



WRITING FOR CHANGE

*How to Write Letters to the
Editor That Drive Action*




TEXAS
GUN SENSE

Step 1

UNDERSTANDING THE PURPOSE

Writing a Letter to the Editor (LTE) is a powerful way to influence public opinion and advocate for stronger gun safety measures.



Raise Awareness

Highlight the issue of gun violence in Texas and its impact on communities.

Advocate for Change

Call for specific policy changes or actions that can prevent future tragedies.

Support Survivors

Show solidarity with victims and survivors of gun violence.

Step 2

CHOOSE THE RIGHT STORY

Identify a recent news story about gun violence or gun laws in Texas that resonates with you.

This could be a report on a shooting incident, a story about gun laws, or an article discussing the effects of gun violence.

*Think about **why** this issue matters to you.*

Step 3

RESEARCH & PREPARE

Gather Facts: Collect accurate data and statistics about gun violence in Texas from [our website](#).

Know Your Publication: Understand the guidelines and word limit for LTEs for the publication you are targeting. Most LTEs are between 150-250 words.

Stay updated on stories on gun violence in Texas by setting up daily Google Alerts. This helps you track news and stories to submit LTEs in response to.



How to Set Up Google Alerts:

1. Visit Google Alerts: Go to the [Google Alerts page](#).
2. Enter Keywords: Type terms like "Texas gun violence," "Texas shooting," and "Texas gun laws."
3. Customize Settings: Click "Show options" to choose alert frequency, sources, region, and language. Select "Once a day" for daily updates.
4. Create Alerts: Click "Create Alert" and add multiple keywords for broader coverage.

Step 4

CRAFT YOUR LETTER

1. Start With a Strong Opening

- Reference the article you are responding to with its title and publication date.
- State your main point clearly in the first sentence.
- Example: "Regarding the recent article 'Texas Shooting Leaves Community in Shock' (June 12), it's time we take decisive action to prevent such tragedies."



2. Share Your Perspective

- Personal stories or connections can be powerful.
- Highlight the broader implications of the issue.
- Example: "As a lifelong Texan and a parent, I am deeply concerned about the increasing frequency of gun violence in our state. Every shooting leaves families shattered and communities in fear."

3. Provide Data & Evidence

- Use data to back up your argument.
- Mention specific laws or policies that could help address the issue.
- Example: "According to the CDC, Texas has one of the highest rates of gun deaths in the country. Implementing expanded background checks could reduce gun violence significantly."

Step 4 Continued

CRAFT YOUR LETTER

4. *Call to Action*

- Clearly state what you want readers or policymakers to do.
- Encourage others to join the cause or take specific actions.
- Example: "I urge our lawmakers to pass common-sense gun safety laws, including background checks on each gun sale and safe storage requirements. Together, we can make Texas a safer place for everyone."



5. *Conclude with a Strong Final Point*

- Summarize your main point.
- Reiterate your call to action or message of support.
- Example: "Gun violence is a preventable epidemic. By working together and advocating for stronger laws, we can protect our communities and honor those we have lost."

6. *Edit and Proofread*

- Check for clarity, grammar, and spelling errors.
- Ensure your letter is concise and sticks to the word limit.

7. *Submit your letter*

- Follow the submission guidelines for your chosen publication.
- Include your full name, contact information, and any required disclosures (e.g., if you are affiliated with an organization).



Sample Letter

To the Editor,

Regarding the recent article "[Article Title]" ([date of publication]), it's time we take decisive action to prevent such tragedies. As a lifelong Texan, I am deeply concerned about the increasing frequency of gun violence in our state. Every shooting leaves families shattered and communities in fear.

According to the CDC, firearms are the leading cause of death for children and teens in Texas. Implementing background checks on all gun sales could reduce gun violence significantly. In states where background checks are required for all gun sales, there are fewer gun-related deaths and injuries.

I urge our lawmakers to pass common sense gun safety laws, including expanded background checks and safe storage requirements. Gun violence is a preventable crisis. Together, we can make Texas a safer place for everyone. By working together and advocating for stronger laws, we can protect our communities and honor those we have lost.

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[City, State]

[Contact Information]

This is just a sample letter, feel free to use this as a template or write from scratch.

Top Publications in Texas

And how to send your letter!

Austin American Statesman

- 150-word requirement. All letters are edited for brevity.
- Include your name, city of residence and a phone number; anonymous letters are not published.
- Email letter to letters@statesman.com. Or mail to: Letters to the Editor, P.O. Box 670, Austin, Texas 78767.

San Antonio Express-News

- 150-word requirement, titles not included.
- Submissions in response to recent developments are prioritized.
- Include your full name, address, and phone number.
- Email your letter to letters@express-news.net.

Houston Chronicle

- Less than 250 words
- Original viewpoints or responses to Houston Chronicle articles accepted.
- When writing about political issues, writers should disclose any relationship with a campaign or candidate.
- Include your full name and contact info.
- Submit via [this link](#).

Dallas Morning News

- Less than 200 words
- Full contact information required; only your name and city are published.
- Submit via [this link](#).

Top Publications in Texas

Continued

Fort Worth Star-Telegram

- 150-word requirement. All letters edited for clarity.
- Include your name, address, and phone number.
- Email your letter to letters@star-telegram.com.

Corpus Christi Caller Times

- 200 words or less.
- Real name, address, and e-mail are required; only your full name and city will be published.
- Email your letter to ctletters@caller.com.

El Paso Times

- Less than 225 words. Letters are edited for brevity.
- Include your full name, address, zip code, and phone number.
- Submit via [this link](#).

Laredo Morning Times

- Can not exceed 500 words.
- Include your name and telephone number.
- Email your letter to editorial@lmtonline.com.

Galveston County Daily News

- Letters up to 200 words.
- Include your address and phone number.
- Submit via [this link](#).

By writing and submitting a letter to the editor, you are playing a crucial role in raising awareness and advocating for stronger gun safety measures in Texas. Thank you for taking action!



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