

Gujarat Information Department (Gujarat State Press Accreditation) Rules, 2000

CONTENTS

1. Short title and commencement
2. Definitions
3. Press Accreditation Committee
4. Section
5. Section
6. Section
7. Section
8. Functions of the Committee
9. Section
10. Section
11. Application for Accreditation
12. Section
13. Section
14. Conditions for accreditation
15. Section
16. TV News Agency
17. Feature Agency
18. Section
19. Section
20. Section
21. Section
22. Section
23. Section
24. Section
25. Section
26. Section
27. Section
28. Section
29. Number of Correspondents to be accredited
30. Section
31. Section
32. Effect of Accreditation
33. Withdrawal or Suspension of Accreditation Facilities
34. Section
35. Section
36. Section
37. List of accredited press correspondents
38. Section
39. Renewal of Accreditation
40. Provisional Accreditation

41. Representation against the decision of the Committee

42. Section

Gujarat Information Department (Gujarat State Press Accreditation) Rules, 2000

In supersession of all the existing Rules, the Governor of Gujarat is pleased to make the following rules for grant of accreditation facilities by the Government of Gujarat to press correspondents at State headquarters Gandhinagar/Ahmedabad and in the districts.

1. Short title and commencement :-

These Rules may be called "The Gujarat Information Department (Gujarat State Press Accreditation) Rules, 2000. They shall come into force from the date of issue of these Rules in the Official Gazette.

2. Definitions :-

In these Rules, unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) "Government" means the Government of Gujarat.

(b) "Commissioner /Director" means the Commissioner/Director of Information, Gujarat State.

(c) "Committee" means the Gujarat State Press Accreditation Advisory Committee constituted by the Government of Gujarat.

(d) "Newspaper" means a daily newspaper or any printed periodical publication containing public news and comments thereon as defined in the Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867 and Working Journalists' Act, 1955 and includes such other class of printed periodical publications as may from time to time be notified in this behalf by the Government of India and should have registration with Registrar of Newspapers of India, New Delhi.

(e) "News Agency" means an establishment under the control of any person or persons or body of persons, whether incorporated or not dealing in collection and transmission of news material through all means and media of mass communication.

(f) "Working Journalist" means a person whose full time principal vocation is that of journalism and who is employed as such in or in relation to, any newspaper establishment/news agency and includes an editor, a leader-writer, news editor, feature writer, copy tester, reporter, correspondent, cartoonist, news photographer and proof-reader but does not include any such person who

(i) is employed mainly in a managerial or administrative capacity, or

(ii) is employed in a supervisory capacity and performs, either by the nature of the duties attached to his office or by reason of the powers vested in him, functions mainly of a managerial nature.

(g) "Correspondent" means a person whose nature of work is defined by the statutory Wage Board of the Government of India. However, if the Commissioner/Director of Information thinks that the chief reporter, deskman, editor, sub-editor, etc., as the case may be, is required to do considerable reporting work also and who has applied for accreditation, he may be given accreditation card in the first instance for three months and after obtaining approval from the Accreditation Committee, for a period of one year.

(h) "Editor" means the person who is declared as the Editor by the Newspaper concerned under "The Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867".

(i) "Card" means the Press Accreditation Card.

(j) "A part time journalist" means one whose principal vocation is that of journalism but who may be employed by or attached to more than one newspaper or news agency at the same time.

3. Press Accreditation Committee :-

The Gujarat State Press Accreditation Advisory Committee consisting of 18 members shall be constituted by the Government as follows:

1. Commissioner/Director of Information would be the Chairman of this Committee.
2. Three members will be appointed from the editors of the dailies published within the State.
3. Three members will be appointed from the editors of the weeklies published within the State.
4. Six working journalists representing newspapers published from Gujarat.
5. Two members will be appointed from amongst the reporters/correspondents of the newspapers published from outside the State.

6. One representative from electronic media.
7. One representative from press photographer.
8. Additional Director of Information would be the Member-Secretary. Out of 18 members appointed under Rule No. 3, Sub-Rules, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, three would represent one as woman journalist, one from SC/ST and one from minority community.

4. Section :-

The tenure of the Committee shall be for three years from the date of its constitution unless it is reconstituted earlier.

5. Section :-

The Committee shall meet, as a general rule, once in three months.

6. Section :-

Seven members shall form a quorum for a meeting and seven clear days' notice should be given for convening a meeting of the Committee. But in case of emergency, the Commissioner/Director may call an emergent meeting at shorter notice of not less than twenty four hours.

7. Section :-

The status of the Committee shall be that of a State level and membership of the Committee shall be honorary. The members shall be entitled to get Travelling Allowance as admissible to Class-I Government officers for attending a meeting.

8. Functions of the Committee :-

The functions of the Committee shall be

(i) to suggest accreditation or disaccreditation or suspension or withdrawal of accreditation of correspondents on the basis of data and the facts supplied to it by the Commissionerate/Directorate.

(ii) to suggest principles and rules governing accreditation of correspondents.

9. Section :-

The names of persons submitting application together with such other details as may be available, and particulars of proposals for disaccreditation, suspension or withdrawal of accreditation shall be placed before the Committee by the Commissioner/Director of Information for consideration.

10. Section :-

The recommendations of the Committee shall be placed before Government by the Commissioner/Director of Information. Government, however, reserves its inherent right when it disagrees with the recommendations of the Committee to grant or to refuse accreditation to any correspondent or to withdraw or to suspend the accreditation once granted.

11. Application for Accreditation :-

An application for accreditation of the correspondent shall be submitted in a prescribed form (Form-1) appended to these Rules by the editor of the newspaper or chief or branch manager of news agency concerned to the Commissioner/Director of Information. Full details about the professional experience of the representatives seeking accreditation should be furnished in the application.

12. Section :-

An application for accreditation from district correspondents shall be submitted in the prescribed form, through the Joint/Deputy/Assistant Director of Information concerned, as the case may be. The Joint/Deputy/Assistant Director of Information shall forward such application to the Commissioner/Director of Information after proper verification of the details given in the application form accompanied by his remarks about the regularity of the newspaper or weekly/fortnightly, as the case may be, and suitability of the applicant for accreditation.

13. Section :-

The Commissioner/Director of Information in the case of headquarters and the Joint/Deputy/Assistant Director of Information in the case of the district shall call for police report about the character and conduct of the applicant. After the scrutiny of the application the Commissioner/Director of Information shall refer the same to the Committee for consideration.

14. Conditions for accreditation :-

The correspondent should fulfil the following conditions for accreditation:

(i) He/she should not be less than 21 years of age at the time of application.

(ii) He/She should be stationed at Ahmedabad/Gandhinagar or at the District headquarters during the period of accreditation.

Note. Normally correspondents Presiding at the district headquarter

shall be eligible for accreditation. Correspondents not Presiding at the district headquarters but representing the whole district may also be considered for accreditation.

(iii) He/She should be a working journalist and should be whole time engaged as correspondent or cartoonist or News Cameraman. And in support of which he/she should produce his/her pay slip duly signed by the editor of the daily.

(iv) He/She should not carry on any other type of paid work or business. An affidavit in this regard should be produced.

(v) At the time of application he or she should have spent/served for not less than five consecutive years in profession of journalism and/or should be a person of sufficient experience and standing and be able to discharge his/her duties in a competent and responsible manner. The details of the daily together with the evidence regarding its type should be produced.

Note. Particulars regarding experience or any other item furnished in the application form may be got verified by the Commissioner/Director of Information if he finds it necessary to do so.

(vi) Recommendation of the editor of the daily to grant him/her the accreditation card should also be produced.

15. Section :-

In case of a news agency, the factors to be taken into consideration to determine accreditation are:

(i) Nature, Type of the Agency;

(ii) Method of distribution of its services;

(iii) Centres or newspapers catered for;

(iv) Number of subscribers;

(v) Standing of the news agency;

(vi) Number of the news items and wordage from headquarters distributed by the agency.

Normally a news agency should have the teleprinter service and should cater to the newspapers of atleast five important cities of India.

16. TV News Agency :-

T.V. News Agencies of States level or district level shall be eligible for two accreditation cards one for correspondent and one for video cameraman.

Provided that:

(a) In case of State level agency, it should be engaged in covering and transmitting the news regularly through national statelite channel news service and it must be approved by Press Information Bureau.

(b) In case of district level agency which is engaged in covering of news at district level and transmitting news on daily basis on its own or having a tie up for transmitting news through local cable net-work having minimum 5,000 connections.

17. Feature Agency :-

In case of a feature agency having not less than 12 paying subscribers in news media organisation one accreditation card may be granted at the place of agency.

18. Section :-

In the case of daily newspapers, the factors to be taken into consideration are

(i) Nature and size of Newspaper : Four pages of 8 columns or tabloide size consisting of 1,600 column cms of newspapers.

(ii) Periodicity : Minimum 6 issues in a week and regularity of publication,

(iii) The influence among people and circulation of newspaper. Accreditation will be restricted to a daily newspaper which has been continuously in existence for a period of one year with an average daily circulation of 5,000 copies and above as certified by the Registrar of News Papers for India or Chartered Accountant and in case of dailies published from within the State and 50,000 copies and above in case of Gujarati dailies and 75,000 and above in case of other language dailies published from outside the State.

(iv) Newspapers published under one name and management but published from one or more places with separate registration number should not be treated as separate. However, it is provided that the accreditation should be issued to one of its correspondents at a place of the publication of such editions.

(v) The editor of a newspaper may also get accreditation, if he seeks it, provided that the Accreditation Committee is satisfied that the editor of a Newspaper is not merely its owner or the owner's nominee, but professionally involved in the production of the Newspaper.

(vi) Daily news paper must provide details of Permanent Account No issued by the Income Tax Authority.

19. Section :-

In the case of weekly/fortnightly newspapers, only editor would be considered for accreditation provided he/she is a full time-journalist and he/she does not have any other business or service. The factors to be taken into consideration for accreditation in such case are

(i) Size of the news weekly /fortnightly : Print area should be 480 column cm. or more.

(ii) Regularity : A weekly should have published not less than 45 issues in a year, and a fortnightly should have published not less than 22 issues in a year.

(iii) The contents of the weekly/fortnightly should be mainly related to news and current affairs.

(iv) News weekly for which accreditation is applied for must be of one year's standing and regular size of atleast four pages (minimum 480 column cm.) and have minimum circulation of average 3,000 copies exclusive of complimentary copies, while in case of fortnightly it must be of two years' standing and having a circulation of not less than 4,000 copies.

(v) Accreditation card may be issued to Assistant editor of weekly/fortnightly only if the editor requests to grant such facility in his place.

(vi) the circulation figure of the weekly/fortnightly should be supported with attested copy of circulation figure certified by a Registrar of Newspapers for India or by a Chartered Accountant, giving details of news print purchase, bills of printing press where it is printed.

(vii) Correspondent of news weekly/fortnightly published out side the State and having very large circulation is eligible for accreditation card at the State headquarters

Gandhiangar/Ahmedabad only,

(viii) News should cover 52% or more space in the weekly/fortnightly.

(ix) He/She should produce an affidavit to the effect that he/she is engaged as a full-time working journalist.

(x) Weekly/fortnightly must provide details of Permanent Account No. issued by the Income Tax Authority.

20. Section :-

Journalists who represent periodicals published at intervals greater than a fortnight shall not be accredited. They may, at the discretion of the Commissioner/Director of Information, be allowed to call at the Commissionerate/Directorate for collecting materials, to make enquiries from the Commissionerate/Directorate or to enjoy any other facilities which the Commissioner/Director thinks necessary for the discharge of their duties.

21. Section :-

The journalist/columnist who has spent almost his life time in any newspaper or news agency or news media having minimum 60 years of age and had an accreditation card for 15 years and during 15 years 100 articles should have been published may be granted accreditation card irrespective of his being attached to any newspaper/news agency/news media etc. but still continuing in the profession of journalism.

Provided that

(a) His/Her services in the field of journalism are considered to be outstanding.

(b) He/She should not be employed in any organisation engaged in non-journalistic work. For the interpretation of this clause, those employed in advertising or public relations firms or in Information services may not be eligible.

22. Section :-

The State Government Journalist Award winners are eligible to obtain accreditation card for the State headquarter or the district, as the case may be.

23. Section :-

If a journalist accredited under the above category ceases at any

stage to satisfy the above mentioned criteria, his/her accreditation should be discontinued.

24. Section :-

Members of Gujarat State Press Accreditation Advisory Committee are eligible to obtain accreditation card for the State headquarters or the district, as the case may be, so long as he/she is the member of committee.

Provided that

(a) Members of the Committee satisfy the conditions prescribed for granting accreditation,

(b) He/She is not holding accreditation card.

25. Section :-

Accreditation card for press photographers should be issued to staff photographers of daily newspapers. The following factors should be taken into consideration for granting accreditation to photographers:

(i) His principal vocation should be photography and should be attached to daily newspaper either as full-time or as part-timer and in support of which he should produce his pay slip duly signed by the editor of the concerned daily.

(ii) At the time of application he should have spent not less than three consecutive years in photojournalism or should have worked as press photographer for not less than five years in newspaper of repute.

(iii) At least 25 photographs of a photographer attached to a daily newspaper should have been published in that daily before an accreditation card is issued/renewed to him. Particulars/Cuttings in this regard should be furnished.

26. Section :-

(A) Accreditation of press photographer is limited to dailies only which have been continuously in existence for a period of one year with a minimum certified circulation of over 25,000 copies in respect of dailies published from within the State and over 50,000 copies in case of Gujarati dailies and over one lakh and above in respect of other language dailies published from outside the State.

(B) A newspaper is not entitled to have more than one accredited

press photographer at the place of publication and in other districts of the State, provided it fulfils the circulation criteria as specified in Rule No. 27.

27. Section :-

Dailies having lesser circulation, accreditation will be granted to one photographer at the district in which the daily newspaper originates, provided it enjoys a certified circulation of 10,000 copies and above. The accreditation card may be issued to photographer stationed at the district other than Ahmedabad/Gandhinagar or the district from where the daily is published having the circulation figure of 2,000 copies or above in the district for which the card is claimed. In case of the daily newspaper published from outside the State, only one accreditation card may be issued to its photographer at Ahmedabad. However, a newspaper published from the State headquarters Gandhinagar/Ahmedabad having a circulation of over 2,50,000 copies will be entitled to have two accredited photographers, if need be. Accredited press photographer shall not be eligible for any facilities available to accredited correspondents except invitation to Government functions and transport facilities.

28. Section :-

In respect of accredited photographers no responsibility is taken by the Commissionerate/Directorate of Information for obtaining clearance from military or civil agencies where such clearance is necessary for security purposes.

29. Number of Correspondents to be accredited :-

Normally a newspaper or a news agency shall not be entitled to have more than one correspondent to be accredited. However, Government may, at its discretion issue more than one accreditation card to such newspaper/news agency through the Commissioner/Director of Information, subject to the condition that not more than one accredited correspondent of a newspaper/news agency shall claim facilities or remain present at a time at any function;

Provided that:

(1) Maximum five accreditation cards may be issued at the place of publication in respect of daily newspapers published from Ahmedabad, Baroda, Surat and Rajkot cities having a certified circulation of not less than 1,00,000 copies and three in case of

daily newspapers of lesser circulation i.e. 20,000 copies and above. Further one accreditation card per district, having minimum circulation of 2,000 copies in that particular district exclusive of complimentary copies.

(2) In case of news agencies, maximum accreditation cards at Ahmedabad may be three and in each district it should be one only provided that the English news agencies and language news agencies should have reputation of three years.

30. Section :-

In case of mofussil daily newspapers (excluding Ahmedabad, Baroda, Surat and Rajkot) maximum 4 accreditation cards for those having a certified circulation of 25,000 or more copies at the place of publication and one in each district and maximum 2 for those having a certified circulation of less than 10,000 copies at the place of publication and one in each district should be issued. In case of evening daily newspapers with a certified circulation of five thousand copies or more accreditation to be issued should be maximum two at the place of publication only. Evening daily newspapers having standard sized 8 columns shall be treated on par with the morning daily newspapers and may be granted accreditation cards accordingly. For the district other than the district of publication one correspondent can be given accreditation card provided that the daily is having circulation of minimum 2,000 copies in the district. In case of daily newspapers published from outside the State and foreign newspaper/agencies, only one accreditation card should be issued at Ahmedabad/Gandhinagar only, provided the certified circulation of the daily newspaper is 50,000 copies and language dailies (he/she must be a full-time paid employee) and he/she possesses a valid visa for working in India. No correspondent should be accredited to represent more than one newspaper/news agency.

31. Section :-

Personnel of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India posted at the State headquarters or district headquarters, State Government journalistic staff/officers, representatives of AIR, TV etc. are eligible for accreditation card provided they require accreditation cards in discharge of their duties.

32. Effect of Accreditation :-

Accreditation does not confer any official status on a correspondent. Government merely recognises that the accredited correspondent

represents the newspaper or news agency which employs him. It must be issued only for journalistic purposes. The accredited correspondents would be entitled to receive the facilities mentioned in these Rules and those granted, declared by Government from time to time. Conditions. The accreditation cards shall be issued on the following conditions

(i) Accreditation cards is non-transferable.

(ii) Editors/correspondents/photographers should not use the words "Accredited to the Government of Gujarat" on their letter heads, visiting cards or any other literature.

However, admission to special events and places including press conferences, tours of press coverages may in some cases be governed by invitations. Admission to protected places or photography in restricted places shall not be permissible by virtue of this card. In determining the number of accredited correspondents to be allowed, the character and volume of coverage required in each case and limitations of the service of the State Commissionerate/Directorate of Information availed will be taken into consideration.

33. Withdrawal or Suspension of Accreditation Facilities :-

A n Editor/Correspondent/Photographer of dailies, Editor of weeklies/fortnightlies and Veteran Journalists shall be liable to disaccreditation if

(1) he/she engages himself/herself in other than journalistic work such as soliciting/promoting business or advertisement.

(2) he/she uses for non-journalistic purposes, information and facilities accorded to him/her as an accredited correspondent.

(3) in the course of his/her duties as correspondent he/she behaves in an undignified or unprofessional manner.

(4) he/she publishes official secret the inviolability of which is accepted by general understanding and the State Press Accreditation Committee concurs with this view after giving an opportunity of a personal hearing to the concerned correspondent;

(5) he/she ignores or violates the conditions on which information and facilities are provided by Government or acts contrary to any provision of these Rules.

(6) he/she ceases to be correspondent or ceases to be in the service of the newspaper/news agency.

(7) he/she causes wilful publication of news that is incorrect, false or mala fide in so far as Government is concerned; provided that if the newspaper is responsible and not the correspondent for the wilful publication of false and mala fide or incorrect reports or abuse confidence, the newspaper concerned will be liable to be discredited.

(8) newspapers/news agency organisations will also be liable to discreditation, if they are responsible for wilful publication of mala fide, incorrect or false reports or abuse confidence.

(9) the daily newspaper or weekly/fortnightly which he/she represents is included in ban list issued by the Government.

(10) if any FIR has been filed against him/her.

(11) any case of bankruptcy has been filed against him/her in the court of law.

(12) he/she is found lunatic (mentally unsteady).

(13) publication of the newspaper is totally stopped or irregular.

(14) violation of code of conduct (Norms of Professional Ethics) prescribed by the Press Council of India by the newspapers.

34. Section :-

Action for discreditation under Rule 33 will be taken by Commissioner/Director of Information in consultation with the State Accreditation Committee after the matter has been reported to the managing editor, proprietor of newspaper, news agency concerned and after the correspondent and editor of the newspaper or news agency concerned are given an opportunity to be heard by the Committee but not through legal advisor or representative. The decision to discredit will be communicated to the members of the Committee for information.

35. Section :-

In urgent cases the Commissioner/Director of Information may be at liberty to take any action warranted by circumstances in matters relating to discreditation, suspension or withdrawal of accreditation, but such action should be placed before the Accreditation Committee.

36. Section :-

When an accredited correspondent ceases to represent a news

agency/newspaper on behalf of which he/she is accredited, the fact should be brought to the notice of the Commissioner/Director of Information in writing by the correspondent as well as by the editor concerned within fifteen days. Failing this, facilities accorded to the newspaper may, without following the procedure prescribed in Rule 34, be withdrawn by the Commissioner/Director and the correspondent would be liable to be refused any facility thereafter in spite of the fact that he continues to represent other newspapers or news agencies.

37. List of accredited press correspondents :-

The Commissioner/Director of Information shall maintain a list of accredited correspondents.

38. Section :-

The list of accredited correspondents will be reviewed periodically preferably every year, by the Commissioner/Director in consultation with the Committee in the light of changes in respect of the name and status of accredited correspondent or changes in respect of circulation, status, existence, services etc. of the newspaper/news agency.

39. Renewal of Accreditation :-

The validity of accreditation card is of one year from the date of its issue, unless its validity is renewed, suspended or cancelled before its expiry.

(i) A request for renewal of accreditation card should be made by the editor/correspondent/photographer of dailies, editor of weekly/fortnightly or veteran journalists concerned to the Commissioner/Director of Information before one month of the expiry of validity of accreditation card alongwith certificate of circulation as specified in Rules 18 and 19 for the previous year.

(ii) The Commissioner/Director of Information, in consultation with the Committee may renew the accreditation card for a further period of one year.

(iii) Accreditation card of a daily should be renewed on the basis of the recommendation made by the editor of the daily and in the case of a photographer his 25 photographs published in the daily should also be taken into account.

(iv) The accreditation card shall be renewed after verifying the regularity of the publication in the previous year.

40. Provisional Accreditation :-

Accreditation facilities may be extended on a provisional basis for a period not exceeding three months by the Commissioner/Director of Information to the editors, correspondents, photographers of newspapers and/or news agencies, or editors of weeklies/fortnightlies or veteran journalists, decision on whose application for accreditation is pending or to the correspondents who have just arrived in this country and whose credentials are in transit.

41. Representation against the decision of the Committee :-

Any editor/correspondent/photographer of newspapers/news agency or editors of weeklies/fortnightlies or veteran journalists aggrieved by the decision of the Committee refusing, suspending, withdrawing the accreditation card may make a representation to Government within thirty days from the date on which the decision of the Committee is communicated to the newspaper/news agency or correspondent concerned and the State Government shall, on such appeal, make such order as it thinks just and proper and such order shall be final.

42. Section :-

Notwithstanding anything contained in these Rules, the Government shall be free to take any action warranted by circumstances in matters relating to accreditation and disaccreditation and in all cases Government's decision shall be final.