

## **Complaints Procedure**

Our complaints procedures have been devised in the interests of fairness and of achieving a speedy resolution to complaints. If there is anything about them that is not clear, please do not hesitate to contact us by telephone at 0040728048132 or email [office@szekelyhirmondo.ro](mailto:office@szekelyhirmondo.ro).

Note: all complaints must be accompanied by a dated copy of any print article under complaint and/or a copy or screenshot or link to an online article if the complaint is about an online article.

There is no charge for our services.

### **What can I complain about?**

You can make a complaint about any article published within the last three months that personally affects you and has been published by Szekely Hírmondó or on our webpage at [www.hirmondo.ro](http://www.hirmondo.ro) you think that it breaches the Hungarian Journalists Association of Romania's Code of Practice. Consiliul Național Pentru Combaterea Discriminării (The National Council for Combating Discrimination).

You can also complain about the behaviour of a journalist if you feel that that behaviour involved a breach of the Code of Practice.

### **How long do I have to complain?**

A complaint can be made about an article that has been published in the previous three months or journalistic behaviour that has taken place in the last three months. Within that three-month period a complainant must indicate to the Office (a) which Principle or Principles of the Code of Practice they feel have been breached, and why and (b) how they are personally affected by the article. They must also, within that period, submit their complaint in writing to the editor, giving the editor two weeks to respond. In the case of an article published online, the date of publication is the date upon which the article was first published online.

### **Who can make a complaint?**

Any person or organisation that can show that, in the opinion of the Press Ombudsman, they are personally affected by the material that was published or the journalistic behaviour that took place.

### **What if more than one complaint is received about the same article?**

In cases where the Office receives more than one complaint about an article where the complaints are made under the same Principle of the Code of Practice and are very similar in nature, the Office may decide to establish a “lead” complainant. If a lead complainant is established this complaint

will be taken up with the editor and processed in accordance with our general complaints procedures. Complainants who submit a formal complaint about the same article subsequent to the establishment of the lead complainant will be advised of the fact that a complaint is being processed and will be notified of the outcome at the conclusion of the complaints process.

### **How long will it take for my complaint to be considered?**

The time to process a complaint will vary. Complaints are usually resolved through conciliation within about four to six weeks. If the complaint is referred to the Press Ombudsman for a decision, it may take a further two weeks for him to make a decision. If his decision is appealed, that will lengthen the process again.

### **Is the complaints process confidential?**

Yes – the complaints process is confidential until all aspects of the process are completed.

### **What should I do first?**

You are first required to complain in writing, by post or email, to the editor of the publication concerned. You should mark your complaint “Confidential – not for publication”. You can contact our Office for contact details of any editor.

If, within two weeks from the date of your complaint to the editor, you do not receive a reply, or you are dissatisfied with the reply you receive, you can then complain in writing to our Office. Please remember that your complaint must be submitted to our Office within three months of publication of the article under complaint, or of the journalistic behaviour taking place.