



# MEDIA HOTLINE: (651) 238-1884

Sponsored by The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press; Tilton & Dunn, P.L.L.P.; and Kelly & Berens, PA  
RCFP: 1101 Wilson Blvd., Suite 1100, Arlington, VA 22209 (703) 807-2100  
Tilton & Dunn, P.L.L.P., 101 East Fifth Street, Suite 2220, St. Paul, MN 55101 (651) 224-7687  
Kelly & Berens, PA, IDS Center, 80 S. Eighth Street, Suite 3720, Minneapolis, MN 55402-2219 (612) 349-6171

## REPORTERS COMMITTEE HOTLINE PROVIDES FREE 24-HOUR LEGAL AID TO JOURNALISTS COVERING REPUBLICAN NATIONAL CONVENTION

- Carry with you, at all times, (1) your RNC-issued press credential, if applicable, (2) a government issued photo I.D., and (3) cash (to post bond).
- If you are detained, (1) comply with police orders; (2) identify yourself as a member of the press; (3) ask the arresting officer to notify a supervisor that a reporter is being detained; and (4) call the MEDIA HOTLINE.

The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press has arranged with two Minnesota law firms to coordinate *pro bono* legal assistance to reporters covering the 2008 Republican National Convention through a 24-hour hotline. Volunteer attorneys will be available to advise reporters who are arrested or experience other problems with law enforcement while covering the convention, the political protests or related events.

The hotline will be in operation from Wednesday, August 27, 2008 through the end of the convention. The phone number is (651) 238-1884. If the number is not available due to high cellular traffic or any other reason during regular business hours you may call Bill Tilton or George Dunn at Tilton & Dunn, (651) 224-7687; or Paul Hannah at Kelly & Berens, (612) 349-6171. Other hours you may call Bill Tilton's cell at (612) 867-7473. You may also call the regular hotline operated by the Reporters Committee at (800) 336-4243. The attorneys responding to calls will be Bill Tilton, George Dunn, and Paul Hannah.

**BE PREPARED.** Disturbances occurring at political conventions in the past sometimes have resulted in mass arrests during which reporters have been taken into custody. The MEDIA HOTLINE is part of the Reporters Committee's effort to address problems experienced by reporters as a result of undue restrictions on access or while covering demonstrations and other events occurring in and around St. Paul during the Republican National Convention. This flier provides guidelines to follow in the event of a disturbance and provides our best information at the time it was prepared. This information is subject to change; for the most recent version, go to [www.rcfp.org/conventions](http://www.rcfp.org/conventions)

Always carry with you two forms of identification: (1) your convention credential, police-issued press pass or other documentation of your status as a professional journalist, and (2) a government issued photo identification card. If you are detained without a government issued I.D., the police will hold you until you can be fingerprinted and positively identified, a process that can take several hours and makes you ineligible for immediate release on bond. Also carry cash with you (see "Arrest & Release" below).

Make it visually obvious you are a member of the press. Any journalist wearing a helmet during a protest should have the word "PRESS" prominently displayed on the helmet itself. Indeed, it is advisable to always wear a hat and/or shirt that displays the word "PRESS" prominently. If an event becomes the subject of law enforcement activity, the best way to avoid being arrested is to report on those activities in a manner that does not obstruct the law enforcement activity, and to follow all police orders. Do not walk through a police line without first showing your press pass and obtaining permission.

**POLICE INFORMATION.** The Secret Service, FBI, Department of Homeland Security, Minneapolis Police Department, St. Paul Police Department, Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, Ramsey County Sheriff's Office, Minnesota State Patrol, and other law enforcement agencies will all have a presence in and around convention-related locations, including the Xcel Energy Center, the designated parade route and demonstration sites.

In the event of any incident between the media and the police, you should immediately call the MEDIA HOTLINE.

**ACCESS.** Access to the Xcel Energy Center and other convention-related sites, and particular areas within those sites, will be highly regulated. RNC-issued credentials are required to enter the center. Do not expect to be permitted to enter any areas inside or in the vicinity of the convention sites or elsewhere that are closed by police for security reasons. And, again, do not walk through a police line without first showing your press pass and obtaining permission. Press credentials other than those issued by the RNC, e.g., those issued by a city police department or city or state press association, may be recognized in some places but not others.

**DETENTION.** In the event police detain you during a disturbance, remain calm and obey instructions. In addition, (1) notify the arresting officer that you are a news reporter and show your credentials; (2) ask that a supervising officer be notified that a reporter is being detained; and (3) seek permission

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to call the MEDIA HOTLINE attorney at your earliest opportunity. Identifying yourself as a news reporter may reduce the likelihood of arrest, and may facilitate your release if you are caught up in a mass arrest. If you are covering the activities of a crowd that invites arrest and want to avoid being arrested along with them, move to the periphery of the activity so you can readily detach yourself should that prove necessary.

**ARREST & RELEASE.** If you are arrested for disorderly conduct, unlawful assembly, disturbing the peace, failure to follow a police order, or any other non-felony infraction, *the quickest way to get back onto the streets to continue reporting is to cooperate and post bond, assuming bond is necessary.* You should be cooperative during this process, but remember that anything you say may be used against you. You will be taken to a central processing area. The main processing area for St. Paul will be at the Law Enforcement Center, which is located northeast of St. Paul's downtown at 425 Grove Street, St. Paul, MN 55101; (651) 266-9350. The main processing area in Minneapolis will be at the Adult Detention Center, 401 South Fourth Avenue, Suite 100, Minneapolis, MN 55415; (612) 348-5112.

A routine booking procedure will be conducted in which you will be fingerprinted, your photograph will be taken, and your identity will be verified. You should cooperate in giving your name, address, and other basic identifying information, but remember that other statements you make can and will be used against you in later proceedings.

If you do not have proof of your identity or refuse to provide it, you will be detained until your identity is determined.

**First Arrest:** Officials have said that, for people with identification who are being arrested for the first time, there likely will be no bail required, assuming that person has not been accused of any physical confrontation with the police (or other individuals) or of the destruction of property. Typical bail for a misdemeanor offense is \$200 - \$300, and we recommend you carry at least that much in case bail is required. Credit cards typically are not accepted. You may be released without being arraigned in front of a judge. HOTLINE attorneys have been told that it is intended that such people will be released after being given a citation (e.g., tab charge). Those people will be expected to return at a later date to appear in court. Normally, court dates are not given out right at the time of the citation is given. You will be required to call the court to get a court date within ten days.

**Second arrests** will result in longer detention while you are processed and arraigned and likely require bail. Bail will be determined by the seriousness of the alleged offense and the circumstances of the person arrested, including whether that person has been arrested previously. In this situation bail might be in the \$300 - \$500 range, but there is no minimum amount for bail in Minnesota.

If you are actually arraigned before a judge, you will be

given a date to return before you are released from custody. Anyone who is actually arraigned before a judge should consider entering a plea of not guilty and asking for a speedy trial. You have the right to have an attorney represent you at arraignment, and you may call the MEDIA HOTLINE to request a volunteer attorney who can provide assistance in connection with your arraignment. Volunteers from the ACLU, the National Lawyers Guild and similar organizations may also be present at the courthouse to assist you.

There is no requirement that you post or pay a fee to receive a jury trial. It is presumed for any misdemeanor or above charge that the person is entitled to a jury trial. People charged with petty misdemeanor (non-criminal offenses) are not entitled to jury trials.

The courts in Hennepin County (Minneapolis) and Ramsey County (St. Paul) are both prepared to hold court in the evening and night if necessary.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.** When calling the MEDIA HOTLINE, please identify yourself as a journalist and state that you are calling the MEDIA HOTLINE. If you are taken into custody and unable to call the MEDIA HOTLINE, try to inform a colleague, employer or somebody else to contact the HOTLINE on your behalf. You should call the HOTLINE at your earliest opportunity thereafter, however, as the volunteer attorneys can be of little, if any, assistance before speaking with you.

Bill Tilton and George Dunn (Tilton & Dunn, P.L.L.P.) and Paul Hannah (Kelly & Berens, PA) will be glad to assist anyone who has a subsequent court appearance in finding an attorney or discussing possible representation, but representation at subsequent hearings is not part of the free HOTLINE service.

The MEDIA HOTLINE should not be used for disputes over credentials or problems unrelated to your news coverage of the convention. You may call the Reporters Committee's regular hotline, (800) 336-4243, if you have other credentialing or access issues.

Other sources of assistance: the National Lawyers Guild of Minnesota, Jail Support Hotline, (651) 356-8635; the Minnesota ACLU Hotline, (651) 789-0443.

For police misconduct complaints: contact either the Minneapolis Police Department, Minneapolis Civil Complaint Review Board - 301 Fourth Avenue South, Room 670, Minneapolis, MN 55415, (612) 673-5500; or the St. Paul Police Department, Police Civilian Internal Affairs Review Commission - 367 Grove Street, St. Paul, MN 55101 (651) 266-5583.

If you have any questions or comments about the MEDIA HOTLINE, contact Bill Tilton or George Dunn at Tilton & Dunn, (651) 224-7687; Paul Hannah at Kelly & Berens, (612) 349-6171; or Gregg Leslie, Legal Defense Director of the Reporters Committee, at (703) 807-2100.

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