

City Hall Press Gallery Accreditation Policy & Procedure

Policy Statement

- The City of Toronto is an open and accountable organization. As such, it values the role that the media plays in communicating, informing and engaging the public on civic issues and initiatives.
- The City of Toronto is committed to developing and maintaining professional working relationships with members of the City Hall Press Gallery to promote public awareness and understanding of Council decisions, City policies, issues facing the City, services and programs, and new and emerging initiatives.
- The City of Toronto is responsible for security and access at City Hall and is committed to providing a safe environment for Councillors, staff and others who work at or visit City Hall.
- Access to the second floor Councillors' office area is a privilege. All visitors, including members of the media, are expected to adhere to all City of Toronto policies, procedures and by-laws. Visitors to the area are expected to be considerate, to respect people and their rights, and to show proper care and regard for City property and the property of others. Visitors must conduct themselves appropriately at all times. Any individual who fails to do so may be requested to leave the area, and may have their City accreditation and/or access privileges revoked.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy ("Press Gallery Accreditation Policy") is to:

- Outline the City's accreditation process for members of the City Hall Press Gallery
- Specify the City of Toronto requirements for accreditation for members of the City Hall Press Gallery
- Outline the conditions under which accreditation for members of the City Hall Press Gallery may be issued or revoked.

Application

- This policy applies to all members of the Toronto City Hall Press Gallery (or "Press Gallery Members") as defined below who wish to apply for accreditation from the City of Toronto
- From the date of implementation of this Policy and Procedure, access to the secure second floor Councillors' office area will only be available to those Press Gallery Members who meet the requirements of this Policy and Procedure.

Definition - membership

City Hall Press Gallery Member (or "Press Gallery Member"):

The City of Toronto defines a full-time member of the City Hall Press Gallery as:

- A journalist employed by a media outlet with a valid lease agreement for office space at City Hall;
- and who works from the office space at City Hall leased by their media outlet and reports on City of Toronto news a minimum of three (3) days per week.

The City of Toronto defines a part-time or occasional member of the City Hall Press Gallery as:

- A journalist employed by a media outlet with a valid lease agreement for office space at City Hall;
- and who works from the office space at City Hall leased by their media outlet and reports on City of Toronto news not less than two (2) days each month and not more than two (2) days per week.

**Accreditation –
Application process**

All members of the City Hall Press Gallery, including those with existing City identification badges, are required to complete the accreditation process. All Press Gallery Members, as defined above, are eligible to apply for accreditation, in accordance with the following procedure:

1. Applicants are required to complete and sign an application form (attached).
2. The application form must be signed by the Press Gallery Member and by a responsible individual authorized to sign on behalf of the applicant's employer stating that the information on the application is accurate.
3. The application for accreditation will be reviewed and a determination on approval will be made by the Director of Strategic Communications, or designate, in consultation with the Chief Corporate Officer, or designate.
4. Applicants who are not approved, or who have been approved prior to the approval subsequently being revoked, may appeal the decision in accordance with the appeals process set out at the end of this policy.

**City Media Badge –
Issuance**

1. Subject to approval, the applicant will be issued an identification badge, a "City Media Badge".
2. City Media Badges are issued to the approved individual Press Gallery Member only. Badges cannot be loaned, shared or used to provide access for any other individual, whether or not a Press Gallery Member, unless in accordance with the modified Visitor Protocol for Photographers or Camera Operators.
3. The City Media Badge is distinct from identification badges worn by City staff and clearly identifies the Press Gallery Member and their associated media outlet.
4. City Media Badges must be visibly worn by the Press Gallery Member while on City Hall premises and must be presented to Members of Council, staff from Strategic Communications or Corporate Security, at any time upon request.
5. City Media Badges remain the property of the City of Toronto.

Access privileges

- City Media Badges provide card access privileges for all accredited members of the City Hall Press Gallery to the ground floor of the City Hall building 24 hours per day, seven (7) days per week.
- City Media Badges provide card access privileges to the secure Councillors' office area behind the Councillors' reception areas, A, B and C on the second floor of the City Hall building for accredited full-time and part-time members of the City Hall Press Gallery from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on regular business days (Monday to Friday, holidays excepted).
- Access to Toronto City Hall is at the discretion of the City of Toronto. Changes to access privileges may be implemented by Corporate

Security as necessary.

- Press Gallery Members must have a specific purpose for their visit to the secure second floor Councillors' office area and must go directly to and from their destination, which may include a Councillor's office or a designated meeting room.
- Press Gallery Members may not loiter in the hallway(s) of the secure area or enter photocopier rooms or other staff-only areas.
- Press Gallery Members must be invited to enter the individual office of a specific Councillor and must leave upon request of the Councillor, his or her staff, or Corporate security staff.
- Photography, interviews and scrums are permitted in the area only with the permission of the applicable member or member(s) of Council.
- Press Gallery Members must leave the area immediately after they are directed by the property owner (the City of Toronto).
- Press Gallery Members may not facilitate access to the secure second floor Councillors' office area for any other individual, unless in accordance with the modified Visitor Protocol for Photographers and Camera Operators, set out below.

Modified visitor protocol

- Camera operators and photographers from the same media outlet as the Press Gallery Member must sign in at the Councillors' reception area, obtain a visitor's badge and be escorted into and out of the area by the same Press Gallery Member.

Conditions to revoke accreditation

- The list of accredited Press Gallery Members will be reviewed quarterly by Strategic Communications and Corporate Security staff, with input from the Press Gallery president or designate.
- During review, City Media Badges will be cancelled for journalists who no longer meet accreditation requirements.
- City Media Badges will be revoked for those Press Gallery Members who breach the provisions of the Policy or the terms and conditions of the application, including, but not limited to the following:
 - Neglecting to follow City policies or by-laws
 - Facilitating access for another individual
 - Changes to a journalist's employment status
 - Cancellation or expiration of lease agreement between the applicable media outlet and the City of Toronto.

Appeals process

- Members of the City Hall Press Gallery who are denied accreditation, or who have had their accreditation revoked, may appeal that decision in writing to the City Manager within 30 days of the decision. The decision of the City Manager with respect to the appeal shall be in writing, shall determine any future eligibility or any further terms or conditions applicable to the applicant, and shall be final.

Sample – for design

City of Toronto Logo

Application for City Hall Press Gallery Accreditation and City Media Badge Agreement

Members* of the Toronto City Hall Press Gallery are entitled to apply for accreditation with the City of Toronto

To be completed by the applicant:

Please indicate your Press Gallery status:

I confirm that I am a Full-time* member/Part-time* member of the Press Gallery as defined below, and I agree to be bound by the terms and conditions of the Press Gallery Accreditation Policy and this application and agreement.

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Twitter id:

Position/Title:

Name of employer media outlet:

To be completed by applicant's editor/producer/supervisor (or individual authorized by employer media outlet for this purpose).

Name:

Phone:

Email:

Media outlet:

Address:

Position/Title:

Terms and Conditions:

1. The issuance of any City Media Badge is subject to the terms and conditions of the Press Gallery Accreditation Policy (attached) and the terms and conditions of this application and agreement.
2. City Media Badges are issued to the accredited Press Gallery Member only. They cannot be loaned, shared or used to provide access for any other individual, unless in accordance with the modified Visitor Protocol for Photographers and Camera Operators.
3. City Media Badges may not be used to facilitate access to any areas of the building for any other individual, including the secure Councillors' office areas behind Councillor reception in A, B and C on the second floor of City Hall, subject to paragraph 2, above.
4. The City Media Badge is to clearly identify the Press Gallery Member and their employer media outlet.
5. City Media Badges must be worn visibly by the Press Gallery Member while on City Hall premises and must be presented to staff from Strategic Communications or Corporate Security, at any time upon request.

6. City Media Badges remain the property of the City of Toronto.
7. The applicant and his/her media outlet agree to follow all City policies and by-laws.
8. The applicant and representative from his/her media outlet acknowledge that access to areas of City Hall that are not public is at the discretion of the City of Toronto and must only be exercised in accordance with the Press Gallery Accreditation Policy. Should media enter areas that are not open to the public, the City has the right to revoke or restrict privileges for that Press Gallery member(s).
9. If the applicant's City Media Badge is lost or stolen, he/she or the responsible media outlet agree to notify the City of Toronto Corporate Security immediately.
10. Improper use of the City Media Badge in any way to attempt to gain entry to non-authorized City facilities is a violation of this agreement and the Press Gallery Accreditation Policy.
11. The City Media Badge must be returned to Corporate Security if access is revoked or upon termination, leave, retirement, or departure of the applicant from the employ of the media outlet, or if the applicant will no longer be working out of the employer media outlet's City Hall offices (or, less than the number of days required to qualify as a Part-time Press Gallery Member).
12. The applicant and his or her employer media outlet agree to notify Corporate Security and Strategic Communications of any changes to the information on this page.
13. The Press Gallery Accreditation Policy is attached and forms part of this application and agreement.

[NOTE: This application and agreement form must be signed by the Press Gallery Member and by an individual authorized to sign this document on behalf of the applicant's employer]

Declaration of applicant:

I declare that the information provided on this application is accurate and I understand the terms and conditions above and will abide by the terms and conditions of this application and agreement. I understand the City can alter or revoke accreditation and/or access privileges at any time.

Date:

Signature:

Declaration of appropriate signing authority on behalf of the applicant's employer media outlet:

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge, the information provided on this application is accurate; and as an individual authorized to sign for and make statements on behalf of the employer of the named applicant, I/we understand that we are responsible for ensuring that the applicant complies with the terms and conditions of the Press Gallery Accreditation Policy and this application and agreement. I/we understand the City can alter or revoke accreditation and/or access privileges at any time.

Date:

Signature:

Position:

*** City Hall Press Gallery Member (or "Press Gallery Member"):**

The City of Toronto defines a **full-time member of the City Hall Press Gallery** as:

- A journalist employed by a media outlet with a valid lease agreement for office space at City Hall, and who;
- Works from the office space at City Hall leased by their media outlet and reports on City of Toronto news and issues on a full-time basis (a minimum of three (3) days per week).

The City of Toronto defines a **part-time or occasional member of the City Hall Press Gallery** as:

- A journalist employed by a media outlet with a valid lease agreement for office space at City Hall, and who;
- Works from City Hall on a part-time or occasional basis not more than two (2) days per week but who attends City Hall not less than two (2) days per month to report on City of Toronto news and issues.

