Speech and Press

State	Citation	Text
Alabama	Ala. Const. , § 4	That no law shall ever be passed to curtail or restrain the liberty of speech or of the press; and any person may speak, write, and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty.
Alaska	Alaska Const. art. I, § 5	Every person may freely speak, write, and publish on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right.
Arizona	Ariz. Const. art. II, § 6	Every person may freely speak, write, and publish on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right.
Arkansas	Ark. Const. art. II, § 6	The liberty of the press shall forever remain inviolate. The free communication of thoughts and opinions, is one of the invaluable rights of man; and all persons may freely write and publish their sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of such right. In all criminal prosecutions for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury; and if it shall appear to the jury that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives and for justifiable ends, the party charged shall be acquitted.
California	Cal. Const. art. I, § 2(a)	Every person may freely speak, write and publish his or her sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of this right. A law may not restrain or abridge liberty of speech or press.
Colorado	Colo. Const. art. II, § 10	No law shall be passed impairing the freedom of speech; every person shall be free to speak, write or publish whatever he will on any subject, being responsible for all abuse of that liberty; and in all suits and prosecutions for libel, the truth thereof may be pleaded, and if true, and published for justifiable ends, the party shall be discharged from the censure of the court, which shall determine the law and the fact.
Connecticut	Conn. Const. art. I, § 4	Every citizen may freely speak, write and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty.
Delaware	Conn. Const. art. I, § 5	No law shall ever be passed to curtail or restrain the liberty of speech or of the press.
Florida	Conn. Const. art. I, § 6	In all prosecutions or indictments for libels, the truth may be given in evidence, and the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the facts, under the direction of the court.
Georgia	Del. Const. art. I, § 5	The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the inviolable rights of man. The press shall be free to every citizen who undertakes to examine the official conduct of persons acting in a public capacity; and any citizen may print on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of the liberty. In the abuse of that liberty, in prosecutions for publications investigating the proceedings of officers, or where the matter published is proper for public information, the truth thereof may be given in evidence, and in all indictments for libels the jury may determine the facts and the law, as in other cases.
Hawaii	Fla. Const. art. I, § 4	Every person may speak, write and publish sentiments on all subjects but shall be responsible for the abuse of that right. No law shall be passed to abridge the liberty of speech or the press. In all prosecutions and civil actions for defamation the truth may be given in evidence. If the matter charged as defamatory is true and was published with good motives, the party shall be acquitted or exonerated.
Idaho	Ga. Const. art. I, § 1, ¶ V	No law shall be passed to curtail or restrain the freedom of speech or of the press. Every person may speak, write, and publish sentiments on all subjects but shall be responsible for the abuse of that liberty.
Illinois	Ga. Const. art. I, § 1, ¶ VI	All persons may speak, write and publish freely, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty. In trials for libel, both civil and criminal, the truth, when published with good motives and for justifiable ends, shall be a sufficient defense.
Indiana	Haw. Const. art. I, § 4	In all civil or criminal actions for libel, the truth may be given in evidence; and, if it shall appear to the trier of fact that the matter charged as libelous is true, the party shall be discharged.
Iowa	Ind. Const. art. I, § 9	No law shall be enacted respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.
Kansas	Ind. Const. art. I, § 10	No law shall be passed, restraining the free interchange of thought and opinion, or restricting the right to speak, write, or print, freely, on any subject whatever: but for the abuse of that right, every person shall be responsible.
Kentucky	Iowa Const. art. I, § 7	In all prosecutions for libel, the truth of the matters alleged to be libellous, may be given in justification.
Louisiana	Kan. Const. Bill of Rts. § 11	Every person may speak, write, and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right. No law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech, or of the press. In all prosecutions or indictments for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury, and if it shall appear that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted.
Maine	Ky. Const. § 8	The liberty of the press shall be inviolate; and all persons may freely speak, write or publish their sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of such rights; and in all civil or criminal actions for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury, and if it shall appear that the alleged libelous matter was published for justifiable ends, the accused party shall be acquitted.
Maryland	Ky. Const. § 9	Printing presses shall be free to every person who undertakes to examine the proceedings of the General Assembly or any branch of government, and no law shall ever be made to restrain the right thereof. Every person may freely and fully speak, write and print on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty.
Massachusetts	La. Const. Ann. art. I, § 7	In prosecutions for the publication of papers investigating the official conduct of officers or men in a public capacity, or where the matter published is proper for public information, the truth thereof may be given in evidence; and in all indictments for libel the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the facts, under the direction of the court, as in other cases.
Michigan	Me. Const. art. I, § 4	No law shall curtail or restrain the freedom of speech or of the press. Every person may speak, write, and publish his sentiments on any subject, but is responsible for abuse of that freedom.
Minnesota	Md. Const. Decl. of Rts. art. 40	Every citizen may freely speak, write and publish sentiments on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty. No censorship shall be required; nor restraining the freedom of the press; and in prosecutions for any publication respecting the official conduct of people in public capacity, or the qualifications of those who are candidates for the suffrages of the people, or where the matter published is proper for public information, the truth thereof may be given in evidence. And in all indictments for libels, the jury, after the charge received the direction of the court, shall have a right to determine, at their discretion, the law and the fact.
Mississippi	Mass. Const. Pt. 1, art. XVI	That the liberty of the press ought to be inviolably preserved; that every citizen of the State ought to be allowed to speak, write and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that privilege.
Missouri	Mich. Const. art. I, § 5	The liberty of the press is essential to the security of freedom in a state: it ought not, therefore, to be restrained in this commonwealth. The right of free speech shall not be abridged.
Montana	Minn. Const. art. I, § 3	Every person may freely speak, write, express and publish his views on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of such right; and no law shall be enacted to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech or of the press.
Nebraska	Miss. Const. art. I, § 3	The liberty of the press shall forever remain inviolate, and all persons may freely speak, write and publish their sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of such right.
Nevada	Miss. Const. , § 13	The freedom of speech and of the press shall be held sacred; and in all prosecutions for libel the truth may be given in evidence, and the jury shall determine the law and the facts under the direction of the court; and if it shall appear to the jury that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted.
New Hampshire	Mo. Const. art. I, § 8	That no law shall be passed impairing the freedom of speech, no matter by what means communicated; that every person shall be free to speak, write or publish, or otherwise communicate whatever he will on any subject, being responsible for all abuses of that liberty; and that in all suits and prosecutions for libel or slander the truth thereof may be given in evidence; and in suits and prosecutions for libel by the jury, under the direction of the court, shall determine the law and the facts.
New Jersey	Mont. Const. art. II, § 7	No law shall be passed impairing the freedom of speech or expression. Every person shall be free to speak or publish whatever he will on any subject, being responsible for all abuse of that liberty. In all suits and prosecutions for libel or slander the truth thereof may be given in evidence and the jury, under the direction of the court, shall determine the law and the facts.
New Mexico	Neb. Const. art. I, § 5	Every person may freely speak, write and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right; and no law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech or of the press. In all criminal prosecutions or indictments for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury; and if it shall appear to the jury that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted or exonerated.
New York	Nev. Const. art. I, § 9	Every citizen may freely speak, write and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right; and no law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech or of the press. In all criminal prosecutions or indictments for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury; and if it shall appear to the jury that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted; and the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the fact.
North Carolina	N.H. Const. Pt. 1, art. 22d	Free speech and liberty of the press are essential to the security of freedom in a state: They ought, therefore, to be inviolably preserved.
North Dakota	N.J. Const. art. I, ¶ 6	Every person may freely speak, write and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right. No law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech or of the press. In all prosecutions or indictments for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury; and if it shall appear to the jury that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted; and the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the fact.
Ohio	N.M. Const. art. II, § 17	Every person may freely speak, write and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of the speech or of the press. In all criminal prosecutions or indictments for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury; and if it shall appear to the jury that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted; and the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the fact.
Oklahoma	N.Y. Const. art. I, § 8	Every citizen may freely speak, write and publish his or her sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right; and no law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech or of the press. In all criminal prosecutions or indictments for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury; and if it shall appear to the jury that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted; and the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the fact.
Oregon	N.C. Const. art. I, § 14	Freedom of speech and of the press are two of the great bulwarks of liberty and therefore shall never be restrained, but every person shall be held responsible for their abuse.
Pennsylvania	N.D. Const. art. I, § 4	Every man may freely write, speak and publish his opinions on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that privilege. In all civil and criminal trials for libel the truth may be given in evidence, and shall be a sufficient defense unless the jury shall find that the publication complained of was not justifiable; and the jury shall have the same power of giving a general verdict as in other cases; and in all indictments or informations for libels the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the facts under the direction of the court as in other cases.
Rhode Island	Ohio Const. Article I, Section 11	Every person may freely speak, write, and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right. No law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech, or of the press. In all criminal prosecutions for libel, the truth may be given in evidence to the jury, and if it shall appear to the jury, that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives, and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted.
South Carolina	Okla. Const. art. II, § 22	Every person may freely speak, write, or publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right. No law shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech or of the press. In all criminal prosecutions for libel, the truth of the matter alleged to be libelous may be given in evidence to the jury, and if it shall appear to the jury that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was written or published with good motives and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted.
South Dakota	Or. Const. art. I, § 8	No law shall be passed restraining the free expression of opinion, or restricting the right to speak, write, or print freely on any subject whatever; but every person shall be responsible for the abuse of this right.
Tennessee	Pa. Const. art. I, § 7	The printing press shall be free to every person who may undertake to examine the proceedings of the Legislature or any branch of government, and no law shall ever be made to restrain the right thereof. The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the invaluable rights of man, and every citizen may freely speak, write and print on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty. No conviction shall be had in any prosecution for the publication of papers relating to the official conduct of officers or men in public capacity, or to any other matter proper for public investigation or information, where the fact that such publication was not malicious or negligently made shall be established to the satisfaction of the jury; and in all indictments for libels the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the facts, under the direction of the court, as in other cases.
Texas	R.I. Const. art. I, § 20	The liberty of the press being essential to the security of freedom in a state, any person may publish sentiments on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that liberty; and in all trials for libel, both civil and criminal, the truth, when published from malicious motives, shall be sufficient defense to the person charged.
Utah	S.C. Const. art. I, § 2	The citizens have a right in a peaceable manner to assemble for their common good, and to apply to those invested with the powers of government, for redress of grievances, or for other purposes, by petition, address, or remonstrance. No law abridging the freedom of speech shall be enacted.
Vermont	S.D. Const. art. VI, § 5	The General Assembly shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble and to petition the government or any department thereof for a redress of grievances.
Virginia	Tenn. Const. art. I, § 19	Every person may speak, write and publish on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right. In all trials for libel, both civil and criminal, the truth, when published with good motives and for justifiable ends, shall be a sufficient defense. The jury have the right to determine the fact and the law, under direction of the court, as in other criminal cases.
Washington	Tex. Const. art. I, § 8	That the printing presses shall be free to every person to examine the proceedings of the Legislature, or of any branch or officer of the government, and no law shall ever be made to restrain the right thereof. The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the invaluable rights of man, and every citizen may freely speak, write, and publish on any subject, being responsible for the abuse of that right.
West Virginia	Utah Const. art. I, § 13	Every person shall be free to speak, write or publish his opinions on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right; and no law shall ever be passed curtailing the liberty of speech or of the press. In prosecutions for the publication of papers, investigating the conduct of officers, or men in public capacity, or where the matter published is proper for public information, the truth thereof may be given in evidence. And in all indictments for libels, the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the facts, under the direction of the Court, as in other cases.
Wisconsin	Vt. Const. CH I, art. XIII	No law shall be passed to abridge or restrain the freedom of speech or of the press. In all criminal prosecutions for libel the truth may be given in evidence to the jury and if it shall appear that the matter charged as libelous is true, and was published with good motives, and for justifiable ends, the party shall be acquitted, and the jury shall have the right to determine the law and the fact.
Wyoming	Va. Const. art. I, § 12	That the freedom of speech and of the press are among the great bulwarks of liberty, and can never be restrained except by despotic governments; that any citizen may freely speak, write, and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right; that the General Assembly shall not pass any law abridging the liberty of speech or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for the redress of grievances.
	Wash. Const. art. I, § 5	Every person may freely speak, write and publish on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right.
	W. Va. Const. art. III, § 7	No law abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, shall be passed; but the Legislature may, by suitable penalties, restrain the publication or sale of obscene books, papers, or pictures, and provide for the punishment of libel, and defamation of character, and for the recovery, in civil actions, by the aggrieved party, of suitable damages for such libel, or defamation.
	Wis. Const. art. I, § 3	Every person may freely speak, write and publish his sentiments on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right; and no laws shall be passed to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech or of the press. In all criminal prosecutions or indictments for libel, the truth may be given in evidence, and the jury, under the direction of the court, shall determine the law and the fact.
	Wyo. Const. art. I, § 20	Every person may freely speak, write and publish on all subjects, being responsible for the abuse of that right; and in all trials for libel, both civil and criminal, the truth, when published with good intent and [for] justifiable ends, shall be a sufficient defense. The jury have the right to determine the fact and the law, under direction of the court.