The Pennsylvania Lawyer
Writer Guidelines

The Pennsylvania Lawyer is a feature magazine published by the Pennsylvania Bar Association as a service to its members and the legal profession at large.

It appears every other month in January, March, May, July, September and November. It has a circulation of approximately 25,000. It is distributed to the state Legislature and to libraries as well as to members of the association.

The magazine is designed to supply useful information about the practice of law; to explore law-related trends and developments; to provide a forum for the expression of ideas, concerns and opinions; and to stimulate debate on professional and public issues that affect lawyers. All articles must relate to the legal profession in Pennsylvania.

Publishing goals in support of Pennsylvania Bar Association goals

We seek to publish articles that:

- Promote pride in the profession
- Encourage civility, ethical behavior and professionalism
- Create awareness of important trends and developments
- Help build sound, profitable practices
- Enhance the quality of legal life
- Improve service to clients and community
- Foster commitment to legal education
- Contribute to positive involvement in public affairs
- Educate and inform the public and the profession

Length and format

Feature articles generally run approximately 2,000 words, although we sometimes publish articles that are shorter or longer. Length always depends on the timeliness, importance and complexity of the subject matter.

We are a feature magazine, rather than a scholarly publication or traditional legal journal. We want to be read — for interesting information and enjoyment — rather than studied. Articles should be written in a brisk journalistic style, generally following the guidelines of the Associated Press Stylebook. This means NO FOOTNOTES OR ENDNOTES. The source of quotations and information should be attributed within the text, without lengthy citations. For example, if referring to a decision or case, you could write: “In the case of Smith v. Jones in 1995, the U.S. Supreme Court held that ...” If you feel more detailed citation is necessary, you should supply the information separately for use with the online version of the article on the PBA website. Appropriate documentation of controversial facts or quotations may be required. We prefer to receive articles as MS Word files sent via email. Articles should be marked to the
attention of the editor and sent to editor@pabar.org. We accept hard copy submissions submitted by mail if printed in double-spaced, letter-quality format on white paper, without pen or pencil marks. Hard copy MUST be accompanied by an electronic version, preferably in Word on a CD or thumb drive. Please do not send submissions in hard copy only.

Queries and unsolicited manuscripts

The Pennsylvania Lawyer prefers to receive advance queries about proposed articles by email, although unsolicited manuscripts will be considered. Telephone queries are not accepted. Writers querying The Pennsylvania Lawyer for the first time should include clips of previously published work, references, or other relevant credentials.

Your query should describe the article you have in mind, why the topic would be important or interesting to the readers of The Pennsylvania Lawyer, why you’re uniquely qualified to write the article, and what specific approach or focus you would take. A tight, well-planned focus is crucial.

Remember that our editorial calendar usually is set four to six months in advance. We sometimes open space to accommodate a late-breaking article, but most of the time our articles are planned many months ahead.

We require our writers to sign a publication agreement that allows distribution of the article by both print and electronic means. We ask for first serial rights only but require the right to exclusive publication in Pennsylvania. Our publication agreement gives us the right to edit for length, house style and accuracy, and to determine the title and captions used for the article.

Tips for writers

- The Pennsylvania Lawyer accepts legal humor and cartoons infrequently. The magazine publishes a regular humor column. The magazine also publishes regular columns on legal discipline, legal ethics, people notes and best practices. These columns are not open to outside writers. Short personal-experience stories are accepted for our “War Stories” column. Book reviews are accepted.

- Profiles are considered but are usually given lower priority than articles that focus on the practical, day-to-day aspects of lawyering, the business of law, law-office management, the impact of emerging legal trends and the legal aspects of current public issues. Historical articles also are considered.

- Scholarly articles dealing with substantive law are not accepted. Such articles should be submitted to The Pennsylvania Lawyer’s sister publication, The PBA Quarterly. (The association also publishes the Pennsylvania Bar News, a biweekly newspaper containing news of association activities.)
• Articles should contribute in a positive way to the profession. For example, the exploration of a problem affecting lawyers should also examine the possible solutions to the problem. Opinion pieces and point-of-view articles are accepted, but political polemics and attacks on individuals are not.

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