

## **Requests to remove journalistic content**

### **1. Introduction**

The role of the Press is to report on matters of general interest, to inform the public as accurately and completely as possible, and to ensure that the public has access to this information. It is also a matter of public interest that in carrying out this role the Press must be free to determine what matters it does and does not report, subject to at all times to ensuring that the information it reports is accurate and lawful.

Over time, the day to day publication of news becomes a repository containing a detailed and contemporaneous recording of information about political, economic and social affairs as well as matters of general interest. It is important from a social and historical point of view to ensure that this information is not manipulated, and that this information remains accessible, including via search engines. After all, press archives provide an important source of information and inform the collective memory. By altering such an archive there is a risk of rewriting events as they happened and possibly even to the falsification of important narratives.

It would also be entirely incompatible with journalistic purposes for the right to publish news to be limited in time. The right to freedom of expression necessarily involves the right for expression to endure, save of course as may otherwise be limited by law.

Taking account of all of this, and always striving to comply with the codes of conduct of the Press Council of and the National Union of Journalists, Mediahuis will not remove articles from its website save in the most exceptional of circumstances.

In other circumstances, we may consider a request to remove an article from search engine results such as Google or Bing (also referred to as 'de-indexing') but only in accordance with this policy. We will not consider a de-indexing request unless you can furnish us with satisfactory proof that a request has previously been made to the search engine(s) and refused by them

Anybody wishing to make such a request must follow the procedure set out below.

### **2. Initial Steps**

All such requests must be sent to the INM Data Protection Office via our [Data Subject Request Form](#) housed on our secure privacy portal. Alternatively, you can also make your request:

- by email to [data.protection@mediahuis.ie](mailto:data.protection@mediahuis.ie)
- by post to the INM Data Protection Office, INM, 27-32 Talbot St, Dublin 1, Ireland.

The request must be made by the person to whom the personal data belongs to. If this person is deceased then their next of kin may submit the request with official

supporting documentation establishing their status as next of kin. If the personal data belongs to a minor then their parent or legal guardian may submit a request on their behalf.

The article in question must be clearly identified in the written request and must always state the URL. If multiple articles are targeted in the same request, all URLs must be specified.

The request must be dated and be accompanied by proof of identity of the requester (a copy of their driving licence, passport, or other government issued identification).

The request must clearly set out the grounds on which the request is being made.

Any request that does not comply with these preliminary requirements will not be considered and no individual response will be sent to you.

Any request that does comply with these preliminary requirements will receive a formal acknowledgement. The request will then be considered and a response provided within 30 days. If further information is required in order to consider your request then this will be requested and it may take longer than 30 days to provide a final decision.

### **3. Our consideration of a removal request**

If you believe that exceptional circumstances exist that justify a removal request then the reasons for your request should be set out clearly to include supporting documentation where relevant.

It is important to stress that it will only be in very rare circumstances that such a request will be granted.

### **4. Our consideration of a 'de-indexing' request**

Subject to a requestor furnishing proof that they have unsuccessfully requested Google, Bing or other search engines to de-index the link to an online publication, we will consider a request to do so directly. Please note that we will not consider such a request unless we have been furnished with satisfactory proof that a request has previously been made to Google and Bing and refused by them.

We reserve the right not to comply with a request to de-index an article. For example, we will not agree to de-index in the following, non-exhaustive, cases:

- If the continued availability of the publication as a searchable link is compatible with journalistic purposes;
- If the publication relates to a fact or event that still constitutes information of public interest;
- If the request relates to a public person and/or facts that constitute information of public interest;
- If the request is manifestly based on claims that are incorrect or untrue or which the requestor is unable to substantiate.

If a de-indexing request is granted then this leads to the publication no longer being listed in the results of the search engine(s). The publication will remain available in full on our website because it remains a matter of public interest that a repository of contemporaneous record keeping should be retained.

Any decision by us to remove a link from a search engine is limited to the extent that we cannot control or be held responsible for the operation of the search engines and databases of third parties.