

A Guide to Getting Your News In The Washington Post

Every day **The Washington Post** receives hundreds of news tips from community and business leaders, government workers, parents, cab drivers, students and people from all over the metropolitan area. Many tips become items on washingtonpost.com/local or in the next day's paper. Some even provide the first break in a major story that has a profound impact on affairs in the capital, the nation and the world.

Unfortunately, there is never enough space in any single edition to print everything that is written in our newsroom that day. Only about 180,000 words — a fraction of the more than 2 million words written each day by more than 500 Post reporters, editors, web producers and foreign correspondents -- is printed in the newspaper. Far more is included on our Web site, but there is much cut in the editing process.

Here are some hints on how to give your story idea the best chance of being used

- **Decide which section of the newspaper would be most interested in your story.** If it is in connection with high school sports, contact the sports editors; local business, the business editors; local news, the metro editors. E-mail is the best way to make an initial contact, but you may also call or write a letter.
- **If your story is in connection with something you read in The Post,** contact the reporter whose byline is on the article. The e-mail address of Post reporters is printed at the bottom of every story in the newspaper. On-line, you may click on the reporter's byline and receive biographical information about the author, a selection of recent stories written by that author and a form for submitting a comment. Use that form to submit your story idea.
- **Include as many names and facts as you can.** And remember, even if you don't include the other side of the story, The Post will cover both sides in the interest of fairness.
- **Do not expect to be paid.** As a matter of policy, The Post neither accepts gifts or payments from people who offer news or information, nor does it pay for news tips it receives. Do not be discouraged to discover your story has already been covered or that somebody else has submitted the information before you. Instead, continue to keep The Post in mind and call again.

The Metro section is not the only place for local news

Many local stories are published both in the daily Metro section and on the local news home page (washingtonpost.com/local). But not all Metro news is published in the newspaper. Some items are published only on-line. Other stories and event listings are published only for residents of one particular county or area. To accommodate these reports, The Post publishes community news as part of Thursday's **Local Living** section. These sections target areas including **Arlington-Alexandria, Prince George's, Prince William, Montgomery, the District, Fairfax, Loudoun and Southern Maryland.**

FAQs

Getting your news to us

Q. I believe I have a story for The Post. What do I do?

A. If it's a "fast-breaking" story—a fire or accident involving injury, a robbery or something similar—call the proper authorities first, then send an e-mail to postnow@washpost.com or call the local news desk at 202-334-7300. If the story is not a breaking news story, use one of the e-mail addresses on the last page of this pamphlet and describe your story in detail.

Q. The organization I represent is holding an important news conference within the next 24 hours. How do I let The Post know it is happening?

A. The best way to alert the newsroom of an upcoming event is to e-mail the local news staff at metro@washpost.com, but on short notice you may want to call the local news desk at 202-334-7300. Please contact the newsroom as far in advance as possible. This gives you a better chance for coverage.

Q. I have taken a photo and video of flooding in my neighborhood. Would The Post be interested in running these?

A. Yes. Readers may e-mail breaking news photos to us at photo@washpost.com. Send the image as a jpeg and provide as much information about the story as possible. For the video, send an e-mail describing the scene to interactivity@washingtonpost.com. In either case, an editor will contact you before the Post will agree to use your material. Your photo or video will not be considered without the following information: your name, address and phone number.

Q. What happens when I e-mail or call a reporter or columnist?

A. E-mails sent to the address at the bottom of a story, or messages sent by clicking on a reporter's byline at washingtonpost.com are the best way to make an initial contact with a reporter. Writers and columnists often use readers' tips and comments as ideas for articles and leads for news stories. All Post staffers are urged to answer reader e-mails, but because of the volume of tips, comments and messages we receive we cannot promise that each note will receive an individual response.

If you call our newsroom, you may find a writer or reporter available and ready to talk, or your call may be forwarded to a voice mailbox if the reporter is away from the desk. If the reporter is unavailable and you do not want to leave a voice message, you will be redirected back to a news aide who should be able to help.

Q. What happens when I send something in or call a story in to The Post?

A. E-mails and letters not directed to a specific staff member will be read by a news aide. A call to any of the numbers listed in this guide will probably be answered first by a news aide. News aides are trained to look for and check facts, and can write up simple news items and carry them through to publication. If a story warrants a reporter or

photographer, an editor will dispatch them to the scene. The editor, reporter and photographer are responsible for carrying the story through to publication in print or on line.

Q. I called a story in last week and The Post never printed it. Why?

A. There are many reasons why an item does not make it into the paper. Perhaps your story only appeared on-line. Or maybe the suggestion came in on a day when there were many news items of higher priority. Don't give up. Continue to contact The Post whenever you have something that you think the paper should print.

Q. Can I get school, community, club or entertainment event from my neighborhood listed in The Post?

A. Yes. Community calendars run in every Local Living section and contain information about events that would be of interest mainly to people living in that region. To submit an item, send it to one of the following e-mail addresses, depending on where you live:

Fairfax: fxliving@washpost.com
Loudoun: ldliving@washpost.com
Prince William: pwliving@wahpost.com
Arlington/Alexandria: axliving@washpost.com
Southern Maryland: smliving@washpost.com
Prince George's: pgliving@washpost.com
DC: dcliving@washpost.com
Montgomery: mocoliving@washpost.com

Include event names, dates, times, an exact address, prices and a publishable contact number. All items must be received at least 14 days before publication.

Q. My community is holding a literary event. Can I have it listed in The Post?

A. Yes. Listings for literary events also may be sent to the Community Calendar address above for use in Local Living. Sometimes these events are grouped into the Local Living "Going Out Guide" which highlights nightlife and entertainment in your community. The Going Out Guide is compiled by editors from items submitted for the community calendar and material available on goingoutguide.com, The Post's on-line source for all entertainment, dining and nightlife in the D.C. region.

Q. I am planning an event that would be of interest beyond my community, can I get that listed in The Post?

A. Yes. Send your listings information to events@washingtonpost.com. The Post publishes general interest "Going Out Guides" in Weekend on Friday, Washington Post Magazine on Sunday, and in Style on Saturday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The items listed in the newspaper, however, are a fraction of the many event picks, movie reviews, restaurant listings and nightlife options listed on-line at goingoutguide.com.

Q. What about getting religious announcements or events listed in The Post?

A. Retirements, new appointments, ordainments, awards and upcoming religious events are listed on Saturday's **On Faith** page. Items for **In Brief** should be sent to the religion editor at rpevents@washpost.com at least two weeks prior to the event and should include the name and telephone number of a contact person.

Q. An important member of our staff is being promoted to vice president.

A. Send biographical information and details about the promotion of your staff member to appointments@washpost.com. The column runs in Monday's WASHINGTON BUSINESS section inside the A section and online.

Q. Our company is also sponsoring a local technology seminar that is open to the public. Whom do I contact at The Post about this?

A. Send basic information about business events to facetime@washpost.com. Please put the event date in the subject line and send the announcement at least two weeks before the event. Send biographical information and details about the promotion of your staff member to appointments@washpost.com. This column also runs in Monday's WASHINGTON BUSINESS section inside the A section and online.

Q. My children are interested in reading the newspaper. Do you publish anything specifically for them?

A. Yes. The Post publishes **KidsPost** behind the comics pages Monday through Thursday for 8- to-13-year-olds. The page contains news summaries, features, graphics, photos and puzzles. For more information, visit washingtonpost.com/kidspost. On Sunday, the Mini-Page is a pull-out in the middle of the Comics section aimed at 6- to- 12-year-olds. It contains a similar mix of material.

Q. I'm hopping mad about the way The Post covered a news story. I want to register a protest.

A. You may direct your comments to the ombudsman, who works independently from our editors and whose specific assignment is to be our reader liaison with the newsroom and give constructive criticism of news coverage. In a column appearing on the Sunday editorial pages, the ombudsman often writes critically of news items in The Post and elsewhere. In addition, our ombudsman maintains a blog on washingtonpost.com, where he comments on daily events in the newsroom, and where reader questions can be answered and reader comments can be added. Much of what appears in the ombudsman's columns and memos to editors originate from calls and letters from readers. The best way to access the ombudsman is through email (ombudsman@washpost.com) Mail comments and criticisms to: Ombudsman, c/o Editorial Page or call 202-334-7582.

Q. I want to express my point of view about a story in the news.

A. The quickest, most direct way to comment about developments in the news is by clicking on the comments button on washingtonpost.com if it is available for that story.

You can also send your comments to letters@washpost.com or write to *Letters to the Editor*, c/o *The Editorial Page*. Letters to be published in the print edition are selected for widest public interest and reflect views of a range of The Post readers. Your letter may appear in the daily *Letters to the Editor*, on the *Free for All* page on Saturdays, or in Local Opinions in Metro on Sundays. Not all comments are published. Writers whose letters are under consideration for publication will be contacted, so please include home, work and cell phone numbers so that we may contact you for verification.

Letters must be fewer than 200 words and exclusive to The Washington Post. They may not have been submitted, posted to, or published by any other media. They must include the writer's home address, e-mail address, and home and business telephone numbers. Anonymous letters will not be considered, nor does The Post permit the use of pseudonyms.

Opinion page editors read every letter they receive. Due to space limitations, however, all letters are subject to abridgment. Because of the volume of letters we receive (an average of 1,400 letters each week), editors cannot respond individually to the authors of letters we are unable to use.

Q. Someone close to me, who lived in the Washington area, died recently. How do I get a story about her death on the obituary page? Is there a cost involved?

A. The Post has two ways of announcing a death: **news obituaries** and **death notices**.

A **news obituary** is a biographical summary of a person's life that is written by the newspaper's staff. The Post will publish, without a charge, a news obituary of anyone who was a resident of the Washington area for 20 years or more, and who lived in the area longer than he or she was away. A family member must be able to provide information about the medical cause of death and other pertinent facts regarding the person's career, community involvement, marriages and survivors. No information about funeral services, burials, donations or other private memorials is included in a news obituary. A news obituary cannot be published more than 30 days after the date of death. We cannot guarantee that an obituary will be published on a particular day or that a photograph will be used.

Information should be sent by e-mail to newsobits@washpost.com. Additional information and an online form can be found at washingtonpost.com/obituaries. After sending written material, a family representative must call the News Obituaries department at 202-334-6477 to arrange an interview.

A **paid death notice** is a classified advertisement that usually includes information about funeral services, burials or other personal remembrances. Costs vary according to the length of a death notice and whether a photograph is desired. Death notices can be placed by calling the Classified Advertising department at 202-334-4122 or by e-mailing deathnotices@washpost.com.

Q. My daughter has become engaged to be married and I want to announce it in The Post. Will I have to pay for this?

A. Yes. Paid announcements of weddings, engagements and anniversaries appear in Sunday's **Arts & Style** section. To place an order or for more information, go to weddings@washpost.com or call 202-334-5736. All materials for the following Sunday's paper must be received by Monday. Announcements of birthdays, graduations and other special events run in the Local Living section. Use the weddings e-mail or telephone number for those items.

Which desk should I contact?

- **NEWS Happening Now**

Send an e-mail to postnow@washpost.com or call 202-334-7300. (Note: If police, fire department or rescue squads are needed, be sure to contact them first.)

- **Education stories**

Send an e-mail to one of our education reporters (see address at the bottom of every story)

- **Crime stories**

Send an email to one of our crime reporters (see address at the bottom of every story) or contact our crime editors at crimetips@washpost.com

- **Corrections**

To contact the newsroom for a correction to a story, e-mail corrections@waspost.com or call 202-334-6100 and ask to be connected to the desk involved (National, Foreign, Style, Metro, Sports or any of the weekly sections). Contact information for corrections can be found in the corrections box on Page A2.

- **Ombudsman (reader representative)**

Address comments on the performance of the news media in general and The Post in particular to: ombudsman@washpost.com or write *Ombudsman, c/o Editorial Page*.

- **Letters to the Editor**

Send commentary submitted for publication to: letters@washpost.com or write *Letters to the Editor, c/o Editorial Page*.

- **News Obituaries**

Send information to newsobits@washpost.com and call 202-334-6477 to make sure your material was received.

- **Paid Announcements** (Classified advertising rates apply)

Weddings, engagements, anniversaries and birth announcements: weddings@washpost.com or call 202.334.5736.

In Memoriam and Deaths: deathnotices@washpost.com or call 202-334-4122

- **Promotion Announcements**

Send items about business promotions to appointments@washpost.com.

- **Religion events**

Send items to rpevents@washpost.com.

Making sure your news release gets to the right person

News releases should be e-mailed. Before sending your news release, make sure the person receiving the information is the correct recipient. If in doubt, send the release to the department's inbox and the release will be distributed to the correct reporter.

Department contacts

Metro: metro@washpost.com
National: national@washpost.com
Business: business@washpost.com
Sports: sports@washpost.com
Foreign: foreign@washpost.com
Style & Arts: style@washpost.com
Obituaries: newsobits@washpost.com
Local Living: localliving@washpost.com
Books: bookworld@washpost.com
Food: food@washpost.com
Health & Science: health-science@washpost.com
Travel: travel@washpost.com

Date each release and begin with the most newsworthy item or items. And be prepared to provide additional facts and data if and when a reporter calls.

Place letterhead (full name and address of your organization) at the top of your release with the name and telephone number of the person to contact for more information. Don't forget to indicate the date the story may be printed (release date).

Contacting Us

News, Circulation and Advertising department contacts may be found on page A2 or A4 of each day's edition of The Washington Post.

To correspond through the postal service

The Washington Post
1150 15th St. NW,
Washington, DC 20071

Identify the recipient by **name** and **department** (Metro News, National News, Real Estate Advertising, etc) on the cover of all letters and packages.

Direct access to newsroom departments

Main Switchboard

to contact any department
202-334-6000.

Local news

metro@washpost.com
202-334-7300

National

national@washpost.com
202-334-7410

Business

business@washpost.com
202-334-7320

Sports

sports@washpost.com
202-334-7350

Foreign

foreign@washpost.com
202-334-7400

Style

style@washpost.com
202-334-7535

Obituaries

newsobits@washpost.com
202-334-7340 / 202-334-6477

Book World

bookworld@washpost.com
202-334-7882

Food

food@washpost.com
202-334-7575

Health & Science

health-science@washpost.com
202-334-5031

Local Living

localliving@washpost.com

202-334-4409

Travel

travel@washpost.com

202-334-7750

Photojournalism and video

202-334-7380 / 202-334-4655

Graphics and Design

202-334-7380

Ombudsman

ombudsman@washpost.com

202-334-7582

Outlook

outlook@washpost.com

202-334-7573

On Faith (Religion)

onfaith@washingtonpost.com

202-334-4200 / 202-334-9461

Real Estate

business@washpost.com

202-334-6365 / 202-334-7320

Washington Post Magazine

wpmagazine@washpost.com

202-334-7585

Weekend

weekend@washpost.com

202-334-6808

Local news bureaus

Annapolis

410-263-8040

Richmond

804-649-7575

Alexandria-Arlington

axliving@washpost.com

703-518-3000

Fairfax

fxliving@washpost.com

703-383-5100

Loudoun

ldliving@washpost.com

703-771-4102

Montgomery

mocoliving@washpost.com

301-294-2600

Prince George's

pgliving@washpost.com

301-618-1720

Prince William

pwliving@washpost.com

703- 392-1303

Southern Maryland

smliving@washpost.com

Other departments

Advertising

washingtonpostads.com

Classified: 202-334-6200; Display: 202-334-7642

Circulation

homedelivery@washpost.com

1-800-753-POST / 202-334-6100

On the web

To contact news departments, purchase an ad, subscribe to the newspaper, or learn more about The Washington Post and The Washington Post Company, follow links under **CONTACT US** at the bottom of every page at washingtonpost.com.

National news home page

washingtonpost.com

Local news home page

postlocal.com

Company website

washpostco.com