

Press Safety Protocol

The media sector, the police and the Public Prosecution Service are taking steps against violence and aggression against journalists. In this way the various parties hope to reduce threat, violence and aggression. The professional group has drawn up a collective standard (see Annex A). That means the events that are included in the collective norm, the journalist reporting involved does with the employer and / or PersVeilig and, if addressed, also return, preferably via the employer. The parties involved with PersVeilig underline the importance of this collective norm to make it known that such behavior is not accepted and action will be taken.

Where the employer is, the client must also be read.

Employers

Employers in the media sector are responsible for the safety, health and well-being of the journalists working for them. This means that employers ensure sufficient preparation time and preventive measures, such as effective training, for any form of reporting or publication that may involve risks. For this purpose, a training budget is included in the collective labor agreement, which is earmarked for this purpose. In addition, the employer ensures that the company itself is also prepared for threats. Handles are provided for this purpose in the attached 'Security plan for Dutch media' (Appendix B).

In the case of safety incidents, the employer stands next to the employee or contractor. Full support is required. The experiences can be traumatic. The employer provides psychosocial assistance.

The employer makes a declaration instead of the journalist. After unpleasant events, this may be part of the employer's duty of care. In addition, the address of the employer is then included in the declaration, which offers extra protection to the journalist.

Journalists

Journalists employed or with a regular client in the media sector attend training courses that the employer offers and will act in accordance with the responsibilities set out in the Dutch Media Security Plan. For freelancers without a client, training courses will be offered by or via PersVeilig.

For journalists, it is of the utmost importance that all incidents are reported to the employer and to the PersVeilig helpdesk . The employer then has the responsibility to support the journalist in the next steps. For freelancers, they report incidents to their regular client. Freelancers without a client can go to the PersVeilig helpdesk.

Law enforcement

Journalists have been given a preferential position with the police. This means that a special regime applies to journalists. The profession receives a separate check mark in the file. It means that journalists who report to the police to make a declaration, to make themselves known as a journalist. The police and the Public Prosecution Service subsequently give high priority to the investigation and prosecution of the suspects of aggression and violence against journalists. Journalists have been given the same legal status as employees with a public function (think of police officers, firefighters, teachers, helpers, etc.). The preferential position only applies if the offense is related to the performance of the position of journalist. Violence and aggression against the journalist as a private person does not lead to a preferential position, unless a threat occurs in the private sphere with the aim of having the journalist report differently than he would under normal circumstances.

Sometimes a report is not necessary, but a report with a statement from the victim is sufficient. This assessment is made by the police. It is also possible that a 'complaint' is submitted. In that case the journalist asks for action by the police.

The police have committed to the following:

- Reports of aggression and / or violence against journalists receive immediate follow-up.
- If a criminal offense has been committed and the suspect is immediately aware of this, investigative actions must always follow in accordance with the investigation instruction.
- Aggression and violence against journalists are not trivial matters.
- A report of a criminal offense is always included. In case of doubt about the offense of the offense, direct contact is made with the Public Prosecution Service. If there is no criminal offense, a mutation is always made in connection with the filing of files .
- There is in principle prepared minutes and it will be sent as soon as possible to the public prosecutor.
- The police ensure unambiguous registration (national code) in accordance with the agreements with the Public Prosecution Service how the process is delivered verbally.
- If it appears that aggression and / or violence against a journalist is not only limited to the working environment, but also extends to the private sphere, then the declarant and / or employer is advised about measures to be taken.
- Employers can report aggression and violence against their employees. In that case, the victim will in principle be heard as a witness.
- Employers who are more often confronted with violence against their employees can make (declaration) agreements with the police about this.
- The employer's address can be specified as the home address. The police informs informers and / or witnesses about the possibilities in this regard.
- Violence cases against journalists are in principle dealt with by the police.
- In the investigation and prosecution of these cases, as much as possible a one-to-one policy is applied. In the case of serious forms of aggression and violence, the suspect is not sent out until the Public Prosecution Service has been contacted.
- The police optimally inform the injured party and support the recovery of the damage from the perpetrator.

Prosecution

The prosecution has a punishment starting point of 200% for suspects of aggression and violence against journalists. As far as possible, (super) fast law is applied unless witnesses have to be heard or the case is complicated during the trial. The Public Prosecution Service keeps the victim and the employer informed as much as possible about their position during the criminal proceedings and the criminal settlement of the case.

In addition, the Public Prosecution Service will pursue an active communication policy to bring out successes in the approach.

The Public Prosecution Service has committed itself to the following:

- The Public Prosecution Service gives high priority to the prosecution of aggression and violence against journalists. In addition, as much as possible a 'punishment-on-the spot', which means as soon as possible.
- The prosecution decision is taken with determination by the Public Prosecution Service.
- In the case of serious forms of violence, provable cases are summoned by the Public Prosecution Service to court unless the principle of expediency requires a different decision. In those cases, the injured party is informed by the Public Prosecution Service.
- The Public Prosecution Service ensures clear registration of these cases.
- Files related to aggression and violence against journalists are earmarked for recognition.
- The Public Prosecution Service increases the penalty requirement for aggression and violence against journalists. A penalty requirement is established by weighing the seriousness of the offense, the circumstances in which the offense was committed, and the person of the suspect. If a victim encounters aggression and violence in the exercise of his profession, the seriousness of the offense is assessed as 200% more serious. The officer also weighs the other circumstances of the offense and the suspect.
- The Public Prosecution Service optimally informs the injured party and supports the recovery of the damage from the perpetrator. If desired, the victim is kept informed of the criminal case.
- In the case of a Public Prosecution Service, in principle a condition is imposed in the event of damage, namely payment of the damage amount.
- In consultation with the police, the Public Prosecution Service issues press releases about convictions of suspects of aggression and violence against journalists.

Press Safety

PersVeilig is the initiative of the Steering Group on *Aggression and Violence against Journalists*, consisting of the police, the Public Prosecution Service, the Society of Editor-in-Chief and the Dutch Association of Journalists (NVJ). PersVeilig maintains the website <https://persveilig.nl/>. PersVeilig is available 24/7 for employers and employees in the media sector for questions and assistance regarding aggression and violence against journalists. Short lines with the police and the Public Prosecution Service make it possible to quickly assess whether - in case of doubt - a declaration must / can be made. PersVeilig has an advisory and supporting role. Employers are and remain primarily responsible. In the case of freelancers without a client, PersVeilig can act as a facilitator, whether or not in collaboration with the NVJ. For each case, it is examined what PersVeilig can do for the journalist involved.

In addition, PersVeilig is a helpdesk to chart the state of aggression and violence against journalists. This is important because it is a difficult time for journalists. The safety policy in this plan can be adjusted by the findings of PersVeilig.

PersVeilig Protocol adopted in Amsterdam, November 4, 2019

The Society of Editor-in-Chief,
represented by Marcel Gelauff, chairman

The Public Prosecution Service, represented by
PG mr. G. van der Burg, president of the College

The Dutch Association of Journalists,
represented by Thomas Bruning, Secretary General

Police,
Represented by Erik Akerboom, Chief of Police

OPENBAAR MINISTERIE



Nederlands
Genootschap
van Hoofdredacteuren



About us

PersVeilig is a joint initiative of the NVJ, the media sector, the police and the Public Prosecution Service and aims to strengthen the position of journalists against violence and aggression on the street, on social media and against legal claims.

More information?

info@persveilig.nl  @PersVeilig www.persveilig.nl