

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 (SEE CALENDAR OF SPECIFIC DATES ON PAGE 6)

- Submissions are usually due on the 27th of the second 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 on September 27th).
- Submissions should be emailed directly to the editor at michael@sfvba.org with articles, columns and/or images emailed as separate attachments, not as body copy within the email.
- 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 consideration in another issue.

II. FORMATTING

- The word count for feature articles is 2,000 – 3,000 words; monthly column word count is 450-600 words. MCLE article word count is 2,500 – 3,500 words, including the 20 True/False question quiz and brief reasons why answers are either true or false.
- Articles should be submitted in Calibri 11 point font.
- Articles should be single spaced with one space after the punctuation ending a sentence.
- Footnotes, citations, and endnotes should be formatted 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.
- Use the "Tab" key to indent.
- All written material should be submitted as a Word document (.doc or .docx only).
- 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.

Some basic rules to follow:

- Write in the 3rd Person, not in the 1st Person.
- As commonsensical as it may sound, do not quote yourself in an article you're writing. If your input is necessary, weave it into the body of the piece.
- Avoid overuse of the pronoun 'you.' The individual reading the article should be aware that the information included is for their benefit.
- Remember that 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.
- 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 (or any state) Supreme Court. Otherwise, do not capitalize "court."
- The correct spelling is "email" and "website." Internet is always capitalized.
- 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.
- Use the word 'percent,' not the '%' sign.
- Don't use "which" when "that" is proper. Consider the sentence you have written with "which." A simple test: If you can remove the clause beginning with the "which" then you likely have used it properly. If you cannot remove the clause without changing the meaning of the sentence or the sentence structure, then you should have used "that."
- Do follow your "if" phrases with the logical causal connector "then." For example, "If you want new shoes, then you should buy some."
- Do put periods and commas inside quotation marks.
- Do put endnote numbers outside of punctuation marks (particularly quotation marks).
- Do not spell out dates, except when they are used as part of a quotation or dialogue.
- Avoid run-on sentences; break-up blocks of text into paragraphs.

- Avoid ‘fancy’ words or phrases when simple ones will do. For example, avoid using the word “utilized” when the word “used” will work. The same holds true for “observed/saw,” “possess/own,” or “at present/now.”
- Regarding Italics...

The following **SHOULD** be Italicized:

- The names of legal cases used in both text and endnotes.
- The shortened names of legal cases.
- The names of publications, bulletins, reports, studies, research papers, books, films, works of music, and periodicals.
- Websites, databases, hashtags, and domain names, or any portions thereof, except when Domain names are used as company names: Amazon, Google, Facebook.
- Foreign words and phrases not Anglicized: *raison d’etre*, *Zeitgeist*.
- Latin legal terms not in common use, e.g.: *ignorantia legis neminem excusat*, *sero sed serio*.
- Special events and programs.
- “Id” when used in either text or endnotes.
- If a word or phrase needs to be emphasized.
- Mathematical formulas and expressions.
- Names of aircraft, spacecraft, ships or trains.

The following **SHOULD NOT** be Italicized:

- Corporate names or products.
- Latin legal terms or phrases in common use: *pro bono*, *quid pro quo*, *amicus curiae*, *prima facie*, *habeus corpus*, *modus operandi*, *certiorari*, i.e., e.g., etc.
- Foreign words or phrases that have been Anglicized: *cliché*, *ante-bellum*, *patio*, *psyche*.

III. PHOTOS/GRAPHICS

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.

IV. 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' tab key was used to indent paragraphs.
- Legal citations should be in **ARABIC NUMERALS** and placed **AT THE END** of the article, **NOT** at the bottom of each page in Roman numerals.
- 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)

V. PUBLISHING LIMITATIONS/EXCEPTIONS

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*.

Valley Lawyer retains the copyright on all published materials, unless negotiated otherwise. Reprint permission is free.

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.

Valley Lawyer does not publish the following:

- Press releases, outlines or articles that are self-promotional or 'advertorial' in nature.
- Articles about public policy or political opinion rather than the law. However, opinion pieces on substantive law issues are accepted.
- Articles that focus on either pleasure or displeasure with a court ruling or the results of a particular suit rather than the legal issues involved.

VI. MCLE CREDIT

Writers of MCLE articles for *Valley Lawyer* will receive up to four (4) hours of MCLE credit for their efforts.

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

The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation, 19th Edition, Columbia Law Review Association, Harvard Law Review Association, University of Pennsylvania Law review and the Yale Law Journal, New York, NY

VIII. 2019 ISSUE/DEADLINE SCHEDULE

- JANUARY November 27,2018
- FEBRUARY December 20, 2018
- MARCH January 27, 2019
- APRIL February 27, 2019
- MAY March 27, 2019
- JUNE April 27, 2019
- JULY May 24, 2019
- AUGUST June 27, 2019
- SEPTEMBER July 27, 2019
- OCTOBER August, 2019
- NOVEMBER September 27, 2019
- DECEMBER October 27, 2019