

Drafting and Format

1. Pick a topic – something timely, compelling or even just reaction to a story you saw in the paper
2. Outline your thoughts – what is the issue at hand? What is your position? Why is it important?
3. Format of the actual letter – try to make your letter flow and follow this simple setup:

Dear Editor,

I am writing in response to (you fill in headline) article published on (insert date). This is (either right, wrong, half truth, some sort of description) and needs to be addressed.

(2 sentences on your opinion)

(1 sentence with a pithy closing)

Sincerely,

Dr. (Your Name Here)
Doctors for America

Editing your draft

The simplest way to make edits to your piece is to submit them to either Megan or Mandy, who can help you polish your draft. We respond typically in 24 hours or less to the emails requesting edits and advice on letters to the editor, so drop us a line at:

Megan.Smith@drsforamerica.org

Mandy.Krauthamer@drsforamerica.org

How to submit

Typically – your newspaper will let you submit a letter to the editor online. Go to the paper's web site, click on the "Opinions" section and follow the instructions there. Also, if you prefer, Megan or Mandy can help you track down that link.

The simplest way to find out how your newspaper takes submissions is to look at the directions in the print version of the Opinions page.

Follow up

The last step of any solid earned media effort is follow up. Letters to the editor are no different.

Call the paper and ask if:

1. your letter was received
2. if they think it may run in the near future
3. are there any other guidelines for letters to the editor you may have missed in doing your research on the editor's preferred stylistic touches for opinion pieces