

NUJ GUIDANCE ON COVERING COP26

NUJ members covering the climate change conference need to plan accordingly and take appropriate health and safety precautions. The union will always stand firm for the right of bona-fide newsgatherers to do their jobs without fear of threats to their well-being. The following tips and advice will ensure that you feel prepared, safe and supported by your union.

Always carry your UK National Press Card (UKPCA)/for Ireland NUJ Press Card in an accessible place and use it to identify yourself. Ensure you are protected by adequate insurance and conduct your own risk assessment before working. Make sure you have your NUJ membership number (not press card number) to hand if you need support from the union or Thompsons solicitors.

Carry a copy of the NUJ's and Thompsons solicitors emergency phone number in case you need help. Thompsons operate a **24-hour EMERGENCY number for work-related criminal matters.**

CALL THOMPSONS SOLICITORS SCOTLAND ON 07718 416 084

Members can also call this number if there are difficulties with police officers, such as being kettled along with protestors.

01786 896000
NewsDesk@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Thompsons say: "Everyone is expecting a peaceful day. However, if you see an incident, don't get involved take a note of the place and time keep a note of the

officer's number and details of other witnesses make a detailed note, as soon as you can, of what you saw."

If you are arrested you have a right to:

- free legal advice at the police station;
- consult with a solicitor in private;
- have someone notified you're in custody have an appropriate adult called to the police station if you appear to be under 17;
- an interpreter if you do not speak English;
- contact your embassy if you are a foreign national.

The Police

- Consider introducing yourself to officers when the pressure is off, showing the officers your UKPCA press card. Tensions often arise when the police do not recognise an individual as a member of the accredited press, and in the heat of a demo it can be hard to know who's who.
- Make sure you are distinct from the protestors and the police. Make it clear that the only purpose of your presence at the event is to act as a bona-fide, professional, newsgatherer.

- Professional journalists on assignment as an observer should never take part in a protest.
- Think constantly about the possibility of being caught by aggression aimed at someone else and place yourself in such a position that you cannot be considered to be impeding the capacity of police officers in the exercise of their duties.

- Ensure your dealings with the police are carried out in a calm, cordial manner.
- If police consider your behaviour to be threatening, abusive or alarming, you could be charged under s38 of the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010, which provides a wide range of reasons for police to arrest you, particularly in the context of protests and other public gatherings. This is one of the most common charges seen in Scottish courts.

- Remember you do not have to hand over equipment or delete any footage or images

Health and Safety Tips and Check List

- Leave yourself time to drive the route to check for places for good pictures, trouble spots, level of policing, exit routes. If you are parking a car, think carefully where you leave it, as you might need to get out in a hurry. If you park too close to the protest your car could get damaged or blocked if there is trouble.
- Wear strong boots or shoes and strong, tight-fitting clothing which allow you to move about freely [do not wear clothing that can be easily grabbed].
- Face mask, shin-guards, kneepads, body armour, helmet – all or some may be worth thinking about.
- Ensure you have enough electronic memory, batteries and powerpacks to power equipment and phones.

- Let someone know that you are covering the protest and tell them what time you are leaving and at what time to expect you back.
- Try and keep police units in sight and avoid putting yourself in a position where you can easily be surrounded.
- Be aware that police lines (and police horses) can advance and charge without warning. Be aware the police could use teargas to disperse protestors.
- Keep an eye on fellow journalists in case they need help.
- Do not respond to protestors or demonstrators who taunt you.
- Tell your employer if you're uncomfortable being sent into a dangerous situation. Ask for a risk assessment. If you're still unhappy, contact the NUJ.

- Observe government health and safety guidance relating to the coronavirus.

Non-Emergency

If you need assistance or have any queries, as an NUJ member you can also contact the NUJ's Scottish Office during business hours on 0141 251 0360 or nujscotland@nuj.org.uk

After the Conference

After the conference, please inform the NUJ of any incidents that happen on the day (even if you do not wish to make a formal complaint), please email the information to campaigns@nuj.org.uk

NUJ
NATIONAL UNION
OF
JOURNALISTS

www.nuj.org.uk