

HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR LETTER

1. Address the editor

If possible, find the name of the editor and address them in your letter to increase the chances of it being read. If you can't find this information, a simple "To the Editor" will suffice.

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2. Grab their attention

Draw the reader in with a powerful opening line that gives them a preview of what they're about to read.

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3. Explain the issue

While you are knowledgeable and passionate about the impact of institutional menus on your community's health, remember that not everybody shares your background or interest. Explain the issue and why it is important simply and briefly.

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4. Give evidence

Back up your call for change with the facts; in this case, you can cite studies that show that plant-forward menus help decrease risk of developing heart disease, diabetes, and even some cancers.

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5. Provide the solution

Be specific about the solution you propose (namely that the institution agree to serve healthier meals) and how it will benefit the community at large.

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6. Sign your letter

Don't forget to provide your full name, phone number, and email address so the news outlet can follow up if needed.



WRITING A LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Writing a letter to the editor can help inform your community about your issue and bring public opinion around to your side. They are an easy and effective way to raise awareness about the impact of your institution's meals on your community's health, and to rally support for a commitment to change.

While you (justifiably) feel very passionately about protecting your community's health, keep the tone of the letter calm and rational, and avoid turning it into a rant against the institution. Your letter will have a better chance of being published and received well if you are able to make an informed case for change. The goal is to get your community on your side, not just to air your frustrations.

Even though there is a lot to say, it's best to keep your letter to the editor brief; in general, shorter letters have a better chance of being published. So once you've written your letter, try to go back over your letter and see if anything can be trimmed or condensed.