



## ***Opening Statement Newsletter***

*An Official Publication of the Young Lawyers Division of The Virginia Bar Association*

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### **Author Guidelines**

#### **Mission of The Virginia Bar Association**

*The Virginia Bar Association is the independent voice of the Virginia lawyer, advancing the highest ideals of the profession through advocacy and volunteer service.*

#### **Purpose of the Young Lawyers Division**

*The purposes of the Division shall be to further the objectives of the Association, to stimulate and promote the interests of young lawyers in the activities of the Association, to encourage public service by young lawyers, to assist in the establishment, improvement and coordination of affiliated local young lawyer organizations and to encourage and promote fellowship among young lawyers.*

#### **About *Opening Statement***

The *Opening Statement* newsletter is published quarterly by the Young Lawyers Division (YLD) of The Virginia Bar Association (VBA) and provides coverage of recent YLD events, announcements of interest to YLD members, and articles, advice, analysis, and commentary about the practice of law, with an emphasis on content relevant to young lawyers. *Opening Statement* is distributed to all members of the YLD as a membership benefit, and it is available online at: [www.openingstatement.org](http://www.openingstatement.org).

The purposes of *Opening Statement* are: (1) to promote the Young Lawyers Division and The Virginia Bar Association, (2) to publicize the activities, events, and projects of the YLD and the VBA, (3) to support the career development of young lawyers by providing a forum for YLD members to share their knowledge and experience with each other and for experienced VBA members to provide advice to young lawyers, and (4) to foster the development of a sense of community among YLD members.

## Article Guidelines and Policies

### Article Length

Articles should be 650-1,300 words in length per issue, including any endnotes. Longer articles are welcome, but they will generally be divided into one or more parts and published in successive issues.

### Title

Your article should include an interesting title, and the use of short headings and subheadings is desirable, where appropriate. (The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit the title and/or headings and subheadings for length, clarity, style, or other editorial reasons.)

### Focus

The article should have a narrow and clear focus, and it should be informative and interesting to young lawyers in Virginia. For example, an article on the Virginia Rules of Evidence is too broad in scope, while an article on the ten most misunderstood rules would be fine. How-to articles and checklists are encouraged.

### Style and Tone

The style should be appropriate for a professional magazine or newsletter. Technical topics should be tailored to a general audience. Articles should be respectful of differing viewpoints within the legal profession and should not denigrate other lawyers or practice areas.

The following guidelines should be followed:

- Strive for an interesting opening and closing;
- Strive for a tone that strikes a balance between conversational and formal;
- Avoid overuse of “legalese” or technical terms that would be unfamiliar to

lawyers outside of a particular practice area;

- Use the active voice (rather than the passive voice) whenever possible;
- Be concise, but do not omit essential facts or details necessary for the reader to understand the subject matter of the article; and
- Avoid long quotations.

### Citations

Citations should be in the body of the article when the article is discussing the cited material specifically (e.g., “In *Ott v. Monroe*, 282 Va. 403 (2011), the court . . .” or “Virginia Code § 8.01-296 requires . . .”), but otherwise put citations in endnotes. Citations should conform to the latest edition of *The Bluebook (A Uniform System of Citation)*. Please ensure that all citations are accurate.

### Graphs, Charts, and Illustrations

You are encouraged to use charts, tables, illustrations, and photographs (“**Supplemental Materials**”) as appropriate for the article, and they will be included as space permits and in the discretion of the Editorial Board. Any Supplemental Materials should be submitted as separate files in their original format (the format in which they were created), which makes publication easier. Photographs and illustrations should be submitted in a high-resolution format. Identify all people appearing in any submitted photographs.

### Author Credits

The VBA Young Lawyers Division is pleased to promote authors whose articles are published in the *Opening Statement* newsletter. At a minimum, authors will be identified by name and will be given the opportunity to include a short biography (subject to the approval by the

Editorial Board). In most cases, each article will feature an author profile containing the author's photo and a short biography, such as place of employment, law school, practice areas, and contact information (the "**Author Profile**"). Authors may request that contact information be omitted. For authors who are members of the judiciary, contact information will not be published unless expressly requested by the author. The Author Profile is subject to the Editorial Policy and the approval of the Editorial Board.

### Submission Process

Your article should be submitted in Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx) format. Please e-mail the article, any Supplemental Materials, and the Author Profile (collectively, the "**Submission**") to [editors@openingstatement.org](mailto:editors@openingstatement.org).

### Publication Schedule

- ❖ **Spring 2013**
  - **Submissions Due:** February 11, 2013
  - **Publication Date:** April 2013
- ❖ **Summer 2013**
  - **Submissions Due:** April 15, 2013
  - **Publication Date:** June 2013
- ❖ **Fall 2013**
  - **Submissions Due:** July 13, 2013
  - **Publication Date:** September 2013
- ❖ **Winter 2013**
  - **Submissions Due:** October 4, 2013
  - **Publication Date:** December 2013

### Updates After Submission

If the law changes after your article has been submitted but prior to publication, you should notify the Editorial Board and provide an update or revision as appropriate.

### Publication Agreement

When submitting an article to the *Opening Statement* newsletter, each author is required to sign the VBA Publication Agreement, which

includes each author's warranty that the work is original and does not infringe the rights of others. A signed VBA Publication Agreement must be received by the *Opening Statement* Editorial Board before an article will be reviewed or considered for publication. The Publication Agreement is available online at: [www.openingstatement.org](http://www.openingstatement.org).

### Multiple Authors

If an article has more than one author, one of the authors should be designed as the contact person for editorial communications. Each author must sign the VBA Publication Agreement and complete an Author Profile. Only those individuals who have actually written the article should be listed as authors; research assistants should not be listed. Only individuals may be authors. A group or committee may not be an author, but an article that is based on the work of a group or a committee may indicate that fact in the body of the article or in an endnote.

### Acceptance Policy

No single member of the *Opening Statement* Editorial Board has the authority to commit to the publication of any article before it has been submitted, even if the article has been specifically solicited by a member of the Editorial Board. The Board will notify authors when their submission has been accepted or rejected. The Editorial Board, in its discretion, may withdraw an article previously selected for publication, delay the publication of a selected article, or reschedule a selected article. The Editor-in-Chief reserves the right to refuse to publish any article.

Your submission of an article does not constitute official acceptance for publication. Articles may be rejected for a variety of reasons, including similarity to other accepted articles. Whenever possible, the Editorial Board will work with

authors to address any problems relating to the Submission.

Any author who submits an article to the *Opening Statement* newsletter must identify whether or not the article is a reprint or has previously been published in a substantially similar form. The Editorial Board may accept such articles (e.g., blog posts adapted for publication in *Opening Statement*) provided that they are identified at the time of submission.

### **Editorial Policy**

Articles are judged by the relevance of the topic, the value of the content, the quality of the writing, and the overall “fit” of the article for publication in the *Opening Statement* newsletter. The Editorial Board reserves the right to edit Submissions as it deems necessary for clarity, conciseness, substance, grammar, style, and length, to comply with VBA, *Bluebook*, *Chicago Manual of Style*, and *Garner’s Modern American Usage* guidelines and requirements, and for formatting and design needs. Due to publication deadlines, it is generally not possible for the Editorial Board to submit page proofs for your review. However, major editorial revisions affecting the substance of an article will be sent to you for your approval before the article is submitted for production. In addition, the Editorial Board may request more substantive revisions before publication.

### **Disclosure Policy**

Each author should disclose to the Editorial Board any relationships he or she has with a firm, company, organization, or person producing or providing any products or services referenced in the article and any financial interest he or she may have in any product or services discussed in the article. Authors should make full disclosure even when the relevance seems minimal. Full disclosure allows the Editorial Board to judge the objectivity of the

author, to determine whether a real or apparent conflict of interest exists, and to determine whether disclosure should be made in the published article. An author should not submit an article specifically promoting his or her own products or services (or the products or services of his or her law firm). (For example, it would not be appropriate to write, “Individuals contemplating forming a new business entity should speak with a lawyer at Marbury & Madison PLC.”)

### **Representation and Warranty**

By submitting an article or other content to the *Opening Statement* newsletter, each author represents and warrants that he or she has included no material in the Submission that violates the rights of any other person or entity, that he or she has made full disclosure to the Editorial Board in accordance with the above Disclosure Policy, and that he or she has the right to grant the VBA a license to publish the submission in *Opening Statement*.

### **Complimentary Copies and Payment**

Upon request, the Editorial Board will provide authors with PDF copies of their articles published in the *Opening Statement* newsletter. Printed copies will generally not be provided. Neither the VBA, the VBA Young Lawyers Division, nor the *Opening Statement* newsletter provides payment for the writing of articles.

### **Questions?**

If you have questions concerning these guidelines or any matters concerning the *Opening Statement* newsletter, please contact: Editor-in-Chief Andrew Stockment ([EditorInChief@OpeningStatement.org](mailto:EditorInChief@OpeningStatement.org)).