hearing except by non-identifying initials, and that the public transcripts and public documents be redacted to exclude any identifying details;

(107) If the Commissioner has exercised his discretion pursuant to Rule 106d, no photographic or other reproduction of the witness that might lead to his or her identification shall be made at any time and there shall be no publication of information that might lead to the identification of the witness.

(108) All media representatives shall be deemed to undertake to adhere to the rules respecting personal confidentiality as set out herein. A breach of these rules by a media representative shall be dealt with by the Commissioner as he sees fit.