

## LTE GUIDE: WRITING AN EFFECTIVE LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### [WHAT] IS A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

A letter to the editor (LTE) is a brief, public communication sent to a newspaper or magazine, intended to be published in the editorial section. Typically written by readers, these letters offer opinions or insights on articles, current events, or issues of public concern. Authors use them to express support, criticism, or to bring attention to specific topics. Editors often select letters that are concise, well-argued, and thought-provoking. An LTE aims to foster community engagement and reflect diverse perspectives, enriching the overall dialogue within the publication's readership.

### [HOW] DO YOU WRITE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

- ☒ **Respond to a recent article in the paper.** Begin your letter by citing that piece by name, date, and author;
- ☒ **Follow the paper's directions.** Usually, submission instructions and details are located at the bottom of the Opinions section. **You can also Google the name of the outlet and "letter to the editor" to find instructions.**
- ☒ **Share your expertise and establish your credibility.** Why do you care about this issue? How are you impacted? And, do you have experience or education working on this issue?
- ☒ **Refer to the legislator or corporation you are trying to influence by name;**
- ☒ **Write the letter in your own words.** Have a friend or someone you trust read over your letter to get some feedback and help look for any grammar or spelling errors.
- ☒ **Refute, advocate, and make a call to action.**
- ☒ **Include your contact information.** Be sure to include your name, town of residence, and daytime phone number; the paper will contact you before printing your letter.
- ☒ **Submit to one outlet.** Do not submit the same letter to multiple outlets at the same time.

### KEEP IN MIND

- **Submitting an LTE does not guarantee publication.** The selection process depends on multiple factors including timeliness, quality of the letter, relevance to the community, adherence to the outlet's submission guidelines, and the number of submissions. Regardless, the selection is at the outlet's discretion.
- **Think about why you want to submit to this newspaper/magazine.** Who's your audience? Does your target audience read this outlet?
- **Focus on your point(s) and keep it brief.** While each outlet has its own word count, most LTEs are pretty short, so focus on your main point and its importance, including your call to action.
- **Ask for an update.** Editors usually respond to submissions in a timely manner, but in the case that they don't, feel free to send a follow-up email or call for an update.

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE LTE EXAMPLES:

1. Local insight:  
<https://lailluminator.com/2024/09/17/readers-react-lng-terminal-treats-neighbors-as-a-sacrifice-zone/>
2. Group of authors:  
<https://www.ctpost.com/opinion/article/letter-to-the-editor-support-environmental-17843605.php>
3. Affirming response to published article:  
[https://captimes.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/letter-powell-inspired-environmental-justice-movement/article\\_9d21c53c-87d1-11ee-bae5-7b388c12516a.html](https://captimes.com/opinion/letters-to-the-editor/letter-powell-inspired-environmental-justice-movement/article_9d21c53c-87d1-11ee-bae5-7b388c12516a.html)