

Write an Op-Ed

TIME: 3-4 HRS

PEOPLE: 1 OR MORE SUPPORTERS

Writing an op-ed for a local newspaper is a way to elevate public health issues. An op-ed is longer than a letter to the editor and generally appears on a newspaper's opinion page. Check if your newspaper accepts guest opinion pieces.

Email mediarelations@apha.org for sample op-eds and assistance with submitting an op-ed!

Tips for getting an op-ed published:

- **Start early.** Many papers receive up to 500 submissions a week. Submit an op-ed to only one paper at a time.
- **Reach out.** Call the newspaper and ask for the editorial page editor. Introduce yourself and tell him/her you are interested in submitting an op-ed for placement during the summer or fall congressional recess. Ask about any specific guidelines. An op-ed is usually limited to about 650 words.
- **Follow the submission guidelines.** Most newspapers now accept op-ed submissions via email or an online form on their website. Following their preferences increases the chances of getting your op-ed placed. When you send your submission, include a personal message to remind the editor who you are and reference any previous contact you have had. Highlight why the subject is important to the newspaper's readers. Include your full name, contact information and a brief description of who you are and what you do to illustrate what makes you an expert on the subject.
- **Be persistent.** Make a follow-up call about a week after submitting your op-ed to give time for the editor to review it. Confirm that the op-ed was received and answer any questions. Offer to modify it if needed.