

# **Rules Regarding Cards for Journalists, Press Technicians and Media Assistants in Foreign Media (2021)**

## **1. Definitions**

In these rules the following terms shall have the meanings appearing next to them:

“Media”

### **(1) A general newspaper**

Fulfilling all the following conditions:

(a) Is sold in national circulation and is published at least once a week, in an amount of no less than 10,000 copies; or -

Is published at least once a month, in an amount of no less than 100,000 copies.

(b) The advertising sections do not exceed 40% of the newspaper’s space;

(c) The source for at least half of the news articles are the press employees it employs;

(d) Is not an internal publication of a body whose primary activity is not news media (municipality, political party, etc.);

### **(2) National radio and television networks**

Note: Broadcasts over internet protocol will be examined according to the following article (3);

### **(3) A general newspaper, radio or television broadcast published on the Internet, which fulfills all of the following conditions:**

(a) Has been active for at least a year prior to submission of the first application;

(b) Updated regularly, at least once a day, with a daily turnover of at least 50% or a weekly turnover of at least 90%;

(c) The average number of daily hits is no less than 150,000 unique users, or 75,000 for news websites partly behind a paywall. A declaration by the Internet provider must be submitted.

(d) The advertising sections do not exceed 40% of the newspaper’s space;

(e) The source for at least half of the news articles are the press

employees it employs;

(f) Is not a publication of a body whose primary activity is not news media;

(4) **A news agency or a photo agency** that supplies original news material – including articles or photographs, whose source are the press employees it employs – to at least 10 paying subscribers which are Media Organizations (contracts with subscribers should be submitted).

- “Foreign Media” - Media whose head offices and primary distribution is outside the State of Israel.
- “The Committee” - A committee established under these rules to hear objections to decisions of the Government Press Office and Director.
- “The GPO” - Government Press Office.
- “The Director” - Director of the Government Press Office.
- “News” - The last or latest news from Israel and around the world, provided that it is not information purely for entertainment purposes.
- “Press Employees” - Journalist, Press Technician and Media Assistant.
- “Journalist” - News reporter; manager of news department or head news desk manager; producer or director of news programs; interviewer/broadcaster in the news field; editor of a newspaper or news programs; news commentator; news photographer or cameraman;
- “Press Technician” - Picture controller; engineer; studio manager; stage manager; generator operator; technical supervisor; audio supervisor; broadcast supervisor; recorder; picture router; mobile news center employee; lighting engineer.
- “Media Assistant” - Researcher; operations manager; teleprompter operator; production assistant; reporter assistant; recording assistant; lighting assistant; video editor; fixer; monitor; make-up artist.

**2. Types of Cards**

The GPO shall issue cards of the following types, this in accordance and subject to the terms set out in the Rules:

- A. GPO Card
- B. Visiting Journalist Card
- C. Temporary GPO Card

**3. Cards – General Provisions**

- A. Cards issued under these rules do not in themselves grant their bearers any right under law, this including the fact that they do not in themselves permit residence and employment in Israel or entrance thereto to anyone who under law must receive residence or work permits in Israel or entrance thereto.
- B. Without derogating from the generality of that set out in sub-Section (A), it is made clear that the Cards issued under these rules do not constitute a substitute for any permit required to enter or access any governmental place or facility or elsewhere, in accordance with the instructions of the owners, or others who have rights to, the place or facility.
- C. Cards will not be issued to any person employed by Media that is active without a permit or license required under the provisions of any law.
- D. Cards will not be issued to any person who does not have the required permits for residence and employment in the State of Israel, insofar as permits are required in accordance with any law and the instructions of the competent authorities.
- E. Cards will not be issued under these rules to any person convicted of an offense against state security.
- F. Cards will not be issued under these rules to any person that has provided false information in his application to receive a Card under these rules.
- G. Cards will not be issued under these rules to any applicant if the Director is of the opinion, after consultation with security authorities, that providing the Cards may endanger the state security.
- H. Cards will not be issued to residents or citizens of enemy states, or to a resident of an area which is in an armed conflict with the State of Israel, unless the GPO Director is of the opinion, after consultation with security authorities, that the possibility of the

existence of danger from such a resident, citizen or applicant to the welfare of the public and security of Israel, may be ruled out.

- I. Cards will not be issued to applicants under the age of 18.
- J. Without diminishing from the aforesaid, it should be clarified that cards that are issued according to these guidelines are meant to facilitate the work of journalists employed in the field of news media, who must go to various locations and the main events for their work in the news field.

#### 4. **Additional Prerequisites for Receiving Cards:**

- A. In accordance with and subject to the professional discretion of the GPO, Cards under these rules shall be issued only to individuals fulfilling the additional prerequisites detailed in this section.

##### B. Worker of Foreign Media (based in Israel)

- (1) **A GPO Card** shall be issued by the GPO to a person (either citizen, resident or a foreigner), who fulfills the following cumulative conditions:
  - (A) He is employed in the State of Israel, full-time, by the Media, as a Journalist or Press Technician or Media Assistant, as the case may be, in the news field, and this is his primary occupation.
  - (B) It has been proven to the satisfaction of the GPO that the person was active as a journalist or served as a Press Technician or Media Assistant in the news field in the Media, in Israel or abroad, on a permanent basis, during the year prior to submission of his application for the Card.
  - (C) It has been proven to the satisfaction of the GPO that it is the intention of the Media with which he is employed to employ him in the State of Israel, in the news field, for a period of at least one year from the date of submission of the application for the Card, and an express and binding work order/contract requesting these services was presented to the GPO.
- (2) **A GPO Card** shall be issued by the GPO to a person who is not a citizen or resident of Israel, who fulfills the following cumulative conditions:
  - (A) He serves as a Journalist, Press Technician or Media Assistant, as the case may be, as a freelancer, and it has been proven to the satisfaction of the GPO that his primary occupation is in the news media.

- (B) It has been proven to the satisfaction of the GPO that the person was engaged in Press Work or served as a Press Technician or Media Assistant in the news field, in Israel or abroad, on a permanent basis, during the year prior to submission of his application for the Card.
- (C) It has been proven to the satisfaction of the GPO that he arrived in Israel for the performance of services in the field of news media for a period of at least one year, at the request of the Media, and an express and binding work order/contract requesting these services, which reflects that his primary occupation is in the news media, was presented to the GPO.
- (3) **The GPO shall issue a GPO Card** to a person who is a citizen or resident of Israel, who fulfills the following cumulative conditions:
- A. He serves as a Journalist, Press Technician or Media Assistant, as the case may be, as a freelancer, and it has been proven to the satisfaction of the GPO that his primary occupation is in the news media; and
- B. It has been proven to the satisfaction of the GPO that the person was active as a journalist or served as a Press Technician or Media Assistant in the news field in the Media, in Israel, on a permanent basis, as a worker or as a freelancer during the year prior to submission of his application for the Card and continues to work as a freelancer. The applicant shall provide one of the following as proof of serving as a freelancer:
1. At least 12 pieces of news work (photographs, articles, etc.) provided for the media, 12 receipts or 12 invoices or other proof of income; or
  2. Other proof that indicates that his main occupation is in the field of news in the year that preceded the submission of the application, such as: a binding contract for a period of at least one year with the media or approval of one of the media on his employment for a period of at least one year.
- (4) **A Temporary GPO Card** shall be issued by the GPO to a person who is a citizen or resident of Israel, who was engaged in Press Work or served as a Press Technician or Media Assistant in the news field, and qualifies in accordance to the above rule 4B(1) or 4C(3) except for the one-year experience.

C. Visiting Journalists

- 1) **A Visiting Journalist Card** shall be issued by the GPO to a person who is not a citizen or resident of Israel, who fulfills the following cumulative conditions:

It has been proven to the satisfaction of the GPO that he is employed on a temporary basis (for a period of less than a year) in the State of Israel, full-time, by the Media, as a Journalist or Press Technician or Media Assistant, in the news field, and this is his primary occupation.

- (2) **A Visiting Journalist Card** shall be issued by the GPO to a person who is not a citizen or resident of Israel, who fulfills the following cumulative conditions:

(A) He serves as a journalist or Press Technician or Media Assistant in the State of Israel as a Freelancer, and it has been proven to the satisfaction of the GPO that his primary occupation is the news media.

(B) It has been proven to the satisfaction of the GPO that he came to the State of Israel in order to perform services in the field of news for a period shorter than a year, and an express and binding work order/contract requesting such services was presented to the GPO.

**5. Form of Cards and Duration of Validity:**

- A. The form, content and color of the Cards in accordance with their types shall be determined by the GPO.
- B. GPO Cards shall be issued for a period of up to two years, in accordance with the B1 visa (work permit) and the GPO procedures as to be determined from time to time.
- C. A visiting Journalist Card shall be issued for a period of up to 3 months each time, and in any event no longer than the period during which the person is active in Israel, temporarily, in the news media, and holds a valid visa.
- D. The validity of the Cards does not automatically renew and those interested in continuing to hold the Card must submit a new application, in accordance with these rules.

**6. Submission of Applications**

- A. An application for a Card shall be submitted to the GPO, via the [online form](#) issued by the GPO, together with all the documents specified in such forms (the form also appears on the GPO's website).
- B. An administration charge will be paid upon submission of the application, as detailed in paragraph 9 below.

**7. Examination of Applications and GPO Decisions**

- A. The GPO shall examine, based on the application form and its attachments, whether the conditions set out in these Rules for granting the Card have been met. If the Director is of the opinion that the information in the application and its attachments is incorrect he may require an affidavit and additional documents in order to confirm the information.
- B. The GPO shall deliver its decision with regard to the application to the Media that submitted the application (and in the event the application was submitted by a Freelancer – to the applicant directly), within 45 days of the date on which the application was received in the Government Press Office.
- C. In the event that examination of the application has not been completed within said 45 days, the GPO shall deliver a notice according to which the application is still under examination and the estimated date for giving a final answer, which shall not exceed an additional 45 days.
- D. An application not submitted in accordance with these rules, or an application submitted without all the required documents, shall be returned to the Media which submitted it (and in the event the application was submitted by a Freelancer – to the applicant directly) for completion of the details. The timeframe set out in Section (C) above shall begin from the date the application has been resubmitted as required.
- E. A person whose application has been rejected under section 3(G) shall be entitled to submit another application after a year has elapsed, and such application will be re-examined.

**8. Objections**

- A. In accordance with these rules, a committee is established which shall hear objections to the decisions of the GPO and the Director. The Committee members shall be the Director General of the Prime Minister's Office, Director General of the Ministry of the

Interior, and the Legal Adviser to the Prime Minister's Office, or their representatives, and the media representative, to be appointed by the Director General of the Prime Minister's Office after consultation with media organizations representatives.

- B. The Director General of the Prime Minister's Office or his representative shall serve as Committee Chairman.
- C. The Committee members will be appointed for 2 years each time.
- D. A Media whose application under these rules was not accepted with regard to a particular employee, may submit an objection to the Committee. In the event that the application was submitted by a Freelancer – the objection shall be submitted by the applicant himself.
- E. The objection is to be submitted to the legal office of the Prime Minister's office, within 30 days of receiving the final decision of the Government Press Office.
- F. A decision regarding an application which was denied on security grounds shall be made by a Committee including the Director General of the Prime Minister's Office, Director General of the Ministry of the Interior, and the Legal Adviser to the Prime Minister's Office, or their representatives, without the media representative. The decision will be made only after the recommendations of the security authorities has been brought before the Committee.
- G. The Committee shall deliver its decision to the GPO and the Media within 90 days of receiving the objection.
- H. Notice of the Committee's meetings will be issued 7 days in advance.
- I. The legal quorum in the Committee's sessions is 3 members, including the Chairman. If the vote is even, the Chairman's opinion will determine.
- J. The Committee shall determine its working procedures insofar as they are not determined in these Rules.

#### **9. Issuing Cards and Payment of Issue Expenses**

- A. The Cards shall be delivered to those applicants who have received a positive answer from the GPO, subject to payment of NIS 50 for administrative costs. The said amount shall be paid directly to the [“Israeli Government ePayment Service”](#).
- B. In order to remove any doubt, it must be clarified that administrative costs will not be returned even in the case that the applicant is found to be ineligible to receive a card.

**10. Cancellation and Suspension of Cards**

- A. The GPO may cancel a Card if it becomes clear that the applicant is no longer a Press employee, as defined in these Rules. The GPO may cancel or suspend a Card under the circumstances detailed in Section 3(c)-3(g).
- B. The GPO shall enable a person whose Card is about to be cancelled as per the above to present his arguments regarding the cancellation before the Director.
- C. If a Media organization has had one of its employees Cards cancelled or suspended by the GPO, it may submit an objection to the Committee in accordance with the provisions of Section 8 above. In the event the matter involves a Freelancer, the objection shall be submitted by the applicant himself.

**11. Return of Cards to the GPO**

- A. The Media are responsible for returning the Card of a press employee employed by them, if his employment has ceased or the validity of the Card has been canceled.

In the event that the Media does not return the Card to the GPO in accordance with the provisions of this section, the GPO shall be entitled, at its discretion, to refrain from issuing additional Cards to press employees employed by the Media, until return of the Card.

- B. The holder of a Card under these Rules, for whom one of the conditions enabling his receipt of a Card has ceased to exist or whose Card has expired, must return it immediately to the GPO. If the Card is not returned by its holder, the GPO may require that he return it within the period it determines. If the holder does not return the Card in accordance with the GPO's written request within said period, the GPO may cancel the Card and publicly advertise a notice with regard to the cancellation. In addition, the GPO shall be entitled to take any steps it sees fit to obtain the Card.

Without derogating from the above, a person who refuses to return a Card shall not be entitled to receive a new Card, even in the event that the conditions for acceptance are valid again, for a period of 5 years from the day of refusal.

The holder of a Card whose Card has been cancelled must return his Card as a condition for a hearing or discussion of an objection to the cancellation.

- C. In any event in which the Card is lost or stolen, the holder of the Card shall notify the Government Press Office immediately upon the loss or theft. The holder who submitted such a notice shall be entitled to receive a new Card, after payment of administrative costs.