

# THE JAG REPORTER

## Getting Published

### THE EDITORIAL PROCESS

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This section provides an outline of the editorial process involved in publishing an article in *The JAG Reporter* and describes how articles are handled by editors between submission and publication.

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## AT SUBMISSION

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### Criteria for publication

*The JAG Reporter* reaches a wide audience of military legal professionals and those interested in military law. We evaluate submitted articles with the following criteria in mind: JAG Corps senior leadership guidance, continuing education for military legal practitioners, relevance to the warfighter, and scholarly standards for academic writing, argument, and readability. While military legal practice is broadly defined, it can be shaped to four areas: Civil Law and Litigation, Military Justice and Discipline, Operations and International Law, and Leadership. At times, we will reach out to specific field experts for specific topics, but most of our content is generated from our readership and military legal professionals.

While we receive a wide range of submissions, most submissions fail to pass the **relevancy test**. We find the explanation from *Joint Force Quarterly* captures this test the best: “Even if everything in the article is accurate and criticism is delivered with precision, does the author recommend clear solutions or arm the reader with actionable information?” Article submissions should be significant in substantially furthering their area of law or military practice as well as innovative in their practical solutions.

### Who decides which papers to publish?

The Editor-in-Chief of *The JAG Reporter* along with The Air Force Judge Advocate General’s School (AFJAGS) leadership make the strategic judgment about which submissions will interest a broad readership and ensure relevant, thought-provoking articles are published. *The JAG Reporter* has a publication cycle of two articles per month, hence the selection criteria are rigorous. Many submissions are rejected without being sent for review due to lack of relevancy or failure to comply with the [Article Submission Guide](#).

### How to submit a paper

Authors should use the [Article Submission Guide](#) to ensure that the level, length, and format conforms with requirements, at submission, and each revision stage. This will reduce the potential for initial rejection and also will reduce delays with subsequent edits. Articles must be submitted via email to [afloa.afjags@us.af.mil](mailto:afloa.afjags@us.af.mil).

Authors submitting to *The JAG Reporter* do so on the understanding that they agree to the publication’s policies. Authors may not submit their submitted articles to other publications while they are being considered for acceptance, and may not subsequently submit their article to other publications if they receive a conditional acceptance.

## AFTER SUBMISSION

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### What happens to a submitted paper?

**First Pass:** The article is first reviewed by the Editor-in-Chief to determine if the content meets the [Article Submission Guidelines](#). Authors may be rejected at this stage for failure to comply with the guidelines. Authors should hear back within 2 weeks of submission as to the initial status of their articles.

**Board Review:** The paper is then considered by the editorial staff to send to a Board Review. The editorial staff may consult advisors and colleagues who may assist in making the decision to send to a Board Review. The criteria for sending the paper to a Board Review is that the paper is novel, readable, and appropriate for publication. The author's information is removed from the article to ensure a blind Board Review.

Once the decision is made to send the submission to Board Review, the Editor-in-Chief assigns a board of two members in the same field of expertise as the subject matter of the article. Typically, Board Members are chosen from the AFJAGS faculty, but if there is a specific subject matter, a Board Member may be requested from the field for their unique expertise. The Board Members must meet the following criteria:

- Independence from the authors
- Ability to evaluate the technical and legal aspects of the paper fully and fairly
- Currently or recently assessing related submissions
- Availability to assess the article within the requested time

Board Members then evaluate the submission, and indicate:

- Suitability of the article to be on TJAG's public website
- Legal or professional military relevance of the article
- Whether the article will be of interest to the intended *The JAG Reporter* audience

The Board Members provide a recommendation for conditional acceptance, rejection with resubmission, or rejection.

The Board and the Editor-in-Chief then make their recommendations to AFJAGS leadership, who make the decision for conditional acceptance or rejection.

Conditional Acceptance: Once the decision for conditional acceptance is made, authors will be notified and must submit a signed [Author Agreement](#), which requires authors to strictly adhere to deadlines and other publication requirements. We reserve the right to reject authors who do not meet deadlines and who do not provide prior notice of a requested extension for good cause. Authors will then be assigned an editor who is a subject matter expert. The editor will work with the author to improve their article and ensure subject matter accuracy.

Security and Policy Review: After final edits have been approved by the Editor-in-Chief, the article is submitted for Public Affairs security and policy review at the appropriate level. All content selected for publication is required by Department of the Air Force Instruction 35-101 and Air Force Manual 35-101 to receive a security and policy review from the appropriate-level Public Affairs office, which can take over sixty days for approval.

Layout and Publication: Once the submission passes the security and policy review, the article is assigned a publication date and is set for illustration and publishing.

## What the decision letter means

All articles published in *The JAG Reporter* will go through at least one, and more likely multiple rounds of review. At each stage, the editor will discuss the article with editorial colleagues, and send an email to the author offering one of the following options:

- Conditional acceptance as discussed in “[What Happens to a Submitted Paper?](#)”
- Reject because the Board or editorial staff have raised considerable technical or legal objections and/or the authors’ claim has not been adequately established. Under these circumstances, the editor’s email will state explicitly whether or not a resubmitted version would be considered. If the editor has invited the authors to resubmit, authors must ensure that all comments have been satisfactorily addressed (not just some of them), and must accompany the resubmitted version with a point-by-point response to the comments and also ensure a clean copy is provided.
- The paper is rejected with no offer to reconsider a resubmitted version. Under these circumstances, authors are strongly advised not to resubmit a revised version as it will be declined without further review.
- Editors’ emails also contain detailed guidance about the paper’s format and style where appropriate, which should be read in conjunction with the [Article Submission Guide](#) when revising and resubmitting.

## Speed

While authors will hear back within two weeks as to initial status of their submission, our goal is to reach a publishing decision as soon as possible. The publication schedule of *The JAG Reporter* is planned in advance of the publication dates. Thus, submissions may take longer than six months to be scheduled for publication.

All article submissions are handled electronically. Board members, editors, and authors are requested to comply with deadlines set by *The JAG Reporter*. Some decisions for publication may take longer depending on the number of submissions, the workload of reviewers, and higher-level approvals that may be required.

## AFTER ACCEPTANCE

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### Formats and lengths of papers

Format and length requirements must be strictly observed, including when editing the article. Submissions must be between **500 to 3,500 words, including endnotes**. Please restrict the use of endnotes in your submission to enhance readability. We reserve the right to reject submissions for not adhering to the requirements in the [Article Submission Guide](#). All endnotes must comply with [The Bluebook](#) and [The Purple Book](#) formats.

### **Copyediting of accepted papers**

After a paper is accepted, it is copyedited to ensure maximum clarity and reach, a process that enhances the value of papers in various ways. Our editors typically are faculty from AFJAGS, but editors from the field may be specifically used if they have a unique area of expertise. Our editors are specifically chosen for their subject matter expertise and editing skills. Our editors are happy to work with authors on editing the substance of the work to ensure maximum clarity and precision of language and the format of their work to ensure compliance with the Article Submission Guide.

### **Publication**

Original papers are assigned to specific launch times in our publication cycle, at which time authors will receive an e-mail notifying them of their scheduled publication date.

## **REFERENCE LINKS**

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- [Article Submission Guide](#)
- [Author Agreement](#)
- [Bluebook](#)
- [The Purple Book](#)
- [DoD Plain Language Website](#)