

NewsBreak / Particle Media — Follow-Up & First Substantive Response

DFP follow-up/closure (May 7, 2026) + NewsBreak first substantive response (May 11, 2026) · Gmail thread: 19e03e90e69bb505 · Investigation: Platform Gatekeeping: Press Freedom

EMAIL RECORD

From: newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org
To: publishers@newsbreak.com
Date: May 7, 2026 — 19:48 UTC
Subject: Follow-Up: Press Inquiry — Publisher Acceptance Criteria: Dismal Freedom Press Application

May 7, 2026

NewsBreak / Particle Media, Inc.

Publisher Relations

publishers@newsbreak.com

To the Publisher Relations Team:

This is a follow-up to DFP's press inquiry of April 15, 2026, regarding NewsBreak's publisher acceptance criteria as applied to Dismal Freedom Press.

Your April 16, 2026 response listed general categories of reasons applications may be declined — including publisher location, website completeness, content volume, and content quality — but did not address any of the six specific questions posed in DFP's inquiry. Those questions asked: what specific criteria were applied to DFP's application; whether those criteria are disclosed to applicants prior to submission; which criterion or criteria resulted in DFP's rejection; how NewsBreak distinguishes independent investigative newsrooms from non-journalistic applicants; whether a formal appeal or reconsideration process exists; and what standards govern timeliness of application review.

DFP's documented record includes a California Department of Education non-compliance finding against a local school district (CDE Case 2026-0301) produced directly by DFP's investigative reporting, and an accepted civil rights appeal at a second district (CDE Case 2026-0096) that advanced to state review through DFP's work. These outcomes are on the public record and were available to NewsBreak at the time of DFP's application.

DFP is formally closing this inquiry as of May 7, 2026. NewsBreak's April 16 response and its non-response to the specific questions posed will be reflected accurately in DFP's reporting on platform gatekeeping of independent investigative newsrooms. Publication is anticipated in May 2026.

If NewsBreak wishes to provide substantive responses to any of the questions in DFP's April 15 inquiry prior to publication, please respond to this email by May 12, 2026.

Sincerely,

Investigations Desk

Dismal Freedom Press

newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org

(209) 425-2677

dismalfreedom.press

EMAIL RECORD

From: publishers@newsbreak.com
To: newsroom@dismalfreedompress.org
Date: May 11, 2026 — 19:11 UTC
Subject: Re: Follow-Up: Press Inquiry — Publisher Acceptance Criteria: Dismal Freedom Press Application

Dear Investigation Desk,

Your domains were rejected due to technical issues.

- The first domain, <https://www.dismalfreedom.press/>, contained a significant amount of content behind a paywall. As a result, we were not able to fully evaluate the publication under our current publisher program requirements.

- The second domain, <https://www.dismalfreedompress.org/>, was automatically rejected because it returned a loading/access error (and still does).

If these issues are resolved, we would be able to review your application again.

For example, you could provide us with an RSS feed that excludes any paywalled content for review. This would need to be shared with us directly over email as resubmitting the application online will most likely result in the same outcome as your other attempts.

Best,

NewsBreak Publisher Support

[Note: This is NewsBreak's first substantive explanation of the rejection criteria in this entire inquiry — provided 25 days after the initial April 15 press inquiry, 4 days before DFP's May 12 publication deadline. The response arrived with an attached screenshot (Screenshot 2026-05-11 at 12.03.30 PM.png). The response for the first time cited specific stated reasons: paywalled content and a domain access error.]