

# Digital Advocacy Network

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## Letter to the Editor (LTE) Resource Guide

# What is an LTE?

An LTE is a short, opinion piece published by media that is typically between 130-350 words. An LTE focuses on one topic and is most often a response to a current event. LTEs can be used to express your opinion, to show support or opposition to something, and to call for action.

## Basic Components of an LTE

1. Include a compelling intro sentence
2. Follow with short and clear factual points
3. Personalize the issue
4. End with a call to action

# Publication Guide

Newspaper	Word Count	Circulation	Criteria (if any)	Link to Website
USA Today	200 words or less	726,906 (daily print), 504,000 (digital only)	Letters are edited for accuracy, clarity, and length. Submissions of 200 words or fewer have the best chance of being published. Letters must include a name, address and phone number.	<a href="https://static.usatoday.com/submitletter/">https://static.usatoday.com/submitletter/</a>
LA Times	150 words or less	653,868 (daily), 954,010 (Sunday), 105,000 (digital)	Full name, mailing address, city of residence, phone number and e-mail address are required. Does not publish more than one letter from a single person within any 60-day period. May be republished in any format.	<a href="https://www.latimes.com/opinion/submit-letter-to-the-editor">https://www.latimes.com/opinion/submit-letter-to-the-editor</a>
Arizona Republic	200	130,000	All submissions must be accompanied by full name, mailing address and daytime phone number. Subject matter should be relevant to readers, provocative, constructive, timely. Passion is good. So is humor. Letters criticizing The Republic are ok. Letter writers may have no more than one letter published per month.	<a href="https://static.azcentral.com/opinion/letters/">https://static.azcentral.com/opinion/letters/</a>
Denver Post	250 words or less	253,261 (daily), 134,537 (Sunday)	Letters must include full name, home address, day and evening phone numbers, and may be edited for length, grammar and accuracy. Include link to the online article you are responding to, if applicable.	<a href="https://www.denverpost.com/submit-letter/">https://www.denverpost.com/submit-letter/</a>
Salt Lake City Tribune	300 words or less	74,043 (daily), 84,137 (Sunday)	Must include signature, full name, address, phone number and email address (if available) of the author for verification purposes. Concise letters developing a single theme are more likely to be published. For printed submissions, please type and double space throughout.	<a href="https://www.sltrib.com/contact-us/">https://www.sltrib.com/contact-us/</a>
Albuquerque Journal	350 words or less	96,825 (daily), 116,826 (Sunday)	Preference is given to letters that are fresh, brief, clear and that don't require factual verification. Letters must include writer's signature, home address and telephone, and a daytime number. Letters keyed to an upcoming event or date should be mailed well in advance.	<a href="http://www.abqjournal.com/letters/new">http://www.abqjournal.com/letters/new</a>

# Tips & Tricks for Writing an LTE

Elvia Diaz

*Arizona Republic Columnist & Editorial Board Member*

- Keep your LTE short, sweet and topical -- if it is a topic that is currently in the news, this helps.
- The Arizona Republic received 250-300 LTEs a week, so it needs to be compelling from the get go.
- The Arizona Republic will publish between 4-6 LTEs a week, depending on the length.
- Most of the time, LTEs are in reaction to something that is happening in the news. Random topics still happen, but not as often.
- The subject of your email of LTE is very important in catching someone's attention.
- If you know the editor, email it to them directly or CC them in your email. At the Arizona Republic, there is one email that receives all of the LTEs so yours could easily get lost.
- Use emotions and facts to back up your opinions and thoughts, especially if you plan on attacking someone or making accusations. You should provide hyperlinks to your sources.
- Write out your thoughts, and then cut it in half. Use your words wisely.
- Use active verbs and NEVER use profanity.
- Some editors at the Arizona Republic keep track of who is sending in LTEs and her boss has a policy of not publishing the same person within a month.

Frank Moraga

*Amigos NAZ Editor*

- It will benefit you to have a personal connection with the paper's editors.
- Keep in mind that all journalists are doing more with less and that they are very busy, so they might not get back to you.
- Make sure to read through the LTEs that have been posted in that publication to see that you are not duplicating efforts.
- Be concise, pick one topic, keep it to the point, and personalize it.
- Talk about yourself, your family, your community, and your county.

# Example LTE

During the LTE Advocacy Training, we put together an LTE with Frank Moraga's guidance. The LTE is below:

Topic: Opening parks and hiking trails

Title: "Now is the time to open our parks and trails. How can we do this safely?"

Right now, more than ever, outdoor spaces mean a lot because I cannot leave my home. I cannot take my family out because I cannot trust others to follow guidelines for social distancing or using face masks. However, we know that outdoor transmission is small and unlikely compared to indoor environments. Are there ways to lessen the restrictions on accessible trails? There needs to be additional resources and funding provided for park workers who can provide social distancing knowledge and guidance on the trail.

The background of the entire image is a photograph of a garden. In the foreground, there are several green cactus stems with white spines. Behind them, there are various plants with autumn-colored leaves in shades of red, orange, and green. The overall scene is outdoors and brightly lit.

## Ways to stay connected

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