

## Article Writing Guidelines

Every article should include the who, what, when, where and why.

- **Who** is the main character involved in this story? Who does this impact? Who is your source providing their expert opinion?
- **What happened?** What is the event? Explain the details of the event. Articles written about general issues should still be put in the context of a specific event.
- **When** was the event that is related to the article? There should be a specific instance that the article points to.
- **Where** did this take place? If this happened outside of Charles County, why is it relevant to Charles County? What are the areas that are being impacted by this story?
- **Why?** Why does this matter to readers? Why does this matter now? Why should people care about this article?

**Don't bury the lead.** The first sentence in your article should contain the most important information that sums up the entire article. This should be the main idea. If readers were only to read the first sentence of your article, they should immediately know what happened.

**Get a quote.** Find someone who is a decision-maker or who is affected by your topic of choice and interview them.

Interview Guidelines:

- Look for someone who the public would consider as an expert in this category.
- If you need background knowledge, data or a specific quote about an issue, consider government agencies, think tanks and consultants in this area.
- You can also find someone in the community who has been impacted by the issue you are covering.
- Quotes cannot be modified. They must be exact.

Requesting an Interview:

1. Research how the person you would like to interview can help.
2. Find out how you can call, email or meet the person.
3. When you request a formal interview, introduce yourself by name and tell them that you are a journalist with Waldorf Live, a hyperlocal news site.
4. Tell them what you are writing about in one sentence or less.
5. Tell them what you would like to interview them about.
6. Once they agree, and you are ready for the interview, begin asking your questions.
7. Record the interview on your phone or take notes. If you are taking notes, be sure to verify their quote by sending an email or by repeating it back to them before publishing the interview.

**Check your work!** Your name will be next to your article, so ensure that it is something you are proud of. Be sure that your story flows in a logical manner.

Writing should be checked for **grammar and spelling**. Use Grammarly Google Chrome extension to help you spell check and correct minor typos. There will be an editor, but the editor shouldn't have to correct minor issues that you can catch such as punctuation, capitalization, etc.

### **Submission Guidelines**

Use the font: **Arial, 12 pt**

Submit via Google Document - [Here's a guide to how to use Google Docs](#)

- You can write directly in Google Docs or you can upload a Word Document to the Google Drive
- Change Share Settings to Anyone with a link can edit via the blue button the top right of the Google Doc