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***Facts & Findings* Style Guidelines**

Facts & Findings is published and printed quarterly: Q1 (January), Q2 (May), Q3 (September), and Q4 (November).

Feature/General/Educational articles should be approximately 1,500 words and be an in-depth analysis of a case, situation, or topic. Columns are standard in the publication, covering a variety of topics. These are solicited works only and should be approximately 600 words.

Please submit a bio of no more than 100 words and a high-resolution photo with any articles submitted. These should focus on the author's professional accomplishments and what makes them an expert in the field, not personal information.

The publications include articles written by lawyers, paralegals, and others concerning substantive legal issues, court rules, current trends, and recent developments, as well as articles of general interest to paralegals. The typical reader has 10 years of experience as a paralegal, a college degree, and specialized education and/or training in the legal profession. Articles should be aimed at paralegals and written in a clear, accurate, and conversational style. Articles should be a refreshing departure from "legalese."

These guidelines are primarily a reference for the editorial team, but authors are encouraged to review them if they wish to understand how content is reviewed and revised in the interest of consistency, accuracy, readability, and space requirements. It is important for authors to understand that NALA reserves the right to edit, heavily if necessary. Such editing is not undertaken lightly. Considerable effort goes into preserving the author's voice during the editing process, and edited content is returned to the author for review prior to publication to ensure that nothing has been misconstrued. The review process is not intended as an opportunity for authors to completely rewrite, but to correct any substantive errors in the original content or that may have been introduced during production editing. Authors should keep in mind that their ideas are the heart of their article for publication. Stylistic writing is a highly subjective matter, but accurately expressing your ideas is a universally admired attribute.

NALA recognizes that AI is a powerful tool to assist in the writing process, enhancing efficiency and offering different perspectives. However, we remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring that the final output authentically reflects the author's original voice, style, and intent. We ask that you disclose whether AI was used in any capacity while preparing your article.

***Important Note: NALA will refer to the most recent AP Stylebook for grammar reference unless otherwise stated below.**

Acronyms

- When introducing an acronym, spell out all the words the first time with the acronym in parentheses, *e.g.*, United States Public Law (USPL). This acronym might be well known to you, but USPL is most commonly used in connection with the United States Paintball League. Some acronyms, such as IRS, FBI, or USA, are in such common usage that they need not be spelled out unless they refer to other entities. It is unlikely that anyone reading *Facts & Findings* will not know the NALA acronym.

Affiliated Associations

- NALA Affiliated Association(s) should be capitalized. If it is “affiliate” or “affiliated association(s)” by itself, then it should be lowercase.

ALL CAPS (Please Do Not Use)

- Avoid using all caps for emphasis in text. Use **bold** instead. This may be reevaluated if an author is adamant and can make a reasonable argument for all caps.

America and United States

- Although commonly misused, “America” is a continent (actually two continents), not a nation. The nations in North America are the United States of America, Canada, and Mexico. Do not refer to the United States as “America” unless there is a compelling rhetorical reason.
- Always spell out United States on the first mention unless it is used as an adjective (*e.g.*, she was a US citizen working for a US government agency in the United States).
- When referring to a rule, law, or condition that applies to all the contiguous states, use “nationwide” instead of “across the United States.”

And vs. &

- Use of the ampersand (&) may sometimes be suitable in a header or title but is mainly reserved for firm or company names (*e.g.*, Johnson & Johnson).

Author Biographies (100 words or less)

- New author bios and bios that need updating should be included with the article submission. The information should include professional training (degrees), employment experience, awards, and preferred email address. Personal interests, hobbies, family, and promotions should not be included.

Bylines

- The first letter is capitalized (*e.g.*, By Janet R. Jones, ACP). The byline should include the middle initial and proper professional credentials.

Capitalization

- Capitalize “President,” “Board of Directors,” *etc.* only when used as proper nouns. A fair

test for this is if the word is preceded by “the,” “that,” or “this” (e.g., “This Board stands for fairness in all such matters, whereas another board might not.”).

Chair

- The style adopted by NALA is to truncate “chairman” to the gender neutral “chair.” The preceding capitalization rule also applies here (e.g., “She was the Ethics Chair for two consecutive terms and also chaired several other committees.”).

Citations/References

- NALA adopts the Chicago Style, particularly with the use of endnotes. Please see the end of this document for a full explanation with examples.

Colons

- Used to start a list (e.g., “You must meet the following criteria:”)

Commas

- *Facts & Findings* uses commas after the Latin abbreviations in parenthetical references (e.g., *i.e.*).
- The Oxford comma is used before “and/or” in a list of three or more elements (e.g., first, second, and third).

Company Names

- Since *Facts & Findings* is oriented to matters of legal interest, the full legal name of companies and law firms, including their corporate structure (e.g., LLP, PC), should be used in the first reference. Subsequent references need not include the corporate structure letters.

Compound Words

- Hyphens are used to join two words together to ensure clarity, particularly when used as a compound adjective (e.g., self-driving car, health-care system). According to AP Style, they are used to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words.
- Using a hyphen may be a matter of taste or judgment. Some phrases, such as chocolate chip cookie, are so well-known that they do not need a hyphen. The goal is to make it clear and logical for the average reader.
- Do not use a hyphen to designate dual heritage (e.g., Italian American).

Contractions

- Please do not use contractions except in a direct quote from a source.

Copyright

- *Facts & Findings* authors retain original copyright to their articles, and the entire magazine is copyrighted by NALA.
- When the United States joined the Berne Convention (March 1, 1989), the requirement to use the copyright symbol (©) was eliminated. The copyright notice on the *Facts &*

Findings boilerplate page is all the formal notice needed.

Credentials

- Paralegal credential abbreviations (CP[®] and ACP[®]) are set apart from the name by a comma (*e.g.*, Janet R. Jones, ACP).
- The credential for lawyers is “Attorney.”
- We will defer to those who request “Esq.” in their byline.
- Academic credentials such as PhD, MBA, BA, EdD are not internally punctuated.
- The registered trademark symbol must be used in superscript after CP[®] and ACP[®], unless it is used after a person’s name (*e.g.*, She earned her CP[®] credential in 2006).

Dashes and Hyphens (three different kinds)

- The normal hyphen is used for words such as e-reader or to separate syllables in a word at the end of a line.
- The “n-dash” is slightly longer and is used in place of “through” for expressions such as “pages 1–20.”
- The “m-dash” is the longest and is used for an emphatic pause in a sentence (*e.g.*, The attorney blustered and sputtered — obviously at a complete loss for words.)

Exclamation Points

- Use the “!” only when the text is truly exclamatory. For the most part, you should pretend that this mark does not exist on your keyboard.

Facts & Findings

- The magazine title is italicized in uppercase and lowercase, whether spelled out or abbreviated as *F&F*.

Foreign Terms

- Avoid gratuitous use of foreign expressions when an English term will work as well. For Example, “reason for being” works as well as “*raison d’être*.”
- Foreign words, including Latin terms and abbreviations such as *pro bono*, *quid pro quo*, and *voir dire*, should be italicized.
- Foreign words that have been absorbed into common English usage (*e.g.*, resume) need not be italicized.
- Abbreviations such as *i.e.*, *e.g.*, *etc.* should be italicized. Use commas with “*e.g.*” and “*i.e.*” and a period after *etc.*
- Correct diacritical markings should be used with foreign words such as *mañana* or *Cañada* (so that the California locale is not confused with the country of Canada).

Headlines and Subheads

- Author suggestions for headlines and subheads are welcome. Short is better than long, and the final decision for these lies with the editorial staff. As a general rule, headlines and subheads should be limited to four words and 10 words or fewer for titles.

Internet Terminology

- Email, online, offline, and website are single words and not hyphenated.
- The words internet and website are not capitalized.

Italics

- Use italics for titles of books, magazines, films, and case titles. See exceptions under “Quotation Marks.”
- Individual articles within publications are set off with quotation marks (*e.g.*, the seventh chapter in *The Hobbit* is “Queer Lodgings.”).
- A reference to a specific legal case (*e.g.*, *Kramer v. Kramer*) should be in italics.

JPEGS

- Author photos should be high resolution pictures of at least 300 dots per square inch (DPI) saved as a JPEG file. They should be submitted as a separate file with the article.

Lists

- Lists may be presented with numbers, bullets, or the initial three or four words set in bold.
- If a list item is a complete sentence, it should have a period, and the other items in the list should also be complete sentences with periods. If all list items are sentence fragments, then no periods are needed.

More Than/Over/Under

- Use “more than” when expressing a number, amount, or dimension larger than a given number (*e.g.*, there were more than 150 lawyers in the room).
- Do not use “over” unless it refers to a physical position.
- Likewise, use “less than” rather than “under.”
- Use “older than” or “younger than” rather than “over” or “under” when defining ages.
- Reserve the “under” and “over” prepositions for directional references (*e.g.*, “over the top”) or in well-known expressions such as “overstated.”

Noon/Midnight

- Do not put a “12” in front of noon or midnight (see “Time”).

Numbers

- Single digit numbers should be spelled out.
- All others should be written as Arabic numerals (*e.g.*, 10, 25, 150) unless the number is at the start of a sentence or refers to millions/billions of dollars (*e.g.*, \$2 million).
- When referring to age, always use Arabic numerals (*e.g.*, 9 years old, 9-year-old).
- For school grades, spell out first through ninth. Use numbers for grades 10 through 12.
- For constitutional amendments, spell out the First Amendment through the Ninth Amendment. Use numbers for the 10th Amendment and beyond.
- Roman numerals are used only when they appear in the original source (*e.g.*, *Title IX*).
- The use of Arabic numerals exclusively in charts, tables, and headlines is acceptable.

- If you are using several adjacent numbers in a sentence, use all numerals (*e.g.*, “There were 4–20 blackbirds.”).

Percent vs. %

- According to AP Style, the percent sign (%) should be used in text, charts, and tables. Do not write out the word unless you are specifically discussing a percentage point.
- Use percentage, rather than percent, when not paired with a number (*e.g.*, The percentage of people who enjoy football is rather high.).

Period

- There is only one space after a period.
- The period always goes within quotation marks.

Persona

- Write articles in third person unless it is an invited editorial or a personal perspective type story.

Possessive Singular of Nouns

- Following the guidelines of *The Elements of Style*, form the possessive singular of nouns by adding ’s (*e.g.*, James’s cat).

Quotation Marks

- Used for direct quotations (needs a source citation).
- May be used to indicate a word used in an unusual way or with a different meaning (*e.g.*, these are more than “toys” in the modern courtroom). This needs only to be done on first use of the term. It may be assumed that the reader will know your meaning from that point on.
- Periods and commas always go within the quotation marks.
- Dashes, semicolons, colons, and question marks go within the quotation marks only if they apply to the quoted material. They go outside the quotation marks when they apply to the whole sentence.
- Use single quote marks in headlines.

Rhetorical Clichés

- Rhetoric is a wonderful thing in speech and writing. However, clichés in written text risk marking the writer as unprofessional. A good example is, “*It goes without saying* that the deadlines must be met.” If this statement truly goes without saying, then do not say it. Conversely, if it needs to be said, do not precede it with “it goes without saying.”

Rhetorical Questions

- Rhetorical questions can be used as thought-provoking material and are excellent ways to engage the reader. However, use these with caution. Too many rhetorical questions take away the impact and quickly become cumbersome.

Semicolons

- Use to separate clauses with internal comma punctuation.

Succinct Sentences

- Short and punchy sentences are easier to read and generally more effective than compound, complex sentences.
- Take caution when beginning a sentence with “And” or “But.”
- Avoid sentence fragments and run-on sentences.

Telephone Numbers

- Avoid telephone numbers unless absolutely necessary (a published wrong number can precipitate a crisis and possibly a lawsuit).
- Follow official telephone company format using hyphens rather than the former practice of separating the area code with parentheses (*e.g.*, 918-587-6828).

Time

- Omit the “:00” for even times such as 6 a.m. or 4 p.m. Please note that periods are used in meridian references (a.m. and p.m.).
- When minutes must be indicated, write 6:15 a.m. or 4:25 p.m.
- When indicating a range of time, use a.m. or p.m. only once unless the range crosses noon or midnight (*e.g.*, 8:30–10:00 a.m. or 8:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.).
- Noon and midnight require no meridian reference.

Trademark Symbols

- If an article deals specifically with intellectual property, trademark symbols may be appropriate as long as they are used correctly. Use ® immediately following the first reference of a registered company, such as LEGO®, and use ™ after the first reference of an actual product, such as Nintendo Switch™. The symbols are not needed in subsequent references.

“v.” Versus “vs.”

- In reference to case law, use the conventional legal style of “v.”
- In ordinary English, the “vs.” should be used.

NALA Endnotes Style

As a uniform guide, *Facts and Findings* has adopted *The Chicago Manual of Style*. For complex legal citations, our authority is *Columbia Law Review’s The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (16th ed. Cambridge: Harvard Law Rev. Assn., 1996).

Using endnotes, writers refer their readers to citations and references by putting a number at the end of the sentence that contains the language or idea that requires citation. The number appears in the text as a superscript at the end of the sentence with no space between the period and the number. The endnotes appear at the end of the manuscript with their corresponding superscript

numbers.

Authors are encouraged to incorporate references and attributions into the text and avoid repetitive endnote references where an initial citation will work.

The editors reserve the right to change endnotes to conform to *Facts & Findings* style. If an author has specific questions, they can reach out to the *Facts & Findings* Proofreader, Callie Spencer, at cspencer@nala.org.

Below are examples of endnotes, specifically in the section at the end of the article titled “Resources.” The point of the resource section is the following: attribute words and ideas to original authors, avoid plagiarism; provide a guide for the reader to learn more about the subject; and provide a resource for the reader to check facts.

—Examples—

Internet Source

⁹<http://nala.org/facts-findings>

Book

¹⁰Pepin, Ronald E. *Literature of Satire in the Twelfth Century* (1988).

Magazine or Journal

¹¹MacDonald, Susan Peck. “The Erasure of Language.” *College Composition and Communication* (2007).

Newspaper

¹²Manegold, Catherine S. “Becoming a Land of the Smoke-Free, Ban by Ban,” *New York Times* (22 Mar. 1994).

Legal Source

¹³*United States v. MacDonald*, 531 F.2d 196, 199-200 (4th Cir. 1976), *rev'd*, 435 US 850 (1978).