



# Protecting the Safety of Journalists

News organizations are increasingly concerned about the safety and security of their journalists—and rightfully so. In the past, keeping journalists safe in the field meant protecting war correspondents. Recent events in the United States have changed that. Now, reporters covering a local protest or rally may be in danger.

The lawyers in Ballard Spahr's Media and Entertainment Law Group understand this reality and can help organizations reduce the risks journalists face not only while reporting close to home, but also when they are working abroad, online, and in the newsroom. Our lawyers provide practical advice to news organization clients so they can successfully navigate issues ranging from hiring security details to combating online harassment to enhancing newsroom security.

## **THE TEAM'S EXPERIENCE**

Our team has handled sensitive security matters for media clients, including a six-month internal audit and review of a major news organization's security protocols after two of its journalists were murdered while reporting in a war zone abroad. Additionally, our lawyers have assisted journalists in obtaining anti-harassment court protection orders; helped clients develop strong corporate cultures of safety; and crafted safety and security plans for large organizations.

Our media lawyers work seamlessly with lawyers in the firm's Labor and Employment Group to advise news organizations on employment law issues that arise when providing security to journalists, from issues to consider when working with freelancers and other independent contractors to how to address employees' safety concerns. These lawyers also represent security contracting companies, giving us added insight into the process of hiring and working with security details.

Our media lawyers also work with our White Collar Defense/Internal Investigations and Privacy and Data Security Groups to address cybersecurity issues.

When appropriate, our lawyers partner with Mark Sullivan, a former Director of the U.S. Secret Service who is recognized as a preeminent expert in security. Mark has worked with clients on a variety of domestic and international security issues, from security training to vulnerability assessments. His clients include professional sports leagues and associations, financial institutions, other corporations and non-profit organizations, and individuals who are at high risk.

## OUR SERVICES

### Safety in the Field

We advise news organizations on a wide range of issues relating to keeping journalists safe in the field. Our lawyers counsel clients on hiring security details to protect reporters and conducting hostile environment training for journalists.

We provide guidance on insurance, working with law enforcement, best practices for self-protection, and implementing proactive security procedures and plans, including emergency management plans for reporting in offsite venues.

### Newsroom Safety

We provide comprehensive security assessments at U.S. and international sites. Our thorough analyses and recommendations enhance newsroom safety and security through threat-detection models, ingress and egress site evaluations, designed evacuation procedures, and training programs for employees.

Our lawyers guide clients in tailoring workplace violence mitigation strategies, including early communication and reporting protocols.

### Cybersecurity

Our lawyers conduct cyber threat assessments to keep journalists safe. This includes counseling clients on how to avoid and respond to various types of cyber threats reporters may experience, from doxing to online harassment.

To discuss how we can assist you, please contact:



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