Association of People Against Lethal Drugs

Contributor Guide: Articles

How to create, edit, publish, and moderate comments

Written for authors · October 2026

This guide is for APALD contributors who write articles on the website. It uses everyday language. You do not need to be a web developer to publish helpful content for families and the community.

1. Who Can Write Articles?

Members at **Contributor** level and above can create articles. If you cannot open the create page, your account may still be at a lower level — contact an APALD admin or the webmaster to request Contributor access.

- Most contributors save a **draft**, then **submit for review**. An admin publishes it when ready.
- Higher-level staff (APALD Admin / Board / Webmaster) can often **publish immediately** without waiting for review.

2. Where Everything Lives

What you want to do	Where to go
See your articles	Profile → My Articles (weareapald.org/profile/my-articles.php)
Start a new article	My Articles → Create or weareapald.org/articles/create.php
Edit one of your articles	My Articles → Edit Article
Review comments on your posts	My Articles → Moderate Comments or weareapald.org/articles/moderate_comments.php
Read published articles	weareapald.org/articles

3. Article Statuses (What the Labels Mean)

Status	Meaning
Draft	Only you can work on it. Not public yet.
Pending	You asked for publication. An admin will review it.
Published	Live on the site for readers (based on viewing level).
Rejected	Not approved as submitted. You can edit and try again, or ask an admin.

Tip: On My Articles, each card shows status, comment counts, and whether any comments are waiting for your approval.

4. How to Create an Article

Step by step

1. Log in to your APALD account.
2. Open **My Articles**, then choose **Create**.
3. Enter a clear **Title**.
4. Write your **Content** in the large text box (see formatting tips below).
5. Choose **Minimum Viewing Level** — use Public so everyone can read it, unless the piece is meant for members only.
6. Check at least one **Category** (required).
7. Optional for staff: mark as **Featured** if that option appears for your account.
8. Choose an action button:

- **Preview** — see how it will look (recommended before publishing)
- **Save Changes** — keep it as a draft
- **Submit for Review** — send to admins (most contributors)
- **Publish Article** — goes live immediately (only if your account allows it)

5. How to Edit an Article

1. Open **My Articles**.
2. Find the article and click **Edit Article**.
3. Update the title, content, categories, or viewing level.
4. Use **Preview** if you changed formatting or images.
5. Click **Save Changes**.

Important: If a published article is edited by a regular contributor, it may return to draft so it can be reviewed again. That protects the public site from accidental mistakes.

You can only edit articles you wrote, unless you are a site administrator.

6. Formatting Your Writing (Simple Tags)

The content box accepts plain text and simple formatting tags. You do not need a fancy editor — a few small tags go a long way.

Common formatting

What you want	What to type
Bold text	bold words
Italic text	italic words
A paragraph break	Leave a blank line, or use …
A link	link text
Bullet list	- Item one - Item two
Numbered list	- First - Second
Heading	Section title

Adding an image

Images are added with an image tag that points to a picture already on the web (including images hosted on the APALD site).

```
<img src="https://weareapald.org/images/your-picture.jpg" alt="Short description of the image">
```

- **src** is the full web address of the picture.
- **alt** is a short plain-language description (helpful if the image does not load).
- The **first image** in your article is often used as the thumbnail on listing pages and when the article is shared.
- Prefer images already on APALD (for example from Media) or images you have permission to use.

If you are unsure how to get an image address, ask an admin to help host the picture, then paste that link into the tag above.

7. Why Some Formatting Disappears (Safety Cleaning)

When readers view your article — and when you click **Preview** — the site automatically cleans the content. That protection removes unsafe or unsupported code so visitors stay safe and pages stay stable.

Behind the scenes this uses a safety filter (HTMLPurifier). You do not need to operate it. What matters for authors:

- Allowed basics stay: paragraphs, bold/italic, lists, links, headings, and normal images.
- Unusual scripts, odd embeds, or unsupported tags are removed automatically.
- Always use **Preview** after adding images or complex formatting so you see what readers will see.
- If something vanishes in Preview, simplify the formatting or ask an admin for help.

8. Publishing Path

Most contributors
Save draft → Preview → Submit for Review → wait for an admin → Published

Accounts that can self-publish
Save draft → Preview → Publish Article (or Publish Now from My Articles)

*From My Articles you can also press **Request Publication** on a draft if that button appears for your level.*

9. Moderating Comments on Your Articles

Authors can review comments left on **their own** articles.

1. Open **Moderate Comments** from My Articles.
2. Read each comment and its status (Pending, Approved, or Rejected).
3. For pending comments choose:
   - **Approve** — the comment becomes visible with the article
   - **Reject** — the comment is not shown publicly
4. You may **Delete** a comment permanently if needed (you will be asked to confirm).

Please moderate with care: respectful disagreement is fine; cruelty, spam, or harmful content is not.

10. Tone and Content Guidance

APALD content is read by grieving families, advocates, and the public. Please:

- Write with dignity and clarity — avoid sensational language about loss.
- Prefer accurate, helpful information over rumor.
- Do not present personal medical or legal advice as official APALD policy unless asked to.
- Credit sources when you quote statistics or news.
- Remember memorials and personal stories deserve extra gentleness.

11. Quick Troubleshooting

Problem	What to try
I cannot open Create Article	Confirm you are logged in and have Contributor level or higher.
My image does not show	Check the image web address. Use Preview. Ask an admin if the file needs to be hosted on the site.
Formatting disappeared	Unsupported tags were cleaned for safety. Use the simple tags in this guide.
I submitted but it is not public	Status is likely Pending — wait for review, or message an admin.
I edited a live article and it left Published	Normal for many contributors — it may need review again after edits.
I cannot edit someone else's article	Only the author (or a site administrator) can edit that article's body.

12. Need Help?

If you get stuck, contact an APALD administrator or email **info@weareapald.org**. You are not expected to figure out technical details alone — your voice and your care for this community matter most.

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