



**RULES FOR MEDIA RELATED
ACTIVITY AT THE NATIONAL
ASSEMBLY OF SEYCHELLES**

2021

The Clerk of the National Assembly of Seychelles:

- i. Approves the *Rules for Media Related Activity at the National Assembly of Seychelles, 2021*
- ii. Delegates the administration of these rules to:
 - a. The Sergeant at Arms & National Assembly Security Division acting jointly with;
 - b. The Public Relations & Protocol Office, the Media Operations Unit
 - c. The Secretariat of the National Assembly headed by the Clerk

The Clerk of the National Assembly

Mrs. Tania Isaac

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T Isaac', is written above a horizontal dotted line.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The rules provide a framework for media related activity (as defined in Appendix 1) within The National Assembly Building and its precinct, and are underpinned by the following principles:

- (a) Openness and accessibility of the National Assembly of Seychelles;
- (b) The facilitation of fair and accurate reporting by the media of Assembly proceedings;
- (c) Respect for the privacy of Members, the Secretariat, other building occupants and visitors to the National Assembly; and
- (d) Non-interference with the operations of the Assembly or the ability of Members, the Secretariat and other building occupants to fulfil their duties.

1.2 These rules apply to all building occupants, media personnel and visitors to the Assembly and its precinct.

1.3 Failure to comply with these rules may result in penalties for individuals, organisations or Media Houses (as outlined in *Section 11* of these rules).

1.5 These rules are administered by the Public Relations & Protocol Office, the Media Operations Unit and the Sergeant-at-Arms (SAA) jointly.

1.6 Members, their staff and the Secretariat should not encourage media related activity that is in breach of these rules. **Only** Members of staff assigned to do so may speak to the Media regarding Parliamentary Matters or send out press releases or statements on behalf of the National Assembly.

1.7 Compliance with these rules is a condition of entry for all visitors to the National Assembly of Seychelles.

2. LOCAL & INTERNATIONAL MEDIA ACCREDITATION

2.1 The Media Accreditation process involves an assessment of whether the activity:

- a) complies with these rules, particularly the principles outlined in Paragraph 1.1 ;
- b) serves an educational purpose;
- c) Serves a news and/or information purpose; or
- d) Serves a cultural purpose (including films or television series)
- e) The Company or Media House is legally registered

International Journalists and other media personnel whose work requires access to the National Assembly for filming or photographic purposes are required to apply for **International Media Accreditation**.

Local Media Houses/Organisations Journalists who wish to access the National Assembly are required to apply for **Local Media Accreditation**.

Below are the options available for Media Accreditation to the National Assembly:

- a) **Local Media Accreditation** - for regular visits to the National Assembly precincts for press coverage of Sittings, Committee Public Hearings, interviews with Members and permitted Secretariat Staff, as well as filming for programmes and so forth. (*Valid for FIVE years and for Local Media Houses Only*)

- b) International Media Accreditation** – for access to the National Assembly precincts within a specific time frame for filming, photography and or, news coverage for purposes outlined in Paragraph 1.1 (*Valid for an approved time frame for International Media Organisations Only*)

As such, a supporting signature of an Editor/Head of News/Pictures Editor/ or equivalent will be required when applying for accreditation. All accredited media are required to adhere to the *Rules of Media Related Activity at The National Assembly* and the *Code of Conduct for Journalists & other Media Personnel*. Failure to do so may result in penalties stipulated in Chapter 9 of this document.

2.2 Local Media Accreditation

Local Media Accreditation will be granted upon presentation of valid press credentials including a:

1. Completed Online Local Media Accreditation Form
2. A Cover Letter of Assignment on the official letterhead of the media organization signed by the Editor in Chief specifying the names and functional titles of the journalists/ media personnel of whom are required to have regular access. Unsigned letters and e-mails will not be accepted.
3. Digital Copies of National IDs of the assigned journalists/media personnel.

Once issued, the **Local Media Accreditation Pass** will be valid for a period of five years (5) from the date of issue, after which time the Media House/ Organisation will be required to renew the Accreditation. Once approval has been granted only an email request is to be sent to the PR & Protocol Office for onward coverage of Events for clearance to access the building.

Media Houses/Organisations are required to send a Cover Letter of Assignment on the official letterhead of the organization signed by the Chief Editor/CEO to assign new journalists during the five year period so that they can be granted approval to carry out press coverage at the National Assembly.

(a) The following identification must be presented on arrival at the National Assembly. No pass will be issued or clearance to enter the Precincts approved without acceptable ID shown.

Forms of acceptable ID are:

- National Identity Card
- Driving License
- Passport

(b) The procedure for renewal is by the submission of a completed Online Media Accreditation Form and Cover letter. All forms must be submitted at least **7 Days** before the date of expiry on the passes.

(c) The National Assembly reserves the right to grant or withdraw Assembly passes. If permission is granted, notification will be provided in writing. The written notice of approval will include any conditions or restrictions.

(d) Media passes must be clearly displayed on your person at all times while you are in the National Assembly Precincts.

(e) All Media Passes are only for use within the Assembly precincts and **MUST** be returned to Gate 2, where you will be required to sign out, before you leave. On **NO** occasion can passes be removed from the precincts, this includes for the purpose of short breaks.

(f) Any Media Personnel or Journalist must request clearance from the Public Relations & Protocol Office for access to the National Assembly to carry out any interview with any Member of the National Assembly, Staff or to carry out any news coverage. The National Assembly reserves the right to refuse entry to the Media Personnel or Journalist if this rule has not been adhered to.

2.3 International Media Accreditation

If you are a journalist or an audio-visual team coming to the Seychelles to cover a specific Committee Meeting/Hearing, the National Assembly Plenary or for the purpose of filming a programme you can obtain International Media accreditation.

The International Media Accreditation process involves an assessment of whether the activity:

- a) complies with these rules, particularly the principles outlined in Paragraph 1.1 ;
- b) serves an educational purpose;
- c) Serves a news and/or information purpose; or
- d) Serves a cultural purpose (including films or television series)
- e) The Company, Independent Media Person or Media House is legally registered

(a) International Media Accreditation is for access to the National Assembly precincts within a specific time frame for filming, photography and or, news coverage for purposes outlined in Paragraph 1.1 **(Valid for an approved time frame for International Media Organisations Only)**

(b) International Media Accreditation will be granted upon presentation of valid press credentials including a:

1. Completed Online International Media Accreditation Form
2. A Cover Letter of Assignment on the official letterhead of the media organization signed by the Editor in Chief specifying the names and functional titles of the journalists/ media personnel of whom are required to have regular access. Unsigned letters and e-mails will not be accepted.
3. Digital Copies of National IDs of the assigned journalists/media personnel.

(c) Once issued, the **International Media Accreditation Pass** will be valid for a specific time frame as specified in the application form from the date of issue. Once approval has been granted only an email request is to be sent to the PR & Protocol Office to inform the institution that you re accessing the Precinct on that specific day.

Media Houses/Organisations are required to send a Cover Letter of Assignment on the official letterhead of the organization signed by the Chief Editor/CEO to assign any new journalists during the specified time frame so that they can be granted approval to carry out press coverage at the National Assembly.

(d) The following identification must be presented on arrival at the National Assembly. No pass will be issued or clearance to enter the Precincts approved without acceptable ID shown.

Forms of acceptable ID are:

- National Identity Card
- Driving License
- Passport

(e) The procedure for renewal is by the submission of a completed Online Media Accreditation Form and Cover letter. All forms must be submitted at least **7 Days** before the date of expiry of the Accreditation.

(f) The National Assembly reserves the right to grant or withdraw Assembly passes. If permission is granted, notification will be provided in writing. The written notice of approval will include any conditions or restrictions.

(g) Media passes must be clearly displayed on your person at all times while you are in the National Assembly Precincts.

(h) All Media Passes are only for use within the Assembly precincts and **MUST** be returned to Gate 2, where you will be required to sign out, before you leave. On **NO** occasion can passes be removed from the precincts, this includes for the purpose of short breaks.

(i) Any Media Personnel or Journalist must request clearance from the Public Relations & Protocol Office for access to the National Assembly to carry out any interview with any Member of the National Assembly, Staff or to carry out any news coverage. The National Assembly reserves the right to refuse entry to the Media Personnel or Journalist if this rule has not been adhered to.

3. AREAS OF MEDIA ACCESS

3.1 The National Assembly access arrangements (i.e. physical access arrangements) are based upon the presumption that all security-cleared media passholders should have unrestricted access to all areas subject to the following conditions:

a) Areas with no media access:

- The floor of the debating Chamber (*unless authorised by the Speaker*)
- The Committee Rooms (*unless authorised by the Clerk and/or the Committee Chairperson*)

b) Areas where access is by invitation only:

- The Speaker's and Clerk's offices
- All Assembly Staff offices
- The Members Lounge

c) Areas of free access:

- All public areas and entrances (*including the Lobby*)
- The Media gallery (*behind the Speaker's Chair in the Public Gallery*)
- The Library

d) Areas with specific access arrangements:

- All Committee Rooms
- Conference Rooms
- The Speaker's Receiving Room

3.2 Media related activity in the below areas of the National Assembly Building are prohibited unless permission has been granted by the Clerk or Deputy Clerk:

- a) The Gardens, Parking of the National Assembly
- b) At security screening areas and of security arrangements;
- c) In corridors and other private circulation areas not expressly provided for in these rules.

3.3 Impromptu or "vox pop" style interviews with members of the general public visiting the Assembly are strictly prohibited, in order to protect the privacy of visitors.

3.4 Members of the Media are allowed to be present in the Media Gallery **ONLY** for note taking. **No audio or visual recording or live streaming via camera or other electronic device is permitted in the Media/Public Gallery.**

3.5 Any Interviews or non-core Assembly Business filming to take place upon a Members wishes requires clearance from the Public Relations & Protocol Office. Failure to do so will result in not obtaining access to the Building.

4. BROADCASTING ACCESS

4.1 Access for broadcasters to film or record takes account of the above physical access arrangements for all security-cleared media pass holders. Broadcasters may film or record in all areas where they have access or are invited to access subject to the following conditions:

a) The Chamber (Debating Floor/Galleries)

- Filming or recording on the floor of the Chamber is strictly prohibited and subject to the Speakers approval. Requests should be routed via the Public Relations & Protocol Office.
- Filming or recording from the VIP Gallery and Public Gallery is not permitted except where authorisation is received from the Office of the Speaker.

b) Committee Rooms/Conference Rooms/Private Offices:

- Requests to film in Committee Rooms and Conference Rooms should be routed through the Public Relations & Protocol Office well in advance.
- Filming or recording of non-core Assembly business such as meetings, interviews or media conferences held by Members are in accordance with the Member's wishes.

c) Public Areas

- Filming or recording in public areas within the precinct is permissible, but broadcasters are required to respect the privacy of building users. Building users should not be the focus of the shot or recording unless prior permission has been given by the individual.

d) Members' Lounge

- The privacy of building users should be respected in this catering area. Requests to film, record or take pictures should be routed via the Public Relations & Protocol Office.

e) Designated Smoking Area

- The privacy of building users should be respected in this area. Request to film, record or take pictures should be routed via the Public Relations & Protocol Office.

f) Security Features

- Filming or recording should take account the need to protect the Assembly's security. Filming (or taking pictures of) security equipment or security measures are strictly prohibited and requires the approval of the Office of the Speaker.

g) Lobby/Stairs

- Broadcasters are asked not to film or have presenters talk to camera from the stairs in the reception/lobby area or the stairs at the back of the building unless permission has been sought from the Public Relations & Protocol Office in advance. This measure is to avoid causing any obstructions.

h) Interview Locations

- The Media are welcome to conduct interviews with Members throughout the Assembly precincts in accordance with the above terms. Broadcasters are expected to show due courtesy and consideration for other building users when exercising this right of access.

4.2 All access requests to film elsewhere on the precinct will be judged on their merits and will take into account the privacy of building users. Filming Requests will be approved based on the following principles:

- a) Complies with these rules, particularly the principles outlined in Paragraph 1.1 ;
- b) Serves an educational purpose;
- c) Serves a news and/or information purpose; or
- d) Serves a cultural purpose (including films or TV series that may be produced for commercial purposes)

5. PHOTOGRAPHY ACCESS

5.1 Access for photographers to take still photographs takes account of the above physical access arrangements for all security-cleared media pass holders. Photographers may photograph in all areas where they have access or are invited to access subject to the following conditions:

a) Physical access to the National Assembly

- Accredited photographers/media personnel will have the same physical access rights to the National Assembly as other media pass holders.

b) Media photography in the Chamber & Media Gallery

- Photographers are permitted to cover proceedings in the Chamber subject to an approval from the Speakers Office. All requests to cover proceedings must first be routed through the Public Relations & Protocol Office three (3) days in advance.
- Taking photographs either by camera or mobile phone from the Media Gallery is strictly prohibited unless prior approval has been granted.

c) Media photography in Committee Rooms

- All requests to cover proceedings must first be routed through the Public Relations & Protocol Office who will seek the approval of the Committee Chairperson/Office of the Speaker. Given the relatively confined spaces of Committee rooms, access should not be intrusive to proceedings or those giving evidence. (*See Section 9*)

5.2 All access requests to take pictures elsewhere in the precincts will be judged on their merits and will take into account the privacy of building users. Photography Requests will be approved based on the following principles:

- a) Complies with these rules, particularly the principles outlined in Paragraph 1.1 ;
- b) Serves an educational purpose;
- c) Serves a news and/or information purpose; or
- d) Serves a cultural purpose (including films or TV series that may be produced for commercial purposes)

Requests for press photography inside the Building must first be routed through the Public Relations & Protocol Office.

5.3 Photography by the Secretariat departments in private areas, for Assembly administration purposes, is permitted:

(a) To facilitate maintenance and project work (e.g. to record defects, items requiring maintenance, or document stages of a project) and to photograph staff in the course of parliamentary duties. The Presiding Officers' delegates must be notified if photography is to occur in critical or high traffic areas and/or on sitting days to ensure that it does not impede access or egress or interfere with other activities;

(b) For asset management purposes (e.g. to document artworks or furniture); and

(c) For official publications (e.g. About the House) after notifying the Presiding Officers' delegates.

6. MEDIA COVERAGE OF PROCEEDINGS

6.1 Audio Visual Recording of Chamber Proceedings

Television filming in the Chamber is the exclusive responsibility of the National Assembly Media Operations Unit .. Coverage ceases as soon as the Speaker adjourns the Sitting or the Speaker leaves the Chair for the suspension of the Sitting. **No audio or visual recording or live streaming via camera or other electronic device by Members, other persons, in the media or visiting the National Assembly is permitted.**

6.2 Still Photography of Chamber Proceedings

Only still photographers who are Media accredited, upon the approval of the Speaker indicated by the Public Relations & Protocol Office—registered in advance—and official government photographers are permitted to take still photographs of proceedings subject to clearance. **No photography using a camera or a mobile phone by any other person is permitted.**

6.3 When the Chamber is in Sitting, authorised still photographic access to the Chamber can be permitted for a limited time interval of five (5) minutes, and to the public galleries when they are open to the public. Access to the public viewing gallery is open to the public & media personnel.

6.4 Authorised still photographic access in both the Chamber is subject to an undertaking to comply with the following arrangements and conditions:

a) Directions of the Chair must be observed at all times;

b) A Member, Minister or other persons must not be photographed closer than at "*head and shoulders*" distance;

c) The use of telephoto lenses to inspect or take photographs of Members', Delegates' or other persons' documents, computer screens or other electronic devices is not permitted;

d) Persons in the galleries must not be photographed

e) Persons in the chamber surroundings (*parliamentary reporters etc*) must not be photographed;

f) Disturbances in the Galleries or on the Chamber floor must not be photographed;

g) As a general principle, photographers should be as unobtrusive as possible and not disturb the view of guests or other persons in the galleries, or lean over onto any other person from the front row.

8. CONDITIONS OF USED OF AUDIO/VISUAL MATERIAL & PHOTOGRAPHS

8.1 Conditions of use of Video Materials

Access to the official videos are subject to compliance with the following conditions:

a) broadcasting material shall be used only for the purposes of fair and accurate reports of proceedings, and shall not be used for:

- (i) political party advertising or election campaigns; or
- (ii) commercial sponsorship or commercial advertising;

b) reports of proceedings shall be such as to provide a balanced presentation of differing views;

c) broadcast material may not be digitally manipulated;

8.2 Conditions of use of photographs

a) Photographs of Assembly proceedings or official photographs of the National Assembly—and associated captions and editorial comments— taken in accordance must:

- (i) be used only for the purposes of fair and accurate reports of proceedings;
- (ii) not be digitally manipulated; and

b) not be used for:

- (i) political party advertising or election campaigns; or
- (ii) commercial sponsorship or commercial advertising.

9. MEDIA ACCESS FOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES

9.1 Broadcasting of National Assembly Committees are subject to the *Rules of Media Related Activity in The National Assemblys*. Requests should be routed via the Public Relations & Protocol Office. **No audio or visual recording or live streaming via camera or other electronic device by other persons, in the media or visiting the National Assembly is permitted unless granted otherwise.**

9.2 Media access requires the consent of the relevant committee and compliance with the following conditions:

a) A committee may authorise the broadcasting or audio recording of only its public hearing; **Only recordings from portable recorders for reporting purposes are allowed. Audio/Visual recording and photography on mobile phones are not permitted.**

b) Recording and broadcasting of a National Assembly Committee is not permitted during the suspension of proceedings, or following an adjournment of a proceeding;

c) A Committee may order that any part of its proceedings not be recorded or broadcast, and may give instructions for the observance of conditions as so determined and orders so made. A Committee shall report to the Secretariat any willful breach of such conditions, orders or instructions;

d) Photography, recording and broadcasting of proceedings of a Committee shall not interfere with the conduct of those proceedings. Members of the press and public must not encroach into the Committee's work area or film or photograph documents (either in hard copy or electronic form) in the possession of Committee Members, witnesses and/or Committee staff;

e) Broadcasting of Committee proceedings shall be for the purpose only of making fair and accurate reports of those proceedings. Broadcasts of excerpts of Committee proceedings shall not be used for:

(i) political party advertising or election campaigns; or

(ii) commercial sponsorship or commercial advertising;

f) Where a Committee intends to permit the broadcasting of its proceedings, a witness who is to appear in those proceedings shall be given reasonable opportunity, before appearing in the proceedings, to object to the broadcasting of the proceedings and to state the ground of the objection. The Committee shall consider any such objection, having regard to the proper protection of the witness and the public interest in the proceedings, and if the Committee decides to permit broadcasting of the proceedings notwithstanding the witness's objection, the witness shall be so informed before appearing in the proceedings.

g) Interviews with Committee Members/Witnesses are permitted after the public proceedings with the permission of the Members or Witnesses and should be conducted in designated areas outside the Committee Room. The Member/Witness reserves the right to object.

h) Interviews during the Public proceedings are not allowed.

i) It is important to note that as Committees occasionally take confidential evidence, some aspects of Committee proceedings may not be open to the Public and the Media, and information about confidential proceedings must not be disclosed.

10. PENALTIES FOR NON-COMPLIANCE OF RULES

11.1 Persons found engaging in activities in breach of these rules will be directed to cease the activity. Refusal to comply with a direction may lead to penalties and removal from the building.

11.2 The Clerk/Deputy Clerk's Office in considering reported instances of non-compliance with the rules, will ascertain the circumstances of the case.

11.3 Where an activity is found to be in breach of these rules:

a) On the first offence, an individual or organisation will be issued a written warning from the Clerk/Deputy Clerk's Office. Where the offence is considered a very serious breach of the rules, a penalty letter may be initiated without warning;

b) On the second offence, an individual or organisation will be invited to show cause to the Clerk/Deputy Clerk's Office as to why one or more of the penalties listed in Section 11 should not be incurred.

11.4 The Clerk/Deputy Clerk's Office will consider any response or appeal from the individual or organisation, and determine an appropriate penalty. The National Assembly may choose to penalise the individual or the organisation employing the individual, or both (depending on the circumstances).

11. PENALTIES

Depending on the circumstances and the gravity of the breach, the Clerk/Deputy Clerk's Office may apply one or more of the following penalties:

a) Denial of access to the Chamber, Galleries & Committee Rooms for a Sitting day;

b) Suspension of an individual's access for a day (*suspended individuals cannot be signed-in by another passholder*)

c) Denial of access to the Chamber and Public Gallery for a Sitting week;

d) Suspension of an individual's pass for a week (*suspended individuals cannot be signed-in by another passholder*)

e) for sustained and continued breaches by media personnel, a suspension of passes of all individuals working for the relevant Media Organisation

f) Total cancellation of an individual's pass for the duration of the five years of media accreditation; or

g) The suspension of the Media House for a time frame allotted by the Clerk's Office

h) Another penalty determined by the Clerk's Office

Appendix 1

The National Assembly of Seychelles

Code of Conduct for Journalists & Media Personnel

1. Journalists should conduct themselves with the highest professional and ethical standards.

 2. Journalists should observe the *Rules for Media Related Activity in the National Assembly of Seychelles & Its Precincts*, as well as any other rules or codes regarding security, health & safety and any other policies that are put in place by the Institution.

 3. Journalists must treat Members and staff of the National Assembly with due courtesy, respect and consideration for their rights to privacy.

 4. Journalists should not behave in any way that is disruptive and prevents Members and the Secretariat of the National Assembly from performing their duties.

 5. Journalists & Media Personnel shall abide to the Code of Conduct stipulated under the principles set by the Seychelles Media Commission.

 6. Journalists & Media Personnel must adhere to the *Dress Code of the National Assembly* and the *Decorum of the House* if accessing the Chamber for Media coverage.

 7. Journalists must address the Members of Parliament as Honourable. Calling Members by the first name or surname without their title "Honourable" first is not proper and disrespectful.

 8. Accredited journalists and media personnel should not act as lobbyists, paid or unpaid, for any individual or organisation that might seek to influence the political process or benefit from inside knowledge of the political process. Accredited journalists and media personnel should not approach Members, Secretariat Staff, or party officials to seek information for such individuals or organisations or to represent their views.
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