

GUEST COLUMN GUIDELINES

Length

Most guest columns are limited to **500-750** words, but limits vary by news outlet

Writing style – Persuasive

OUTLINE

1) Introduction

- a) *Hook*: Capture reader's attention by conveying a sense of urgency and sharing direct connection to community
- b) *Context*: Explain issue at hand. Provide local #'s/impact of COVID
- c) *Thesis*: Finally, make an argument. Tell your reader where you stand on this issue. Emphasize confidence in citizens to do the right thing

2) Body paragraphs

- a) *Supporting evidence*: Describe the central pieces of evidence that support your position.
- b) *Tie Back*: Make sure to connect this evidence back to your main argument, explaining to readers how it supports your thesis statement.

3) Conclusion

- a) *Summary*: In just a few lines, remind your reader of the main argument and evidence.
- b) *Thesis*: remind readers what you're arguing and why they should care.
- c) *Personal Comment, Call to Action, or Question*: The last few sentences of your essay will linger in your reader's mind. What do you want to leave them with?
 - i) End on a positive, hopeful note
 - ii) Direct to more resources

4) Best Practices

- a) If possible, use individual health care workers, particularly providers and nurses, over CEOs or hospital names. National research shows that trust in doctors is at an all-time high.
- b) Use an emotional, empathic appeal through stories.
- c) Encourage Iowans to be the superheroes of the pandemic where they create an environment of safety.