



Charity No. 1161471

**Consultation by IMPRESS on its Code
Response by The Transparency Project
February 2021**

The Transparency Project is a registered educational charity operating in England & Wales, whose charitable objects are:

- i. To advance the education of the public in the subject of family law and its administration, including the family justice system in England and Wales and the work of the family courts, in particular but not exclusively through the provision of balanced, accurate and accessible information about the work of family courts and the facilitating of public discussions and debates which encompass a range of viewpoints.
- ii. To promote the sound administration and development of the law in England and Wales, in particular, family law, by encouraging and contributing to the transparency of processes in the family justice system, contributing to public legal education concerning family law and matters of family justice, enhancing access to justice in matters of family law and by such other means as the trustees may determine.

In short, our objectives are to make family justice clearer.



We are responding on two of the specified issues.

1. Journalism online

Whether the Code reflects the realities of news gathering and publication online, with particular focus on Artificial Intelligence (AI), data and open source journalism; the use of social media accounts, groups and pages and whether the Code is applicable to different kinds of news providers, including non-professional and citizen journalists.

(1) When court cases are being reported on or featured online, this should include a hyperlink to any publicly available court judgment, for example on the BAILII website at <https://www.bailii.org/>, so that the reader can check the source. We give more detail about the problem of publishers not linking to sources here - <http://www.transparencyproject.org.uk/freedom-versus-responsibility-when-the-press-report-on-care-proceedings/> Where a court judgment is easily available online, but perhaps not obviously so to the reader, we believe the writer/publisher should always provide a link. This provision could be added to the Code's Guidance under either Accuracy or Justice.

(2) We have had cause to complain to IPSO where, in our view, a journalist had compounded the inaccuracy in a story published in the Daily Express (print version), when she personally tweeted about it. Although we were partially successful in our complaint, the ruling required only a print correction, and there was no correction made online, although that may have been where the inaccuracy would have had far greater reach and impact. The potential for this disparity may be something IMPRESS should consider in reviewing its guidance on accuracy and corrections, Details are here: <http://www.transparencyproject.org.uk/296-days-to-correct-a-factual-inaccuracy-effective-press-regulation/>

7. Public Safety

Whether the Code adequately addresses matters that impact on public and community safety, such as terrorism, domestic violence, and public health.

The Guidance currently states - News reporting should not blame the victims of crime for the criminal conduct of a perpetrator, or insinuate blame for that conduct.

We suggest that the Guidance is strengthened by adopting the Level Up media guidelines in respect of the reporting of domestic homicide and abuse - <https://www.welevelup.org/media-guidelines>