

## Coverage Guidelines from WDAF



### **Safety meetings are key.**

Hold mandatory meetings with all staff members prior to covering events where unrest is expected to reinforce safety standards and to go over expectations. Even though your organization likely already has guidelines, you need to review them that day so they are fresh in everyone's memory – and so people can ask questions ahead of having to make quick decisions.

### **Evaluate the use of material with your organization's logo and name.**

While there is strong value in being identifiable as a journalist, logos on shirts, cameras and vehicles can also attract attention that could make your people the news story rather than having them cover it. Every staff member should have their organization ID with them and be prepared to show it should they need to prove their role.

### **Make sure you have the right equipment to support mobility.**

Protests evolve and change. For television crews, strongly consider the use of small bonded cellular units for live coverage rather than traditional microwave and satellite trucks. Those vehicles are hard to move in a crowd and easily attract attention. Send cameras with long lenses to allow photographers to shoot key images without having to be too close to the action themselves.

### **Cover the story in a way that the focus is on events, rather than you as a journalist.**

That means avoiding using bright television lights that attract attention. Find locations on the periphery of the action to allow you a vantage point, but that also allows for an easier escape should the situation become unsafe. Seek permission to put some staff in locations above the incident – shooting from upper floors of nearby buildings – to keep them away from the street level skirmishes.

### **Safety is the top priority.**

Field crews need to have the right to decide unilaterally that they need to evacuate an unsafe situation. When the news value has waned, but the danger is high, it is time for news crews to pull back to safe locations.

### **Three person crews add safety.**

With the photographer looking through the viewfinder at what is in front of them and the reporter looking at the camera, a third person can be on the lookout to alert the crew to danger.