

**SUMMARY OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

Tracking No. 0012-24

DATE: January 12, 2024

**RE: AN ACTION RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE;  
APPROVING THE NAVAJO NATION LEGISLATIVE BRANCH  
MEDIA POLICY & PROCEDURES**

**Purpose of this Legislation:**

to approve the Legislative Branch Media Policy & Procedures developed by the Office of the Speaker.

OLC No. 24-017-1

5-DAY BILL HOLD PERIOD Alfred Mikell  
Website Posting Time/Date 4:42 PM 01/12/24  
Posting End Date: 01/17/24  
Eligible for Action: 01/18/24

1 PROPOSED STANDING COMMITTEE RESOLUTION  
2 25<sup>th</sup> NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL - Second Year, 2024

3 Introduced by:

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5 \_\_\_\_\_  
6 (Prime Sponsor)

7  
8 Tracking No. 0017-24 

9  
10 AN ACTION

11 RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE; APPROVING THE  
12 NAVAJO NATION LEGISLATIVE BRANCH MEDIA POLICY & PROCEDURES

13  
14 BE IT ENACTED:

15  
16 SECTION ONE. AUTHORITY

- 17 A. The Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council serves as the Branch Chief for the Navajo Nation  
18 Legislative Branch, and exercises administrative authority over the Legislative Branch and  
19 matters involving the Navajo Nation Council. 2 N.N.C. §285(A).
- 20 B. The Speaker presides over all Navajo Nation Council meetings and all Naabik'iyáti'  
21 Committee meetings. 2 N.N.C. §285(B)(1).
- 22 C. The Speaker also has the authority to direct and supervise the personnel and programs under  
23 the Legislative Branch as provided by law. 2 N.N.C. §285(B)(2).
- 24 D. The Office of the Speaker provides support and assistance to the Speaker in carrying out her  
25 duties. Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker Plan of Operation, Resolution No. NABIAU-  
26 25-23, dated August 29, 2023. EXHIBIT A.
- 27 E. The Naabik'iyáti' Committee is a standing committee of the Navajo Nation Council and has  
28 oversight authority over the Legislative Branch of the Navajo Nation, including the authority  
29 to promulgate rules and regulations for the Legislative Branch. 2 N.N.C. §700(A), 2 N.N.C.  
30 §701(A)(5).

1 **SECTION TWO. FINDINGS**

2 A. The Office of the Speaker has prepared the proposed “Legislative Branch Media Policy &  
3 Procedures” (draft attached hereto as **EXHIBIT B**).

4 B. The Office of the Speaker has developed this draft in response to certain incidents in which  
5 members of the public media insisted on placing themselves close to Council Delegates  
6 during Navajo Nation Council meetings, and broadcasting such meetings to the public in real  
7 time. Such incidents raised serious concerns regarding logistics, legally required  
8 confidentiality for certain matters, the need to maintain an atmosphere that facilitates free  
9 and open discussion among delegates, and other issues related to live broadcasting of Navajo  
10 Nation Council meetings by individuals who are not members of the Council or support staff.

11 C. The Legislative Branch recognizes that open meetings are in keeping with Ke’ and with Diné  
12 Bi Beenahaz’áanii. The Legislative Branch understands the traditional practice that Navajo  
13 leaders shall have respect and reverence for their community, and they shall maintain open  
14 communication with the Navajo People, keeping them informed about matters affecting  
15 them. However, a written policy is necessary to provide guidance for both Navajo Nation  
16 staff and members of the public media, and to ensure that no meetings are disrupted or  
17 delayed due to media interference and that the official business of the Navajo Nation is not  
18 hampered.

19 D. The Office of the Speaker determined that a written media policy is needed to address such  
20 circumstances in a fair, reasonable, and consistent manner, with due respect to members of  
21 the public media. The Legislative Branch finds the attached Legislative Branch Media Policy  
22 to be in the best interest of the Navajo Nation and the Navajo People.

23  
24 **SECTION THREE. APPROVING THE NAVAJO NATION LEGISLATIVE BRANCH**  
25 **MEDIA POLICY & PROCEDURES**

26 A. The Navajo Nation hereby approves and adopts the Legislative Branch Media Policy &  
27 Procedures attached hereto as **EXHIBIT B**.

28 B. The approved Legislative Branch Media Policy & Procedures may be amended at any time  
29 by a duly adopted Resolution of the Naabik’iyáti’ Committee.

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1 **SECTION FOUR. EFFECTIVE DATE**

2 This Action shall become effective as provided in 2 N.N.C. §221(B) and 2 N.N.C. §164(A)(17).

3  
4 **SECTION FIVE. SAVING CLAUSE**

5 If any portion of this Action is determined invalid by the Navajo Nation Supreme Court, or by  
6 a District Court of the Navajo Nation without appeal to the Navajo Nation Supreme Court, the  
7 remainder of this Action shall be the law of the Navajo Nation.



NABIAU-25-23

RESOLUTION OF THE  
NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' STANDING COMMITTEE  
25<sup>th</sup> NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL -- First Year, 2023

AN ACTION RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE; APPROVING THE PLAN OF OPERATION FOR THE NAVAJO NATION OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER OF THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

SECTION ONE. AUTHORITY

- A. The Naabik'íyáti' Committee is a standing committee of the Navajo Nation Council that serves as the oversight committee for the Office of Legislative Services and other offices, programs, commissions, boards or task forces under the Legislative Branch of the Navajo Nation. 2 N.N.C. § 701(A) (5).

SECTION TWO. FINDINGS

- A. The Office of the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council (Office of the Speaker) is established under the Legislative Branch in 2 N.N.C. § 281(A). The Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council is authorized by law to direct and supervise the personnel and programs under the Legislative Branch. 2 N.N.C. § 285(B) (2).
- B. The purpose of this legislation is to approve a Plan of Operation for the Office of the Speaker attached as Exhibit A.
- C. Pursuant to the Plan of Operation for the Office of the Speaker attached as Exhibit A, the Office of the Speaker purposes are:
1. Provide support and assistance to the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council in carrying out the Speaker's duties.
  2. Ensure the efficient administration and support of daily business and activities of the Navajo Nation Council and its Standing Committees.
  3. Ensure the efficient operation of the programs under the Legislative Branch.

SECTION THREE. APPROVING THE PLAN OF OPERATION OF THE NAVAJO NATION OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER OF THE NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

The Naabik'íyáti' Committee hereby approves the Plan of Operation for the Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker attached as Exhibit A.

CERTIFICATION

I, hereby certify that the foregoing resolution was duly considered by the Naabik'iyáti' Committee of the 25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council at a duly called meeting in Window Rock, Navajo Nation (Arizona), at which a quorum was present and that the same was passed by a vote of 16 in Favor, and 00 Opposed, on this 24<sup>th</sup> day of August 2023.

Honorable Otto Tso, Chairman Pro Tem  
Naabik'iyáti' Committee

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date

08/29/23

Motion: Honorable Rickie Nez  
Second: Honorable Shaandiin Parrish

Chairman Pro Tem Otto Tso not voting



## Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker

### Plan of Operation

#### I. ESTABLISHMENT

The Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker is established within the Legislative Branch, Navajo Nation Government at 2 N.N.C. § 281. The Office of the Speaker shall have such support personnel as may be budgeted for. 2 N.N.C. § 281 (C). The Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council has the power and authority to direct and supervise the personnel and programs under the Legislative Branch. 2 N.N.C. §285 (B) (2).

#### II. PURPOSE

The Office of the Speaker shall have the power to perform any and all acts necessary to fulfill the following purposes:

1. Provide support and assistance to the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council in carrying out the Speaker's duties.
2. Ensure the efficient administration and support of daily business and activities of the Navajo Nation Council and its Standing Committees.
3. Ensure the efficient operation of the programs under the Legislative Branch.

#### III. STAFFING & ORGANIZATION

1. The Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council shall appoint assistants, administrators, clerical staff and other personnel as may be budgeted for.
2. There is hereby established the position of Chief of Staff of the Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker.
3. The Chief of Staff shall be appointed by the Speaker of the Navajo Nation and shall serve at the pleasure of the Speaker of the Navajo Nation. The Chief of Staff shall coordinate with the Navajo Nation Council and the Legislative Branch programs and commissions to promote effective operations.
4. Positions within the Office of the Speaker shall be employed as regular status employees and political-at-will employees in accordance with the Navajo Nation Personnel Policies Manual. All personnel of the Office of the Speaker shall be employed and compensated in accordance with the applicable Navajo Nation Personnel Policies Manual.

5. The Organizational Chart for the Office of the Speaker is included as Attachment "A."

#### IV. RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES

The responsibilities and authorities of the Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker shall include:

1. Manage and administer the overall direction of the Office of the Speaker and assist the Legislative Branch programs;
2. Develop internal policies and procedures related to the overall duties of the Office of the Speaker;
3. Maintain communication and coordination with the Navajo Nation Council, its Standing Committees and Federal, State, and Local governments;
4. Coordinate and develop policies and strategies to implement the Office of the Speaker objectives including financial management, human resources management, information technology, and security protection; and
5. Carry out other responsibilities as assigned by the Speaker of the Navajo Nation.

#### V. LEGISLATIVE OVERSIGHT

The Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker shall operate under the legislative oversight of the Navajo Nation Naabik'iyati Committee of the Navajo Nation Council.

#### VI. AMENDMENTS

This plan of operation may be amended as needed by the Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council through the Naabik'iyati Committee of the Navajo Nation Council.





**LEGISLATIVE BRANCH  
MEDIA POLICY & PROCEDURES**

SUBJECT	<b>MEDIA POLICY &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	RELEASE DATE TBD
REFERENCES		

**PURPOSE**

To provide guidance and clarification on the use of media during meetings of the Navajo Nation Government. This shall include Navajo Nation Council Sessions and work sessions, Standing Committee Meetings and work sessions, Sub-Committee Meetings and work sessions, as well as, Commission, Board, and Task Force Meetings and work sessions. These media policy and procedures shall also apply to all public hearings. This policy and procedure shall ensure that all media correspondence adheres to journalistic standards of integrity and conduct.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Media Coverage:** Any recording, photographing, or broadcasting of a meeting by the media using social media, television, radio, photographic, or recording equipment.

**Media:** A means of mass communication including but not limited to the internet and social media, magazines, newspapers, television, and radio.

**Media Representative(s):** Representatives identifying as Media by way of television, radio, newspaper, magazines, and/or freelance writing.

**Media Credentials:** An official document or statement provided by the Office of the Speaker to Media Representatives.

**Media Box or Area:** Area for credentialed media designated by Chairperson.

**Streaming:** A method of transmitting or receiving video and/or audio material over a computer or cellular network.

**Live Stream:** Transmitting or receiving LIVE video and audio coverage over the internet.

**Recording:** The action or process of recording sound or a performance for subsequent reproduction or broadcasting.

**POLICY**

The Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker with the assistance of the Office of Legislative Services shall have oversight of the official live streaming of meetings and primary streaming services. Media organizations requesting to live stream or record shall obtain media credentials from the Office of the Speaker. Notification that the media has requested such coverage shall be provided by the Office of the Speaker to the respective committee(s).

The media box/area, within the Navajo Nation Council Chamber, shall be reserved for credentialed media members only. For other meeting locations, the presiding chairperson of a committee shall designate the location in the meeting room for media equipment and operators to permit reasonable coverage without disruption.

All recording, streaming devices and equipment shall only be allowed within the designated media box/area while the device is recording or live streaming. No media recording and streaming devices and equipment shall be allowed outside the designated media box/area while it is recording or live streaming, in order to keep walkways, clear for the safety of the general public in the event of an emergency.

Photos are allowed to be taken from the gallery of the Council Chamber so long as the photos are to be used in a respectful manner. During special recognitions or presentations, credentialed media and family members of those being recognized, may take photos on the meeting floor with permission from the Office of the Speaker or Chairperson of the meeting.

While the Navajo Nation is conducting official business (meetings and work sessions), no interviews shall be conducted on the meeting floor. All interviews shall be conducted before or after the meeting or during a recess. Media representatives who wish to utilize a camera to record their interview outside the media box shall step out of the meeting room unless permission is granted by the Chairperson to film on the meeting floor.

Executive Sessions and other meetings requiring attorney-client privilege shall follow Standing Committees Rules of Order and Navajo Nation Council Rules of Order, there shall be no recording and live streaming.

Failure to comply with the Media Policy and Procedures may result in the suspension of media credentials.

## PROCEDURES

Media organizations who are requesting media credentials shall submit a request through the Office of the Speaker – Communications Section in a timely manner prior to the proposed meeting.

Members of the media shall check-in with the Sergeant-at-Arms or Designated Legislative Staff upon arrival to receive media credentials.

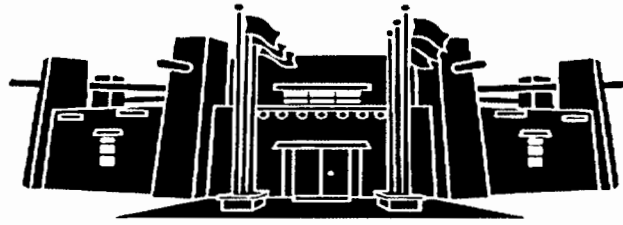
The Sergeant-at-Arms or Designated Legislative Staff shall have the duty and responsibility to provide oversight over the administration of the designated media area. This includes verifying and administrating media credentials and seating arrangements.

Media credentials must be worn and be visible at all times.

These policies and procedures may be enforced by the Sergeant-at-Arms or Designated Legislative Staff.


Appendix A: Media Credentials Application

DRAFT



## MEMORANDUM

To : Hon. Crystalyne Curley, Speaker  
25<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council

From:   
Luralene D. Tapahe, Principal Advocate  
Office of Legislative Counsel

Date: January 12, 2024

Subject: **AN ACTION RELATING TO THE NAABIK'ÍYÁTI' COMMITTEE;  
APPROVING THE NAVAJO NATION LEGISLATIVE BRANCH MEDIA  
POLICY & PROCEDURES**

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Pursuant to your request, the Office of Legislative Counsel has prepared the above-described proposed legislation. OLC finds this draft to be legally sufficient, but as with any action of the Navajo Nation government, it can be challenged under applicable laws.

You may assign this legislation to the appropriate committees, in accordance with your authority under Title 2 of the Navajo Nation Code.

Please review this legislation and all of its exhibits, to make sure that everything is satisfactory. You should contact me immediately if any edits are needed, or if you have any questions or other concerns. I can be reached at phone no. (928)871-7166 or by email at: [LuraleneTapahe@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:LuraleneTapahe@navajo-nsn.gov)

Thank you for your patience.

THE NAVAJO NATION  
LEGISLATIVE BRANCH  
INTERNET PUBLIC REVIEW PUBLICATION



LEGISLATION NO: \_0012-24\_

SPONSOR: Crystalynne Curley

TITLE: An Action Relating to Naabik'iyáti' Committee; Approving the Navajo Nation Legislative Branch Media Policy & Procedures

*Date posted:* January 12, 2024 at 4:42PM

Digital comments may be e-mailed to [comments@navajo-nsn.gov](mailto:comments@navajo-nsn.gov)

Written comments may be mailed to:

Executive Director  
Office of Legislative Services  
P.O. Box 3390  
Window Rock, AZ 86515  
(928) 871-7586

Comments may be made in the form of chapter resolutions, letters, position papers, etc. Please include your name, position title, address for written comments; a valid e-mail address is required. Anonymous comments will not be included in the Legislation packet.

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