



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on May 9, 2023

White House Bans New York Post Reporter From Press Conference

In its latest move to shield President Joe Biden from unfriendly media inquiries, the White House press office [banned a New York Post reporter](#) from a Monday Biden press conference without explanation.

The decision to bar Steven Nelson from one of Biden's rare press conferences came on the heels of the administration's [announcement](#) of new restrictions concerning which reporters will be allowed to cover White House events.

Biden appeared Monday with Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg to discuss airline policies. According to the *Post*, "Biden ultimately took no shouted questions at the venue, which houses the set of a 'fake' White House and about 50 theater-style seats for reporters — about 20 of which were empty."



AP Images

One of those empty seats would normally have been filled by Nelson. However, on Monday, he received an email from the White House saying, "We are unable to accommodate your credential request to attend the Investing in Airline Accountability Remarks on 5/8. The remarks will be live-streamed and can be viewed at WH.gov. Thank you for understanding. We will let you know if a credential becomes available."

That was it. No further explanation was offered, and the White House did not respond to questions from the *Post* about the matter. The paper noted that "at least two other journalists initially were barred, but the press office relented and let one of them in."

It's not hard to understand why the *Post* would be *diurna non grata* at the Biden White House. It is, after all, the paper that [broke the story](#) of Hunter Biden's abandoned laptop and the emails it contained — communications that could well incriminate both him and his father, not to mention his uncle James Biden, all of whom appear to have been involved in highly lucrative influence-peddling schemes in foreign countries.

That story, first reported in October 2020, [might have cost Biden the election](#) had it not been effectively [suppressed](#) by the mainstream media and social media, all of which followed the Biden campaign's lead in labeling it "Russian disinformation."

The *Post* has continued to pursue the story throughout Biden's presidency, much to his chagrin. As recently as February, [wrote the paper](#), the chief executive "stormed out" of a press conference when a *Post* reporter asked him, "Is your ability to deal with China compromised by your family's business relationships in China?"



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The *Post* hasn't been the sole thorn in Biden's side. The administration, in fact, has gone out of its way to ensure that the president isn't asked any challenging questions at public events, prescreening reporters who are allowed to cover them (without disclosing the criteria used) and even requiring reporters to submit their questions in advance. The situation became serious enough that the White House Correspondents' Association [filed a formal complaint](#) with the press office in 2021, and in 2022, 73 journalists sent a [letter](#) demanding an end to the restrictions. Still, the restrictions continue.

On top of that, the administration announced Friday that all journalists who currently have White House press badges will be required to reapply for them by July 31. The criteria for awarding press badges will be extremely strict, and badges may be suspended or revoked if a reporter's "conduct violates" the administration's "expectations" that "all hard pass holders will act in a professional manner."

The one caveat to the new policy, which is still quite vague, is that the White House "will provide a written warning to" the offending journalist upon his first offense. That provision is a clear attempt to avoid losing a court challenge to any sanctions against a reporter, as happened when the Trump administration tried to suspend the badges of journalists it deemed unprofessional. In that case, a federal appeals court [ruled](#) that the White House could not punish a journalist without first "provid[ing] fair notice."

As to Monday's ban on the *Post*, it's worth noting that an indictment of Hunter Biden, based on an investigation that might never had occurred absent that paper's reporting, may be on the horizon — reason enough for Joe Biden's handlers to keep Nelson away from him.

But, [wondered the *Post's* editors](#), "if they think he can't handle reporters, just what duties *are* they trusting him with?"



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