

19 January 2024



Radio and Television Broadcasting Content Regulations Amended

- Adherence to national values, traditions and culture for contents during watershed period required
- Parameters for expression of personal views stipulated
- Contents requiring exercise of great care listed
- Restrictions on broadcasting of newspapers, books or articles provided
- Safeguards on broadcasting of contents of sexual nature enhanced

On 5 January 2024, the Minister for Information, Communications and Information Technology issued the Electronic and Postal Communications (Radio and Television Broadcasting Content) (Amendment) Regulations, 2024 (the Amendments). The Amendments are meant to introduce some changes in the Electronic and Postal Communications (Radio and Television Broadcasting Content) Regulations, 2018 (the Regulations). The areas affected by the Amendments include contents for watershed period, expression of personal views, broadcasting of newspapers, books and articles, and broadcasting of contents of sexual nature.

It should be noted that the Regulations require contents which are unsuitable for children to be broadcast during the watershed period (2200hrs - 0530hrs). The Amendments have introduced an additional requirement that programs that are broadcast during watershed period and programs involving sexual contents should be presented in a manner that observes national value, traditions and culture.

In so far as expression of personal views is concerned, the Amendments prohibit presenters from expressing personal opinions during program presentations. The Amendments further require expression of personal views to be done by guests or analysts who are qualified in the topics under discussion, provided that the audience is informed in advance and is given an opportunity to respond to such views.

Moreover, the Amendments prohibit broadcasting of programs that give information on suicide methods, making of explosives and illicit drugs; give undue prominence in news and current affairs, factual or entertainment programme to owners of broadcasting stations; are likely to promote civil or public disorder; and are likely to promote prostitution and other immoral activities. On top of the above, the Amendments provide for a list of contents whose broadcast require exercise of great care. Such contents include incidents of torture; ill treatment of people or animals; close ups of dead or mutilated bodies; and people in extreme pain or on the point of death or violent treatment of children.

Lastly, the Regulations require seeking of consent prior to broadcast of information acquired from a person unless the information so acquired is essential to establish the credibility and authority of a source. Additionally, the Amendments amplify the said requirement in relation to broadcast of contents of newspapers, books and articles. It should be noted that, the Amendments prohibit reading the content of newspapers, books and articles in the course of presentation of the program without written consent of the owner, save for headlines.

To read the issued the Electronic and Postal Communications (Radio and Television Broadcasting Content) (Amendment) Regulations, 2024, [click here](#)

To read the Electronic and Postal Communications (Radio and Television Broadcasting Content) Regulations, 2018, [click here](#)

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