

# How to Write An Effective Press Release

## *Illinois Coalition for Community Service*

A. When writing a press release make sure that your article includes the following:

**WHO  
WHAT  
WHEN  
WHERE  
WHY**

**AND SOMETIMES, HOW.**

All of this information should be included in the first paragraph of your article. Cover the most important and then follow with details.

Always make verbs active and the subject concrete.

Give your press release a catchy title, e.g., "**ICCS Fighting Local Voter Fraud**". Write the title of the article as if it were the headline you would like to read in the paper.

Write a lead sentence that makes people want to continue reading your article.

If you are writing an article about an organization, try to quote either the Executive Director or the President of the Board.

If you are writing an article about a local committee or organization, try to quote an officer or member.

**ALWAYS TRY TO QUOTE A PERSON WHO WILL BE IMPACTED BY THE ACTIONS TAKEN.**

Never editorialize in a press release. Keep your opinions to yourself.

**ALWAYS CHECK YOUR FACTS!!!**

**PROOF READ EVERYTHING AT LEAST TWICE.**

B. When submitting a press release make sure to include:

The telephone number of a person who can verify the information contained in the article. This should be a number that will be answered by a live person. (Even if this means giving a home telephone number.)

In the upper left corner of the release type "**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: DATE AND THE NAME OF THE CONTACT PERSON.**

**TRY TO LIMIT YOUR PRESS RELEASE TO ONE PAGE.** If the article is over one page, do not E-mail, fax or send by mail.

At the end of the press release write "**end**" or use the symbol **###**. If the article is more than one page, write "**more**" at the end of each page.

After submitting your press release, make follow-up calls to specific reporters, or to the editor, to make sure they received your release.