

# STREET PHOTOGRAPHY

## A NEW PSNZ DEFINITION

### 1. Purpose of this Document

**1.1** The information contained in this document is intended to be used for the clarification of the newly authorised PSNZ Definition of Street Photography. [Published on 8th July 2025]

**1.2** This document provides additional information to help PSNZ judges, mentors and members to comprehend the terminology of specific phrases or words which are used within the new definition.

**1.3** The definition of Street Photography can be used as a specific category within any PSNZ competitions, salons, exhibition or awards.

**1.4** The new definition does NOT replace the existing definition of Photojournalism. It has been compiled to complement and extend the topic of photojournalism which now has a sub-category specifically for Street Photography images.

### 2. Historical Situation

**2.1** Traditionally, images which have been considered as street photographs have been garnered for evaluation or competitive assessment under the genre of Photojournalism.

**2.2** Prior to July 2025, Street Photography was regarded as a “style” of Photojournalism. Therefore it was subjected to the same definition and guidelines for that genre. However, that definition specifically stated that photojournalism images should be; *“...storytelling images such as seen in the news media and periodicals, they may include contemporary life, human interest, documentary, illustrative, spot news, sport, etc”*.

**2.3** That definition was further supported by three paragraphs which explained photographers were not permitted to stage, setup or generate any situation for the specific purpose of making an image. These directions contained a list of restrictive post production practises and emphasised a caveat which said; *The storytelling value of the image shall receive priority over pictorial quality. In the interest of credibility, photojournalism images must not misrepresent the truth.*

**2.4** In reality, most Street Photography Images were unable to fulfil the requirements of the photojournalism definition because they were unlikely to include a topic, situation or story which could be regarded as being newsworthy.

### 3. The New Definition of Street Photography

**3.1** The new definition of Street Photography states:

**3.1(a)** Street Photography (Subcategory of Photojournalism)

Street Photography, (sometimes referred to as candid photography), is a subcategory of photojournalism focused on artistic or documentary enquiry rather than publication in news media. It captures spontaneous, unmediated moments or chance encounters in public spaces.

While most street photographs include people, their presence is not essential. An image may instead feature objects, environments, or scenes that convey a distinctly human presence through context, atmosphere, or aesthetic. Images may be taken from a private location, provided the subject matter remains situated in a public environment.

**3.1(b)** Restrictive Practices Applicable both Photojournalism and Street Photography:

The storytelling value of the images in either category shall receive priority over pictorial quality. In the interest of credibility, images in must not misrepresent the truth. No situations shall be set up for the purpose of photography.

Any manipulation or modification of the original image must not alter the content of the original scene and elements of the story may not be introduced, removed, shifted or changed in any way including HDR toning or use of image enhancement software. Complete conversion of colour images to grayscale monochrome is permitted as are the removal or correction of elements added by the camera or lens, such as dust spots, noise, chromatic aberration and lens distortion.

[Published on 8th July 2025 and now contained in the PSNZ Rules: <https://photography.org.nz/about/definitions/>

### 4. Explanation of words/phrases used in the Definition

**4.1** Whilst the new definition is succinct, it will be helpful if an interpretation/clarification of some words are made available.

- Candid means - open, genuine, honest, truthful and sincere in its representation
- Street means - Any Street, Road or Thoroughfare, including a Public Library, Multi-storey Car Parks, Shopping Malls, Beaches and Reserves. [As defined by NZ Police]

- However - Some locations are NOT public! [\*see note at para. 4.2 below]
- The above conditions are reproduced from the NZ Police definition of a Street.

**4.2** \*Please note that the provided definition does not explain or provide examples relative to when, or in what circumstances, a location might NOT be a public space. One interpretation may be dependent on ownership of the space; e.g. A shopping mall protected by private security personnel could indicate that only invited members of the public are welcome. A similar situation might apply to sports stadiums, arenas or theatres. Whilst such places might be privately owned, the public are invited to be present in some situations. [e.g. when open for trading.] These premises become grey areas and might be best avoided.

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