The Canadian Association of Journalists
L'Association Canadienne des Journalistes

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Ethics Advisory Committee

Policy intent
This policy defines the roles and objectives of the Ethics Advisory Committee, an arm's length committee of the CAJ.

Policy responsibility
CAJ Ethics Advisory Committee, with oversight from the Board of Directors

Policy

1. **Role**
   1.1. The committee is a standing committee formed by the CAJ board that considers and provides advice on ethical issues faced by journalists through the course of a journalist's work. Though it reports to and takes some direction from the board of directors, it functions somewhat autonomously from the organization.
2. **Authority**
   2.1. The ethics advisory committee is an arm's length committee of the CAJ and can set its own direction based on initiatives brought forward to it both internally and externally.
3. **Responsibilities & Objectives**
   3.1. Oversee the implementation of any ethics aspects set out in the CAJ's strategic plan.
   3.2. Maintain positive relationships and necessary interactions with industry stakeholders.
   3.3. Take under advisement any action suggested by the CAJ board of directors.
   3.4. Committee members are expected to reply to requests from the committee chair within seven days.
   3.5. Adhere to the *Committee Governance Policy*, except items 2.1, 2.2, 3, 5.2, 6
4. **Membership**
   4.1. Members of the committee are recruited in several ways:
      4.1.1. through direct recruitments from existing EAC members;
      4.1.2. through application from members at large via the CAJ website;
      4.1.3. through recruitment suggestions from CAJ directors.
   4.2. All potential members of the committee shall:
      4.2.1. be vetted by the existing committee members,
      4.2.2. be active or recently active in journalism, including people who retired or left journalism within two years

4.2.2.1. non-journalists can be considered to be members of the committee so long as the purpose for their inclusion is paramount to the work of the committee (e.g., media lawyers, journalism educators, etc)

4.2.3. have 3+ years of journalism experience, including:

4.2.3.1. people who meet the definition of journalism as outlined in the EAC paper "What is journalism"

4.2.3.2. news managers on the editorial side

4.2.3.3. journalism educators

4.2.4. be of a caliber who thinks deeply about journalism or various aspects of it

4.2.5. be committed to a monthly meeting and collaborating on at least one discussion paper per year

4.3. The committee shall be comprised of up to 12 individuals who are not current directors of the CAJ

4.4. A liaison between the committee and the board of directors will be appointed to the committee by the board of directors and will act as an ex-officio member of the committee

4.4.1. A CAJ staff person may be instructed to attend a meeting in the liaison's stead, acting only in an ex-officio capacity, should the liaison not be available for the scheduled meeting

4.5. The committee and its members shall adhere to stipulations set out in the *Responsibilities of Members on Committees Policy,* except items 3 and 5

4.6. The terms and removal or re-appointments of committee members shall be determined by consensus of the committee.

4.6.1. Should the committee require assistance with disciplinary action or other such oversight, the committee chair shall seek guidance from the executive committee.

5. Meetings

5.1. The committee shall meet at least 9 times per year, with the aim of meeting on a monthly basis.

5.2. The operations manager shall oversee minute taking either by attending the meeting (in an ex-officio capacity) or by watching a recording of the meeting

6. Reporting

6.1. The committee chair shall maintain a written report of the committee activities in the appropriate Google Drive folder. This report is an internal report that will be circulated to the board on a quarterly basis but will not, except for motions adopted by the board, be made publicly available.

6.2. Each report shall include the following:

6.2.1. date, agenda, attendance and notes of each meeting

6.2.2. summary of motions made by the executive,

6.2.3. summary of recommendations made to the board,

6.2.4. summary of policies currently under review,

6.2.5. summary of action items, and

6.2.6. summary of agenda items for other committees.

Related References, Policies, Procedures and Forms:

This Policy References:

Committee Governance Policy
Responsibilities of Members on Committees Policy

This Policy is Referenced by:

None

Forms and documents:

None

Policy History:

Original Approval Date: June 25, 2025
Last Review Date: June 25, 2025
Review by Date: June 2027