

= Press pass =

A press pass (alternatively referred to as a press card or a journalist pass) grants some type of special privilege to journalists . Some cards have recognized legal status ; others merely indicate that the bearer is a practicing journalist . The nature of the benefits is determined by the type of issuing agency , of which there are three major categories : news organizations , law @-@ enforcement agencies , and event organizers (usually for a specific single affair like a corporate press conference) . Each type of card grants different authorizations , thus it is often necessary or desirable for reporters to hold multiple press passes simultaneously .

= = Law @-@ enforcement cards = =

Police departments at a city , county , or state / provincial level may issue press passes in some countries . Such passes allow the bearer to cross police or fire lines to report breaking news , or grant access to crime scenes or other restricted areas ? though admission may be denied if it would interfere with the duties of emergency personnel . Popular media of the mid @-@ 20th century often depicted reporters at a crime scene with their press passes tucked into their hat bands , which was unusual in reality .

Because of the exceptional dispensation endowed by police press passes , they are issued with discretion ? some jurisdictions require an in @-@ person interview with all prospective applicants , complete set of fingerprints , and a background check . Generally , only reporters who cover breaking news are eligible ; other journalists (feature writers , editors and editorialists , freelance writers , and bloggers) are not .

Police @-@ issued passes do not grant access to government press conferences or any other such privileges : they are only recognized by emergency response personnel , and only valid within the jurisdiction of the issuing agencies .

= = = Parking permits = = =

Police parking permits , issued in some jurisdictions , exempt news vehicles from certain parking restrictions while on the job . They may be offered to any news @-@ gathering organization that covers breaking news for use in company vehicles employed by full @-@ time reporters , photographers , and camera operators . Often , these permits are only granted to journalists who already carry a police press card .

When conspicuously displayed , these permits may allow the bearer to park in restricted " resident @-@ only " parking zones , and may exempt him or her from parking @-@ meter costs . These privileges apply only for the duration of breaking @-@ news coverage , and do not nullify all parking restrictions : red zones , fire hydrants , crosswalks , bus zones , disabled parking zones or access ramps , commercial loading zones , taxi cab zones , " no stopping " or " no parking " zones , transit lanes , and other towaway zones are still off @-@ limits .

= = Event @-@ specific = =

For tradeshow , community gatherings , sporting events , award shows , professional conferences , or major events of any type , press passes are generally available . These are sometimes referred to as " press badges " . For many events publicity in news media and elsewhere is of great importance , and granting privileges to the press can help in this . The privileges granted to holders of press badges , and who is eligible to receive them , depends on the nature of the affair .

Generally , prospective recipients must apply in advance , offering evidence of their affiliation . Event sponsors may request past published material , or a letter from the news agency on its letterhead , detailing the job assignment . Generally , non @-@ reporting employees of news agencies (executives , sales personnel , publishers , editors , etc .) are not eligible for press passes . In addition to journalists , some bloggers may be granted event passes .

Many major events , especially trade shows , issue press kits to pass @-@ holders . A press pass may allow the bearer to request interviews with noteworthy attendees , and special rooms are sometimes set aside for this purpose .

= = = Open events = = =

For activities open to the public , such as community gatherings , school events , or trade shows , a police- or media @-@ issued press pass may offer little advantage . Free or reduced @-@ price admission , or guaranteed entry , can sometimes be arranged . The benefits may be more extensive , granting access to front @-@ row seats or to press @-@ only rooms . For sporting events , a press pass issued by a stadium grants access to the press box . Because open events are usually funded by paying attendees , the number of press passes may depend on the number of tickets sold .

= = = Closed events = = =

For events closed to the general public , police- or news organization @-@ issued press passes sometimes grant access , but almost all require advance application for admittance . Greater exclusivity , however , means more restrictions on potential pass recipients . For professional conferences or trade shows , passes may be granted only to journalists who regularly cover the industry or who hold a title of " industry analyst , " or with an editorial or reporting designation .

= = News agency cards = =

" You do not need to ask permission from anyone to be a journalist , " explains the Periodical Publishers Association ; " however , it is sometimes useful to be able to identify yourself as a journalist when needed . " To this end , journalistic agencies issue press cards to their reporters , editorialists , writers , and photographers . These do not have the legal merits of government @-@ issued cards , and they will not replace event @-@ specific passes ; the card only serves as proof of its bearer 's status as a legitimate newsperson according to the issuing organization . As such , card @-@ carriers may be better able to obtain interviews , acquire information from law @-@ enforcement , or gain access to exclusive venues .

In the United Kingdom , the UK Press Card Authority (a voluntary consortium of news agencies) issues a nationally standardized card to United Kingdom @-@ based news gatherers .

For freelance journalists , organizations like the National Writers Union , Professional Publishers Association .

= = Press armbands = =

Journalists in Asia use an armband to mark themselves , similar to a press badge . Journalists are encouraged by journalist trade union to wear press armbands to protect themselves during protests and government upheavals .

= = Fake cards = =

Genuine press cards can be obtained by people not entitled to them , counterfeit copies of real cards can be made , and plausible @-@ looking cards can be issued by anybody , or made . The reasons and consequences range from the trivial (free drinks) to the catastrophic (access by terrorists to rulers) .

Spurious cards

Press passes not issued by a recognised publication can be obtained or made , with the intention of gaining benefits offered to holders of legitimate press cards . Joan Stewart of the Public Relations Society of America reports , ? Fake press passes abound at restaurant and theater openings ,

sporting events , music festivals , political rallies , celebrity parties and even crime scenes . With a decent computer and color printer , almost anybody can crank out an official @-@ looking pass within minutes . ?

Counterfeit cards

Counterfeit copies of cards issued by legitimate publications can be made . Issuers of cards have taken measures to prevent counterfeiting of their cards , creating cards with holographic foil blocking , signature strips , and tamper @-@ resistant lamination .