


Professional Code of Conduct and Standards for Prosecutors in Relations with The Public, Civil Society Institutions, And the Media

 Komilov Avazbek Bokijoniovich

Tha Law Enforcement Academy of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Head of Department, DSc in Law, Associate Professor, Uzbekistan

Received: 28 Feb 2026 | Received Revised Version: 14 Mar 2026 | Accepted: 02 Apr 2026 | Published: 29 Apr 2026

Volume 08 Issue 04 2026 | Crossref DOI: 10.37547/tajpslc/Volume08Issue04-06

Abstract

This scientific article provides a comprehensive theoretical and legal analysis of the professional conduct standards for prosecutorial employees of the Republic of Uzbekistan in their engagement with the public, civil society institutions, and the mass media. The research evaluates the evolution of the national legal framework, specifically focusing on the Law «On the Prosecutor's Office» and specialized departmental regulations aimed at ensuring institutional transparency and accountability. A significant portion of the study is dedicated to aligning national practices with international benchmarks, such as CCPE Opinion No. 8 (2013) and the «Budapest Guidelines». The author substantiates that adhering to the principles of objectivity, professional secrecy, the presumption of innocence, and the protection of vulnerable groups is essential for maintaining the integrity of the prosecution service. Furthermore, the article explores the strategic importance of "institutional image-making" as a tool to bolster public trust and enhance the rule of law. The study concludes with a set of conceptual and practical recommendations designed to modernize prosecutorial communication strategies through digitalization and proactive legal advocacy.

Keywords: Prosecutorial bodies, professional ethics, standards of conduct, transparency, confidentiality, mass media, international standards.

© 2026 Komilov Avazbek Bokijoniovich. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY 4.0). The authors retain copyright and allow others to share, adapt, or redistribute the work with proper attribution.

Cite This Article: Komilov Avazbek Bokijoniovich. (2026). Professional Code of Conduct and Standards for Prosecutors in Relations with The Public, Civil Society Institutions, And the Media. The American Journal of Political Science Law and Criminology, 8(04), 34–39. <https://doi.org/10.37547/tajpslc/Volume08Issue04-06>

1. Introduction

One of the pivotal dimensions of the reforms implemented in Uzbekistan in recent years is directly associated with ensuring the unfettered operation of civil society institutions and the mass media.

The State guarantees the freedom of activity and access to information for the mass media, as well as the protection of their property rights and safeguards against unlawful decisions by state authorities or the illegal actions (or omissions) of their officials [1].

It is pertinent to underscore that well-founded objections and critiques voiced by the populace regarding the activities of state bodies and their leadership –conveyed through civil society institutions, mass media, and social networks – serve as a vital mechanism. Consequently, numerous systemic issues and legal infractions are being rectified in a timely manner, thereby preempting potential adverse consequences.

Accordingly, the policy of openness and transparency currently pursued in Uzbekistan presents the prosecution

authorities with critical tasks in this domain. Notably, Article 4 of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan «On the Prosecutor's Office» designates participation in law-making activities and the enhancement of legal culture within society [2] as one of the nine primary functional directions of the prosecution authorities.

In this regard, raising the engagement of the prosecution authorities with the public, civil society institutions, and the mass media to a qualitatively new level is of paramount importance. Furthermore, establishing rigorous professional codes of conduct for prosecution personnel in their interactions with these stakeholders remains a crucial objective.

It should be noted that the professional codes of conduct for prosecutors in this area are reflected in a number of organizational and administrative instruments issued by the Prosecutor General of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

In particular, the Code of Ethics for Employees of the Prosecution Authorities of the Republic of Uzbekistan mandates that personnel, in their interactions with citizens, shall:

- Bear in mind that the process of communication with applicants serves as the primary basis for the formation of public perception regarding the prosecution authorities;
- Receive citizens appropriately without causing unjustified delays, demonstrating respect, courtesy, attentiveness, and patience while remaining focused on the matter at hand;
- Refrain from expressing resentment, anger, or insolence toward citizens for having filed an appeal;
- Strictly avoid any actions that disparage the honor and dignity of individuals or involve the exertion of psychological or physical pressure;
- Strive to fully comprehend the substance and merits of each application;
- Strictly adhere to professional communication standards during telephonic conversations [3].

Furthermore, pursuant to Sectoral Order No. 140 «On enhancing the efficiency of the prosecution authorities' activities in ensuring public relations and disseminating legal information» [4], the primary objectives of the prosecution authorities in the field of public engagement and legal information dissemination are as follows:

- Strengthening the rule of law, ensuring the supremacy of the law, and protecting the rights, freedoms, and legitimate interests of citizens;
- Establishing effective cooperation with the public, civil society institutions, and the mass media;
- Ensuring transparency in operations to further enhance public confidence in the prosecution authorities;
- Promoting legal advocacy and actively participating in the elevation of the population's legal culture;
- Disseminating the substance, essence, and significance of legislative acts and ongoing reforms to both the general public and direct executors;
- Consolidating laws and other regulatory legal acts.

The prosecution authorities shall establish an integral cooperation with the general public, civil society institutions, and the mass media in implementing a complex of measures aimed at constructing a legal democratic state, strengthening the rule of law, and ensuring the prevalence of social justice. To further enhance public confidence in the prosecution authorities, the following objectives shall be pursued:

- Formation of an objective public perception regarding the prosecution authorities through the effective utilization of the mass media;
- Engagement in active cooperation with public opinion research centers to monitor social sentiments;
- Systematic analysis of information flows concerning the activities of the prosecution authorities, including strategic forecasting and the formulation of relevant developmental proposals.

An analysis of the legal frameworks governing the interaction of the prosecution authorities with the public, civil society institutions, and the mass media demonstrates that prosecutors must adhere to a specific set of professional codes of conduct within these relations:

Firstly, the Public Relations and Legal Information Department, the prosecutors of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, regions, and Tashkent city, as well as equivalent prosecutors, the Head of the Department for Combating Economic Crimes under the General Prosecutor's Office (hereinafter – the Department), and the Director of the Bureau of Compulsory Enforcement (hereinafter – the Bureau), shall ensure:

- Daily monitoring of reports in both print and electronic mass media;
- Immediate, comprehensive, and thorough review by relevant departments of any reports concerning legal violations that necessitate the intervention of the prosecution authorities.

In this context, it is mandatory to provide an immediate response to information concerning the activities of the prosecution authorities that is inaccurate or fosters negative public perception.

Secondly, in the sphere of ensuring the transparency of the prosecution authorities' activities:

- Effective utilization shall be made of the legal instruments provided by law to ensure the openness of the activities of the prosecution authorities;
- Strict compliance with the legally mandated procedures and timeframes for processing inquiries regarding the activities of the prosecution authorities is mandatory;
- Information submitted for publication in the mass media must be meticulously reviewed to ensure its veracity and objectivity, as well as to prevent the disclosure of state secrets or any other information protected by law;
- Personal liability for the objectivity, completeness, and accuracy of official statements and materials submitted for website publication shall rest with the heads of the structural divisions of the General Prosecutor's Office, regional prosecutors, the Head of the Department, and the Director of the Bureau.

Thirdly, in the sphere of promoting legal advocacy, participating in the enhancement of the population's legal culture, and communicating the substance and significance of regulatory acts and ongoing reforms to the public and direct executors:

- **Professionalism in Advocacy:** Achieving a further increase in public confidence in the prosecution authorities through the professional and responsible execution of legal advocacy initiatives is considered the official duty of every employee. Regardless of the topic, venue, format, or audience composition, every event must be preceded by comprehensive and meticulous preparation.
- **Analytical Approach:** Legal advocacy activities

must be carried out based on an in-depth analysis of the state of legality and crime, taking into account the specific characteristics of each region and sector, as well as the priority areas of societal reform and the most critical socio-political tasks.

- **Focus on Youth:** In the process of enhancing the legal culture and literacy of minors, particular attention must be paid to initiatives aimed at fostering an active civic position, patriotism, loyalty to the ideals of national independence, and a sense of intolerance toward any form of legal violation.

Most importantly, every employee of the prosecution authorities must continuously enhance their legal proficiency by mastering the substance and requirements of newly enacted regulatory and legal instruments.

In this context, it is important to emphasize that the norms governing the professional codes of conduct and standards for prosecutors in their relations with civil society institutions and the mass media are enshrined not only in national legislation but also in a series of international legal instruments.

Specifically, one of the primary legal frameworks regulating the relationship between prosecutors and the media is Opinion No. 8 (2013) on the Relations between Prosecutors and the Media, adopted by the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE) in Yerevan on October 8-9, 2013 [5].

This Opinion aims to facilitate the media's access to relevant information and to develop recommendations for promoting cooperation between prosecutors and the media in accordance with national legislation and the international obligations of member states.

Notably, according to Paragraph 18 of this document, while prosecutors have the right to freedom of expression, they must simultaneously adhere to obligations such as maintaining professional secrecy, ensuring confidentiality, and demonstrating objectivity and restraint. In their interactions with the media, prosecutors are required to remain vigilant regarding risks that could jeopardize the integrity and impartiality of the prosecution service.

In their interactions with the mass media, prosecutors shall endeavor to ensure that freedom of speech and the press do not infringe upon the legal rights and interests of others – particularly vulnerable groups such as minors, victims, and the family members of the accused.

Furthermore, they are bound to comply with data protection requirements and confidentiality protocols.

Additionally, information provided by prosecutors to the media must not jeopardize the integrity of the investigation and prosecution or undermine the objectives of the inquiry. Such information must not violate the rights of third parties, nor should it exert undue influence on individuals participating in the investigation or prosecution process. Moreover, it is essential that such communication does not influence the eventual outcome of the judicial proceedings.

In accordance with Paragraph 27 of the Opinion, while observing the presumption of innocence, the prosecutor must establish a balance between the public's need for information and the protection of an individual's honor and dignity. If within their scope of authority, the prosecutor must ensure that their actions do not draw undue media attention to persons in custody. Likewise, they must ensure that individuals involved in a case – especially victims – are sufficiently protected from media pressure and harassment.

Section III of the Opinion is entirely dedicated to the relations between prosecutors and the mass media, outlining several fundamental principles:

Transparency as a Core Component: Transparency in the performance of duties by prosecutors is a decisive component of the principle of the rule of law and serves as one of the essential guarantees of a fair trial.

Institutional Image and Public Trust: The application of the transparency principle in prosecutorial activities is a means of securing public confidence and disseminating information regarding the functions and powers of the prosecution service. Consequently, the image of the prosecution authorities constitutes a vital part of public trust in the proper functioning of the justice system. The broad right of the media to access information concerning prosecutorial activities is a factor in strengthening democracy and developing open cooperation with society.

Optimization of Standards: The openness of prosecutorial activities leads to the improvement of their operational standards. By informing the media about proceedings and specifically about investigative actions, law enforcement and prosecution authorities may, in turn, receive information from the general public, thereby enhancing the efficiency of justice.

Crime Prevention: In accordance with legislation, prosecutors may provide information to the general public through the mass media for the purpose of preventing crimes and other legal violations.

Principles of Interaction: Relations with the media must be built upon mutual respect, trust, responsibility, equal treatment, and respect for judicial decisions. Furthermore, in the exercise of their mandates, prosecutors are required to act with objectivity and equality toward all representatives of the mass media.

Accuracy and Clarity: Information provided by prosecutors to the mass media must be accurate, reliable, and unambiguous, leaving no room for misinterpretation;

Legal and Ethical Compliance: At all stages of their activities, prosecutors shall provide information to the media while strictly respecting data protection laws, confidentiality, the preservation of human dignity, the presumption of innocence, and ethical norms in relations with other process participants. They must also adhere to legal provisions that prohibit or restrict the disclosure of specific information;

Institutional Communication and Technology: To exercise their functions conscientiously, impartially, and effectively, the prosecution service may issue press releases, conduct briefings, or provide information through other means, such as press conferences, interviews, and participation in seminars or roundtables. Where necessary, new information technologies should be extensively utilized to ensure the public is adequately and timely informed about prosecutorial activities and other law enforcement efforts. In this regard, it is recommended that prosecution authorities maintain and manage their official websites appropriately;

Professional Restraint and Objectivity: Prosecutors must refrain from expressing opinions or disclosing information that contradicts the fundamental principles of proper communication. They shall communicate independently and impartially at all times, refraining from expressing personal opinions or subjective evaluative judgments regarding individuals or events (Paragraph 44) [6].

Furthermore, the norms governing the professional codes of conduct and standards for prosecutors in their relations with the public, civil society institutions, and the mass media are also reflected in several international legal instruments.

Specifically, the «Standards of Professional Responsibility and Statement of the Essential Duties and Rights of Prosecutors» [7], adopted by the International Association of Prosecutors (IAP) on April 23, 1999, in Budapest, serves as a comprehensive set of international standards for the conduct of prosecutors and prosecution authorities. According to these standards, prosecutors shall:

- Always conduct themselves professionally and in accordance with the law, as well as the ethics and rules of their profession;
- Keep themselves consistently informed of amendments and supplements to the legislation;
- Strive to be consistent, independent, and impartial.

Prosecutors are required to perform their duties objectively and must remain resilient against pressure from individuals, groups, the public, or the mass media.

Similarly, according to the «European Guidelines on Ethics and Conduct for Prosecutors» («The Budapest Guidelines»), adopted at the Sixth Conference of Prosecutors General of Europe held in Budapest on May 29-31, 2005, prosecutors shall, at all times and under all circumstances:

- Respect, protect, and promote human dignity and fundamental rights;
- Preserve the honor and dignity of their profession at all times;
- Enhance their level of awareness and professional competence, while continuously monitoring developments in the legal and social spheres;
- Remain resilient against the influence of individual or private interests, as well as pressure from the public and the mass media;
- Maintain professional secrecy and confidentiality [8].

In general, based on the study of national and international legal instruments regarding the professional codes of conduct and standards for prosecutors in their relations with the public, civil society institutions, and the mass media, the following conclusions have been reached:

First, both national and international legal frameworks for the professional conduct of prosecutors in their interactions with the population, civil society, and the

media have been established. In Uzbekistan, these matters are primarily regulated through the internal administrative and organizational instruments of the prosecution authorities.

Second, prosecutors must demonstrate professional discretion, maintain confidentiality, and uphold objectivity and restraint when expressing their views. Specifically, in interactions with the media, it must be ensured that freedom of speech and the press does not infringe upon the rights and legitimate interests of others (such as minors, victims, and the family members of the accused), and that data protection laws and confidentiality protocols are strictly observed.

Third, relations with the general public, civil society institutions, and the mass media must be built upon the principles of mutual respect, trust, and equal treatment. In the exercise of their mandates, prosecutors are required to act in a spirit of impartiality and equality toward both citizens and media representatives.

References

1. The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan «On the Mass Media» // National Database of Legislation, 21.09.2024 й., №03/24/963/0735.
2. The Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan «On the Prosecutor's Office» // National Database of Legislation, 15.08.2025 й., №03/25/1081/0738.
3. Electronic source: National Database of Legislation (Lex.uz), available at: <https://buyruq.prokuratura.uz/regulations/doc/3845> (accessed on April 24, 2026).
4. Electronic source: National Database of Legislation (Lex.uz), available at: <https://buyruq.prokuratura.uz/regulations/doc/1163> (accessed on April 24, 2026).
5. Opinion No. 8 (2013) of the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE) to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on «Relations between Prosecutors and the Media» – Available at: <http://rm.coe.int/ccpe-2013-op8-ru/1680a20cb5>.
6. Opinion No. 8 (2013) of the Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE) to the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on «Relations between Prosecutors and the Media» – Available at: <http://rm.coe.int/ccpe-2013-op8-ru/1680a20cb5>.
7. Standards of professional responsibility and statement of the essential duties and rights of

prosecutors // adopted by the International Association of prosecutors. – [http:// www.iap-association.org/getattachment/Resources-Documentation/IAP-Standards-\(1\)/IAP_Standards_oktober-2018_FINAL_20180210.pdf.aspx](http://www.iap-association.org/getattachment/Resources-Documentation/IAP-Standards-(1)/IAP_Standards_oktober-2018_FINAL_20180210.pdf.aspx).

8. Модели и стандарты прокурорской деятельности в современных условиях: учебное пособие / Е.Л.Никитин, Н.В.Кулик. – Санкт-Петербург: Санкт-Петербургский юридический институт (филиал) Университета прокуратуры Российской Федерации, 2018. – С. 67-70.
[Models and Standards of Prosecutorial Activity in Modern Conditions: A Textbook / E.L. Nikitin, N.V.Kulik. – Saint Petersburg: Saint Petersburg Juridical Institute (Branch) of the University of the Prosecutor’s Office of the Russian Federation, 2018. – pp. 67-70.]