

WRITER'S GUIDE

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Valley Lawyer (VL) magazine is published monthly to inform and engage members of the San Fernando Valley Bar Association (SFVBA) and the legal community-at-large. The editorial content focuses on the courts and judiciary, lifestyle, law practice management, social media and legal marketing, as well as commentary on the practice of law and timely issues and developments impacting the region's unique law practice experience.

I. DEADLINES

- A. Submissions are due no later than the 1st of the month preceding the date on the cover of the edition of the magazine in question (e.g., articles slated for the November issue are due no later than October 1).
- B. Submissions should be emailed directly to editor@sfvba.org with articles, columns and/or images emailed as separate attachments, not as body copy within the email.
- C. All material must conform to editorial guidelines in order to appear in the magazine; otherwise, the article will be returned for immediate correction or saved for future publishing consideration in another issue.

II. FORMATTING

- A. The word count for feature articles is 2,000—3,000 words; MCLE article word count is 3,000—4,000 words, including the 20 True/False question quiz and brief reasons why answers are either true or false. Monthly column word count is no more than 1,000 words, including sidebars.
- B. Articles should be submitted in Calibri 11 point font.
- C. Articles should be single spaced with one space after punctuation ending a sentence.
- D. Citations should be formatted as endnotes according to CMS guidelines at the end of the article following the writer's biographical note. Refer to past issues of *Valley Lawyer* for additional guidance. Filed cases must include date of filing, docket number and specific court.
- E. Use the "Tab" key to indent.
- F. All written material should be submitted as a Word document (.doc or .docx only).
- G. The article should include the writer's full name, prefix/suffix and SFVBA position (if applicable) at the top of the article. At the end of article, include a brief biographical note about the writer which should include full name, position, and email address. (e.g., *Edward C. Smith, a partner at Smith & Jones in Chatsworth, is an intellectual property litigator specializing in Internet copyright matters. He can be reached at ecsmith@S&P.com.*)

III. STYLE

Valley Lawyer adheres to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (CMS) for all issues relating to editorial style and usage. The CMS is available both [online](#) and in hardbound formats. Another well-respected source is *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White, which is readily available in an inexpensive paperback edition.

A few basic rules follow:

- A. Articles written for *Valley Lawyer* are not legal briefs and should be written in a natural style that is clear, topical and concise, with every effort made to engage the reader.
- B. Names of books, magazines, newspapers and other written sources, as well as Latin or other foreign language legal phrases such as *amicus curiae*, *pro bono*, *de facto*, and *per curiam* should be italicized.
- C. The word “court” should be capitalized when naming any court in full (e.g., U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals or Los Angeles Superior Court) or when referring to the United States Supreme Court. Otherwise, do not capitalize “court.”
- D. The correct spelling is “email” and “website” and “internet.”
- E. Be judicious concerning the use of hyphens. Traditionally, hyphens can be coined by a writer to suit a particular occasion, but, according to a rule-of-thumb, hyphens are used when two or more words are combined to form a compound adjective.
- F. Do not spell out dates, except when they are used as part of a quotation or dialogue.
- G. Avoid run-on sentences; break-up blocks of text into paragraphs.
- H. Avoid “fancy” words when simple ones will do. For example, avoid using the word “utilized” when the word “used” will do. The same holds true for “observed/saw,” “possess/own,” or “at present/now.”

IV. PHOTOS/GRAPHICS

- A. Graphics and photos should be high resolution and submitted as a JPEG attachment, if possible, to the article. If the image is of two or more people, please provide the following (from left to right): the full name of each individual in the picture; their title; their firm or corporate entity; the city in which the person(s) works; and, if applicable, the name of the professional artist/photographer originating the work.

V. PUBLISHING LIMITATIONS/EXCEPTIONS

- A. *Valley Lawyer* does not publish the following:
 - 1. Press releases, outlines or self-promotional articles
 - 2. Articles about public policy or political opinion rather than the law. However, opinion pieces on substantive law issues are accepted
 - 3. Articles that express pleasure or displeasure with a court ruling or the results of a particular suit rather than the legal issues involved
 - 4. Publishing preference is given to authors who are SFVBA members. However, the publication of an article printed in another periodical that addresses an issue germane to the legal profession in general would be considered for replication in *Valley Lawyer*.
- B. *Valley Lawyer* retains the copyright on all published materials, unless negotiated otherwise. Reprint permission is free.

- C. Writers are responsible for ensuring content accuracy. Articles that violate copyright law, work that is plagiarized work, and previously published works will not be accepted for publication.

VI. SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

- The article is written in the 3rd person.
- The article is single spaced and written in Calibri font, size 11.
- The article has a working title and has been proofed for errors in legal terminology.
- The article has single, **NOT DOUBLE**, spaces after the punctuation ending a sentence.
- The Tab key was used to indent paragraphs.
- Legal citations should be in Arabic numerals and placed **AT THE END** of the article, not within the article or at the bottom of each page.
- A biographical blurb with contact information is included at the end of the article.
- A 'headshot' JPEG image is included.
- The article was saved as a Microsoft Word file (either .doc or .docx)

VII. SUGGESTED REFERENCE WORKS

The Chicago Manual of Style, 15th Edition, University of Chicago Press, Chicago IL

The Elements of Style, William Strunk and E.B. White, 4th Edition, Pearson Education Press, Upper Saddle River, NJ

The Harbrace College Handbook, Revised 13th Edition, Harcourt College Publications, New York, NY