

PCC publishes new guidance on dealing with attention from the media after the death of a loved one

The PCC is today publishing new guidance designed to help members of the public coping with media attention after the death of a friend or relative.

Newspapers and magazines regularly publish stories about people who have died, particularly if the death has happened in unusual circumstances. There are generally entitled to do so, provided that they abide by the terms of the Editors' Code of Practice. However, media interest can cause distress to those grieving, and the PCC has now issued practical guidance to ensure the interests of members of the public are properly protected.

The Commission has consulted widely on this issue so that the guidance is helpful and relevant, including working with Facebook, the Samaritans, Members of Parliament and the police. The guidance also reflects the views of newspaper and magazine industry members so that members of the public can understand their approach in this area.

The advice includes:

- what to do if a friend or relative of the deceased wants to speak to the press (and how such contact can be arranged), and what to do if they do not;
- information about material available on social networking sites;
- how to prevent unwanted approaches from journalists or photographers;
- how to make concerns clear to the press both pre- and post-publication;
- what can happen when deaths occur abroad.

The guidance is produced as a leaflet and will be distributed widely (including to all police press offices throughout the UK). It is also available to download from the PCC website.

Stephen Abell, Director of the PCC, said "The death of a loved one is a terrible situation to face, and we want to make sure we are as effective as possible in helping people who are dealing with media interest at a difficult time. This area of work is important to us, and will always seek to be proactive and serve the public as much as we can."

ENDS

Notes to editors:

1. The PCC is an independent body which administers the system of self-regulation for the press. It does so primarily by dealing with complaints, framed within the terms of the Editors' Code of Practice, about the editorial content of newspapers and magazines (and their websites, including editorial audio-visual material) and the conduct of journalists.
2. The PCC runs an ongoing programme of work which seeks to explain to those likely to be assisting people after a death how the PCC can help them. This includes the police, Coroners, the Ministry of Justice and bereavement support organisations. You can read more about this [here](#) and [here](#).
3. To request copies of the guidance, please email tonia.milton@pcc.org.uk
4. For more information, please contact Jonathan Collett on 020 7438 1246 or 07740 896805.

14 June 2011