



**TISL**  
Tennessee Intercollegiate  
State Legislature

## Media Handbook 2022

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### Mission

To accurately and efficiently promote, inform, and spread the news of the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature with integrity, trustworthiness, and objectivity.

### Editorial Board

<b>Communications Director</b>	<b>Rebekah Allen</b> , East Tennessee State University, Johnson City
<b>Deputy Communications Director</b>	<b>Jenna Butler</b> , University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
<b>Internal Relations Director</b>	<b>TBA</b>
<b>External Relations Director</b>	<b>Zach Smith</b> , Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro



## Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature

# OVERVIEW

TISL Media was created as a student initiative in 2007 at the 38<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and officially began at the 39<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

TISL Media's mission is to accurately and efficiently promote, inform, and spread the news of the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature with integrity, trustworthiness, and objectivity.

Students in TISL Media work together to achieve that mission by producing a newsletter called *TISL Times*, publishing online broadcast videos, and utilizing various social media sites.

The media program is an important part of sharing information about what happens at TISL with the delegates and the outside world.

Journalists will follow the Code of Ethics that is included at the end of this document. They will not disturb chamber or AMC3 proceedings.

The Editorial Board has adopted Internal Procedures, a Code of Ethics, and other guidelines to help with the day-to-day operations of TISL Media.

## WHAT'S NEW 2022

TISL Media has undergone several changes for the Tennessee Intercollegiate State Legislature 53<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly, but the following are most notable:

### **New Editorial Board Structure**

The organization and roles of Media leadership have been changed for the 53<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly. Please see the *Internal Procedures* section below to learn more.

### **Broadcasting**

TISL Media will be reintroducing broadcasting during the General Assembly. Journalists will have the chance to film interviews with delegates and competitors and upload them to TISL

Media's YouTube and various social media. They may *not* interview Jurors of View or Capitol Staff.

### **Online Bill Tracker**

An application that follows the progress of bills during the General Assembly will be available to help journalists keep to their schedule and track developments in the legislature.

### **Updated Website**

[www.TISLmedia.TISLonline.org](http://www.TISLmedia.TISLonline.org)

Visit the TISL Media website for important TISL news. The updated website offers assistance for first-time attendees, links to TISL videos and social media sites, and much more.

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## WHAT TO BRING

We encourage media participants to bring the following items to gain the best experience from the General Assembly and other TISL sponsored events. TISL cannot guarantee access to these items and is not responsible for student property.

### General media materials:

- Chargers for phones, computers, tablets, cameras, and other equipment
- Pen & paper
- Headphones
- Video or digital camera (HD preferred)
- Microphone
- Tripod
- SD card
- Software to edit video packages or photos (Final Cut Pro or similar.) Export videos in Quick Time Movie format.
- USB or card reader to connect a camera to computer.

## AT THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TISL Media will meet at the beginning of each day during the General Assembly at a time and location to be determined by the Editorial Board.

Meeting times and locations are subject to change. A Media GroupMe and the Media website will be utilized to inform journalists of schedule changes.

Training will be offered on the Thursday of the General Assembly for new members. For information on the recommended writing & style guide, visit [this link](#).

### Media Content/Editing Process

Each reporter should be sure that his/her work covers at least one of the TISL news values: *impact, conflict, timeliness, prominence, and proximity related to TISL*.

Each piece of content shall be reviewed and edited by two other journalists or a member of the Editorial Board to ensure quality.

### Media-Specific Events

- 1 p.m. Thursday – **Media Orientation** in Press Room, State Capitol
- Friday, 8:30 a.m. – **Media meeting**, Media Area
- Saturday, 8:30 a.m. – **Media meeting**, Media Area
- Sunday, 8:30 a.m. – **Media meeting**, Media Area

## Points & Awards

### Additional Participants

A student representing his or her delegation in the media area has an opportunity to receive additional points for the Best Delegation Score Sheet. A delegation can now receive one point for each additional participant in TISL Media, with a maximum of three points.

### Best Media Journalist

Three members of TISL Media who are the most effective at achieving the TISL Media Mission will receive the Best Media Journalist Award. Three points will also be given to each of the members' delegations.

## Post General Assembly

After the completion of the General Assembly, the Board will create a post-GA survey for Media members. This survey can be used by the upcoming Editorial Board in order to make each year more efficient.

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# INTERNAL PROCEDURES

For the sake of productivity and in preparation for the General Assembly, the Editorial Board will hold at least one conference call per week. Access to the conference call is available upon request, but the Editorial Board shall hold discretion as to whether their meetings be private or public.

## Job Descriptions

Each member of the Editorial Board will prepare a list of required/suggested supplies and equipment for media members to bring for the appropriate sections. The lists, along with a list of meeting times, will be sent out or published no later than the first state-sponsored workshop in the fall semester.

### Director

The Director will act as chair of an Editorial Board whose terms end with the term of the Director.

The Director's job is to act as the communication liaison between the Executive Council and the Media program. They will keep both parties informed of progress but cannot claim any editorial independence. All final editorial calls will be made by the Deputy Director, unless such indiscretions occur that the Director must step in.

### Deputy Director

The Deputy Director will stand in when the Media Director cannot. They will assure that all content has been properly reviewed and edited by a qualified member of TISL Media before publication.

The Deputy Director is to be kept informed of current projects by media team members. They are responsible for ensuring that commitments to TISL sponsors are met in coordination with the TISL Executive Director.

They should be the first informed of issues within the Media department and are responsible for helping resolve issues or bringing them to the Director.

### External Relations Director

The External Relations Director will be responsible for all information that is published about TISL to the outside world. This includes but is not limited to: social media, broadcasting, and the TISL Media website.

They may delegate someone to oversee broadcast production and/or the website, but the External Relations Director must have final approval.

Duties of the External Relations Director include:

- Promote a common hashtag for use across social media platforms, typically #TISL [insert GA number]
- Train members of the media for social media and content submission during the General Assembly and enforce Social Media Guidelines
- Keep the TISL Media website up to date throughout the year

### Internal Relations Director

The Internal Relations Director is responsible for information published during the General Assembly that deals specifically with proceedings and information for delegates.

They will act as editor-in-chief of the *TISL Times* and ensure that an edition is published twice a day and once on Sunday. They will work with the External Director to ensure online and physical copies are readily available.

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## Social Media Guidelines

*This is intended to be helpful for the TISL Media leaders responsible for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media.*

Media members have an important task because you are presenting TISL to hundreds of people who aren't at the Capitol and whose primary view is through your eyes. It's very important that you consider your audience and the message you're sending them.

Your audience is large and diverse. It is much larger than the delegates at the Capitol. These social media accounts are also followed by:

- TISL alumni of all ages
- High-ranking state officials
- College & university administrators
- Professors
- Anyone else who sees your posts because of retweeting, liking, and sharing.

Please consider the total audience -- delegates and non-delegates -- when deciding what to post. Be cautious of what you like and who you follow on our social media pages. It is imperative to maintain a professional image.

### Good topics for posting

- General Assembly key events: Opening Session, Joint Sessions, Elections and Closing Session, for example.
- Interesting bills passed and defeated
- Quotes from outside speakers
- AMC3 results
- Election nominations and results
- Photos and other visuals generally receive more insights and are easier to quickly comprehend.

### Bad ideas

- Silly posts ("Shoutout to everyone in the Senate," "My delegation rocks.")

- Irresponsible posts ("I was sooooo drunk last night.")
- After-hours social events because they're not official TISL events
- Don't flood the reader
- Consecutive tweets (multiple tweets within a few minutes)

### Goals

Post **accurate** information in a timely manner. This includes double-checking important information such as names, hometowns, delegations, election results, bill numbers, etc. Check twice, post once.

Other good practices might include getting a list of colleges, sample ballot, bill packet, etc. to check for accurate information.

Members of TISL Media, especially the Editorial Board, should be available to quickly cover breaking news via social media should the need arrive. The Director can also recruit and train assistants to help with the posting process.

Media reporters are encouraged to use the official hashtag when posting social media content. Based on the content of the message, the External Relations Director has the opportunity to re-post material highlighting the reporter's coverage.

With some social media sites, such as Twitter, there is a limited character count. Keep this in mind when posting content and remember to keep information consistent across platforms.

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### AMC3-Media Guidelines

A Media member must enter the courtroom before the round begins and remain there until the round is complete. Please try to remain courteous to the AMC3 participants and minimize distractions by remaining in the back or to the sides of the courtroom. No food or drink(s) is permitted in the courtrooms.

Cell phones, in silent mode, may be used only for the purposes of media coverage. Avoid personal cell phone usage during court sessions. Photography is permitted in all rounds of the AMC3 competition, but reporters and photographers should use a quiet “point-and-shoot” without flash. Turn off the sound to the shutter if you have the capability and avoid any serious disruption through movement or sound.

Video is only permitted within the semi-final and final rounds. It is allowed ONLY if the reporter is in the room BEFORE the competition starts and remains stationary through the remainder of the court session.

Reporters are permitted to interview the TISL Supreme Court, Magistrates, Clerk & Marshall, or Assistant Clerks. Avoid discussing any opinion on the case prior to its release, AMC3 scores, lawsuits, and campaigns. You may NOT interview Jurors of View.

Media reporters should refer to teams by their team number or individual name and *avoid naming their college or university*.

## CODE OF ETHICS

The Code of Ethics is adopted by the Editorial Board and applies to all TISL Media participants.

Everyone participating in TISL Media shall seek high standards of accuracy and ethical reporting.

### Standards for Factual Reporting

Reporters are expected to be as accurate as possible given the time allotted for story preparation and the space available, and to seek reliable sources.

Events with a single eyewitness are reported with attribution. Events with two or more independent eyewitnesses may be reported as fact. Controversial facts are reported with attribution.

Independent fact-checking by another TISL Media participant is desirable to achieve quality. Each section editor will serve as the final editor for material submitted in his or her own section but should still seek approval from their Director.

When an error has been discovered, a correction should be made in a proportionate and timely manner. Corrections might be made through a medium other than where the initial error was made.

Plagiarism is defined as claiming someone else's idea(s) as your own. Paraphrasing, citing sources, and analyzing your work is the best way to keep from plagiarizing any work.

### Slander and Libel

- Libel: a published false statement that is damaging to a person's reputation; a written defamation.
- Slander: the action or crime of making a false spoken statement damaging to a person's reputation.

Reporting the truth is almost never libel, which makes accuracy very important. Reporters and editors are expected to carefully verify the accuracy of anything they publish. They should compare the information presented against their general knowledge to test its veracity and plausibility.

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Private persons have privacy rights that must be balanced against the public interest in reporting information about them.

Should a section editor have concerns about a potential slander or libelous case, he or she should bring the matter to the Editorial Board and a TISL Media adviser.

## Harm Limitation Principle

Editorial independence is accompanied by a responsibility to not print sensitive information in certain situations. Some weight needs to be given to the negative consequences of full disclosure, creating a practical and ethical dilemma. The Society of Professional Journalists' code of ethics offers the following advice, which is representative of the practical ideals of most professional journalists. Quoting directly:

- Show compassion for those who may be affected adversely by news coverage. Use special sensitivity when dealing with children and inexperienced sources or subjects.
- Be sensitive when seeking or using interviews or photographs of those affected by tragedy or grief.
- Recognize that gathering and reporting information may cause harm or discomfort.

Pursuit of the news is not a license for arrogance.

- Recognize that private people have a greater right to control information about themselves than do public officials and others who seek power, influence or attention. Only an overriding public need can justify intrusion into anyone's privacy.
- Show good taste. Avoid pandering to lurid curiosity.
- Be cautious about identifying victims of sex crimes.

## Election Coverage

TISL Media's goal is to provide fair and accurate coverage to all candidates during the election. TISL Media's role is to be a link between voters and the candidates. Reporters should report information that is relevant to a candidate's potential to lead in a position of TISL leadership.

Just as with other TISL coverage, TISL Media will offer fair and accurate coverage of the election. Election results will be announced formally by TISL Media at a designated time and place upon receiving the official vote tally from the Election Commission.