



Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Intramuros, Manila

EN BANC

**GUIDELINES FOR MASS
MEDIA ACCREDITATION
FOR THE MAY 9, 2022
NATIONAL AND LOCAL
ELECTIONS.**

ABAS, Sheriff M.	<i>Chairman</i>
GUANZON, Ma. Rowena Amelia V.	<i>Commissioner</i>
INTING, Socorro B.	<i>Commissioner</i>
CASQUEJO, Marlon S.	<i>Commissioner</i>
KHO, Antonio Jr. T.	<i>Commissioner</i>
FEROLINO, Aimee P.	<i>Commissioner</i>

x-----x Promulgated: December 9, 2021

RESOLUTION NO. 10739

WHEREAS, it is expected that the conduct of the May 9, 2022 National and Local Elections will be the subject of massive media coverage by *domestic* and *foreign* media, including both mainstream and alternative media;

WHEREAS, the Commission on Elections (COMELEC), as the sole government agency charged with the conduct of honest, orderly and peaceful elections has a substantial interest in maintaining the orderliness and credibility of elections;

WHEREAS, the proliferation of amateur media enthusiasts and independent media practitioners may be used as a means to mask the operations of certain individuals or groups who intend to undermine the orderliness and credibility of elections;

WHEREAS, accreditation shall ensure the integrity of individuals or groups performing media functions during the elections;

WHEREAS, duly accredited members of the mass media shall be given free access to polling places, voting centers, and canvassing centers for purposes of observing and reporting on election events and processes;

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act No. 7166 and other election laws, the COMELEC has **RESOLVED**, as it hereby **RESOLVES**, to promulgate the following guidelines:

SECTION 1. Declaration of Policy. – It is the policy of the COMELEC to ensure accurate reporting on the conduct and results of the elections by providing maximum access to all stages of the electoral process to accredited media practitioners, subject only to conditions essential for the protection of COMELEC personnel, property, privileged information and integrity of the elections and

compliance with the relevant guidelines of Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-MEID).

SECTION 2. Definitions. – As used in this Resolution:

- a) **Foreign Media** refers to those who are engaged in news reporting for and on behalf of a foreign media corporation or entity, regardless of their individual nationality;

Visiting Foreign Media refers to foreign media who are not based or who does not have a bureau/office in the Philippines and will only come to the Philippines for the purpose of covering elections;

- b) **Local Media** refers to those who are engaged in news reporting for and on behalf of a local media corporation or entity, regardless of their corporate or investment structure including correspondents of, and freelancers on assignment for, regional, provincial, city or municipal publications or broadcast entities; *except* that local media who operate in the National Capital Region (NCR) shall be considered as National Media as defined below;

- c) **Media practitioner** refers to a person or group of persons actively engaged in the pursuit of information gathering and reporting or distribution, in any manner or form, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Bloggers
- Community Journalists
- Documentary Makers
- Feature Film Makers
- Novelists
- Online Journalists
- Photo Journalists
- Playwrights
- Print Journalists
- Professional Photographers
- Professional Videographers
- Public Relations Contractors
- Radio Journalists
- Screenwriters
- Television Journalists
- Television Productions

- d) **National Media** refers to those who are engaged in news reporting for and on behalf of a local media corporation or entity with online or print publications, or which engages in radio/television broadcasting, with national circulation or viewership, including provincial correspondents of, and freelancers on assignment for national publications or broadcast entities;

- e) **Other Media** refers to those engaged in *other* forms of journalism, *including, but not limited to,* opinion writers, public relations practitioners, creative writers, bloggers, feature film and documentary film makers, and the like; and

- f) **Freelancer** refers to those who do not work full time for a media company but is hired by different media companies for certain assignments.

SECTION 3. General Requirements for Accreditation. – Media practitioners, whether foreign, local, or national media, applying for accreditation shall submit the following:

- a) A fully accomplished COMELEC Media Accreditation Form(CMAF);
- b) Two (2) recent 1.5”x 1.5”colored photographs; and, where applicable, an endorsement from the publisher, editor-in-chief, assignment editor, station manager, or similar officer of the newspaper, television station, radio station, or online publication employing the applicant;
- c) An endorsement from the appropriate officer of the broadcast entity or film distributor which has committed to air/distribute the work; and
- d) In the case of freelancers, a valid assignment letter from the *bona fide* media organization for which the freelancer is on assignment.

Endorsements from any person other than those mentioned above shall not be honored: *Provided*, that the application of freelancers whose previous accomplishments are highly visible, respected and widely recognized need not be endorsed.

A freelancer shall be accredited only if he or she qualifies under either of the following:

- a) Must be on assignment for a professionally recognized organization, provided, that the request for accreditation shall be made by the organization he or she is representing; or
- b) Must have previous accomplishments which are highly visible, respected and widely recognized.

The application for accreditation of a freelancer need not be endorsed, but the application must be made by the organization he or she is representing.

In addition, media practitioners engaged in blogging and online publications shall be subject to the following requirements:

- a) Submit the URL of the online publication or blog showing the applicant’s name or listing the applicant as part of the reporting team for that site;
- b) Submit a copy of regular online articles or blogs related to the topic of politics, elections, governance or other related topics, by-lined or published on the applicant’s or similar online sites or blogs in the last six months;

- c) The website or online publication should be updated at least once a week with contents which are original, dated and extend beyond links and forums;
- d) No personal websites, fan sites, forums, and sites containing personal diaries will be eligible for accreditation. Only website editors and writers shall qualify for accreditation; and
- e) Blogs must be well established, updated at least once every two weeks, contain content on politics, elections, or related topics, and show an acceptable level of readership. Commercial or company blogs are not eligible for accreditation.

Online publications which are communications outreach or advocacy publications of non-governmental organizations do not qualify for media accreditation.

SECTION 4. Specific Requirements for Accreditation of Visiting Foreign Media. – In addition to the requirements mentioned in the immediately preceding section, all visiting foreign media seeking accreditation – including reporters, correspondents and stringers, cameramen, photographers and other members of the news/editorial staff of foreign wire agencies, regardless of nationality, shall submit individual or group endorsements from the embassy or consulate with *jurisdiction* over the foreign media entity or organization they are representing or are on assignment for.

SECTION 5. Period for Filing Application for Accreditation. – The period for the filing of application for accreditation shall be from the effectivity of this Guidelines up to **March 11, 2022.**

SECTION 6. Filing of Applications for Accreditation. – Applications for media accreditation shall be filed at the following offices:

- a) Applications for accreditation of **national media, foreign media** and **other media**, both domestic and foreign, such as novelists, screenwriters, playwrights, and those involved in the production of feature films and documentaries shall be filed at the **Education and Information Department (EID)** via **online** through the following links:

For National Media and other media: <https://bit.ly/2022NLENationalMedia>

For Foreign Media: <https://bit.ly/2022NLEForeignMedia>

- b) Applications for accreditation of **local media** shall be filed at the **Office of the Provincial Election Supervisor(OPES)** concerned, by submitting the prescribed application form for accreditation of **Local Media** together with the requirements, personally or through an authorized representative. Said application form can be downloaded at the COMELEC website.

Applications with incomplete requirements shall not be processed.

SECTION 7. Approval of Applications for Accreditation. – Approval of applications for accreditation is hereby delegated by the Chairman to the:

- a. Director IV of the COMELEC-EID- for national media, foreign media and other media; and
- b. The concerned PES - for local media

SECTION 8. Report on Actions Taken on Applications for Accreditation. – Within seven (7) days from March 11, 2022, the PES shall furnish the EID, via e-mail, a list of all applications received, indicating the status of each individual application, whether approved or denied.

SECTION 9. Media Card. – Upon approval of the application, the EID and PES shall issue media cards to all accredited media practitioners. Media cards must be claimed, personally or through an authorized representative, from the EID, for national, foreign and other media; and from the concerned OPES, in case of local media.

The COMELEC media card is strictly *non-transferable* and is valid only for the purpose for which it was issued. It shall be worn prominently whenever the media practitioners are covering or observing any official event, open to the public, relating to the elections for which accreditation was sought.

Improper use of the media card, or use thereof not in accordance with these guidelines, shall be considered abuse of the accreditation and carries the penalty of summary *revocation*.

SECTION 10. Access. – Duly accredited media shall be allowed maximum access to all stages of the electoral process, including but not limited to preparatory activities, command conferences, and other related activities organized and conducted by any of the COMELEC's Accredited Citizen's Arms and Deputies, subject to such conditions as may be necessary for the protection of COMELEC personnel, property, privileged information and integrity of the elections and compliance with the relevant guidelines of Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-MEID), PROVIDED FURTHER that the COMELEC Media Accreditation shall not be used to undermine any of the protections mandated by Republic Act 10173, or the Data Privacy Act of 2012.

All COMELEC officials shall honor the accreditation passes of accredited media personnel subject to the conditions stated in this Section.

SECTION 11. Rules of Conduct. - All accredited media shall observe the following rules of conduct:

- a) Respect the authority of the Electoral or Canvassing Board with regard to the number of accredited media which shall be allowed inside the polling place or canvassing center at any one time;
- b) Immediately identify themselves upon entry into the polling places, before the Electoral Board by presenting their media cards and a negative RT-PCR test or antigen test taken within the last seventy-two(72) hours prior to election day;
- c) Strictly observe the minimum health protocols and other prescribed safety measures as stated in the relevant guidelines of Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-MEID), COMELEC and concerned local government units.
- d) Maintain professionalism at all times. Unprofessional activities shall not be tolerated. The accreditation of any media practitioner found to have engaged in any unprofessional activity shall be summarily revoked by the Electoral or Canvassing Board where the activity complained of is committed, by confiscating the media card of the offender;

Unprofessional activities shall include, but shall not be limited to:

- 1. Any behavior deemed disruptive of the conduct of voting, counting, or canvassing, such as, but not limited to, conducting interviews inside the polling place or canvassing center;
- 2. Engaging in partisan political activities, which refer to acts designed to promote the election or defeat of a particular candidate or candidates to public office;
- 3. Any behavior intended to unduly influence the choice of voters, such as, but not limited to, directly swaying the voter to speak for or against a candidate;
- 4. Distributing campaign materials;
- 5. Refusal to submit to the authority of the Electoral Board members or the Department of Education Supervisor Official (DESO) of the voting center or of the Canvassing Board of the canvassing center where the coverage is being conducted; and
- 6. Any behavior deemed unlawful.

The revocation shall be noted in the Minutes of Voting and Counting, stating therein the reasons therefor.

- e) Unaccredited media shall be allowed access to the polling place only at the exclusive discretion of the Electoral Board.

SECTION 12. Effectivity. – This Resolution shall take effect immediately after its publication in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation.

SECTION 13. Dissemination. – The Executive Director shall furnish copies of this Resolution to the Office of the President, the Presidential Communications Operations Office (PCOO), the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Philippine Information Agency, and all mass media organizations.

The Department of Foreign Affairs shall furnish copies of this Resolution to all foreign embassies and consulates.

The EID shall cause the publication of this Resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation and shall furnish copies to the Regional Election Directors, Provincial Election Supervisors and the Election Officers.

SO ORDERED.

SHERIFF M. ABAS
Chairman

MA. ROWENA AMELIA V. GUANZON
Commissioner

SOCORRO B. INTING
Commissioner

MARLON S. CASQUEJO
Commissioner

ANTONIO T. KHO, JR.
Commissioner

AIMEE P. FEROLINO
Commissioner

CERTIFICATION

APPROVED by the Commission En Banc during its special online meeting on **December 9, 2021**, pursuant to Comelec Resolution No. 10671, “Supplemental Resolution No. 9936 promulgated March 25, 2015, Rule on the Enactment and Promulgation of Executive or Administrative Resolutions providing for other format of meetings to include online meetings applicable in times of the COVID-19 pandemic and the imposition of Community Quarantines and similar emergency situations.”


ATTY. CONSUELO B. DIOLA
Acting Comelec Secretary