

Contest Guidelines

I. Substance

- **Choice of Subject.** Rule 2 allows for a broad range of topics, provided it is one of practical concern to lawyers engaged in the defense or management of the defense of civil litigation. Unusual subjects are desirable if of sufficiently widespread interest beyond the borders of any state or province.
- **Balance.** Entries should be of law review type and quality, not briefs. Authors' opinions should reflect consideration of both sides of the issues.
- **Original Work.** Compliance with this requirement of Rule 2 permits borrowing from the writings of others, provided due attribution is given. An article must not parallel its sources too closely in form or content, and direct quotations must always be shown as such.
- **Sole Authorship.** Entries must be the work of a single author. An entry does not fail the "single author" test merely because it has been graded by a professor who has offered advice on it. Sole authorship cannot be claimed, however, if, for example, a paper has been rewritten in part by another person, or if another has contributed research to the paper.
- **Legal Analysis.** A major factor is the quality of legal analysis reflected by an article. Clear thinking and expression are key faculties of a good lawyer. While lawyers and judges alike are seldom capable of resolving questions of law solely by the cool light of reason, unclouded by predilections or prejudices, they must justify their conclusions with sound reasoning and pertinent authorities.

II. Form

- **Organization.** Any well-written article must be organized and presented in a logical and orderly manner. This is best accomplished by initial preparation of an outline that (1) disciplines the author's thought processes; (2) provides a table of contents; (3) supplies headings for quick reference; and (4) eliminates the need for lengthy introductions and conclusions.
- **Hallmarks of Fine Writing.** The three hallmarks of fine legal writing are simplicity, clarity and brevity.
 - I. **Simplicity.** A simple writing style befits legal writing because it is easily understood and does not overtax the reader's powers of concentration. Just as long sentences, laden with dependent clauses, should be avoided, so, too, lengthy paragraphs should be avoided.
 - II. **Clarity.** Yale Professor John Berdan used to tell his English composition class that a fine writing is like a windowpane: seen through, but never seen.
 - III. **Brevity.** While the IADC Legal Writing Contest imposes no strict word limitation, brevity is to be desired, although it is a mixed virtue. A well-written law entry should include all points necessary to full treatment of the subject. Past experience has shown that most entries are unnecessarily prolix and repetitious. Trim off the fat; leave the bone and sinew. (Suggested word limit: 12,000 words, including footnotes)

III. Miscellany

- Entries must be submitted via e-mail in English in Microsoft Word format to Melisa Maisel Vanis at mmaisel@iadclaw.org. Footnotes should appear on the page referenced in the text. Avoid excessive footnotes. Use *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (19th edition) for style.

IV. Cicero's Advice

- The winning entries will be those that best heed the 2,000-year-old advice of the Roman orator, Marcus Tullius Cicero: "Be clear, so the audience will understand. Be interesting, so the audience will listen. Be persuasive, so the audience will agree."



2016 Legal Writing Contest

Contest Rules

1. **Eligibility.** The International Association of Defense Counsel 2016 Legal Writing Contest is open to students who, at the time of submission of their entries, are enrolled as J.D. candidates in accredited law schools.
2. **Subject Matter.** Entries must be submitted in the English language on a subject of practical concern to lawyers engaged in the defense or management of the defense of civil litigation, such as relevant aspects of tort law, insurance law, civil procedure, evidence, damages, alternative dispute resolution procedures, and professional ethics.
3. **Authorship and Publication.** Entries must be certified by the entrant on the IADC entry form to be the original and sole work of the entrant. At the time of submission, the entry must not have been published or accepted for publication, and the author must be free to execute the assignment of copyright to IADC referred to in Rule 7.
4. **Judging.** The contest will be judged by a committee of the IADC, whose decisions will be final. In addition to the monetary award winners, the judges may designate entries worthy of honorable mention.
5. **Judging Standards.** Articles will be judged on the following factors: (1) the choice of subject matter, as measured by its significance, international or national relevance, and timeliness; (2) the amount of work and effort, as measured by the entry's comprehensiveness and analysis; (3) the quality of the legal analysis, as measured by its objectivity and balance; and (4) the writing quality, as measured by clarity of expression, brevity, and literary construction. Entrants also should consider the points made in the contest guidelines.
6. **Monetary Awards.** Monetary awards will be made as follows: US\$2,000 to first place, US\$1,000 to second place, and US\$500 to third place. Honorary mentions receive no monetary awards.
7. **Plaques and Publication.** Authors of monetary award articles and of those awarded honorable mention will receive commemorative plaques, and their articles will be made available for publication in *Defense Counsel Journal*, IADC's quarterly law review. At the time of submission, entrants must execute the assignment of copyright in the entry certificate. IADC will copyright articles published in *Defense Counsel Journal*, but release the copyright assignment back to entrants whose works are not published. Acceptance for publication in any publication other than *Defense Counsel Journal* prior to notice to the author of an award in this contest will disqualify the entry. Entrants are expected to notify IADC promptly of such prior acceptance by another publication.
8. **Deadline for 2016 Entries.** Entries must be received on or before Friday, May 20, 2016.
9. **Directions for Transmission.** Entries, together with the completed entry form, must be sent to the International Association of Defense Counsel, via electronic mail to Melisa Maisel Vanis at mmaisel@iadclaw.org.



*International Association
of Defense Counsel*

PLEASE EMAIL, FAX OR MAIL THIS FORM AND YOUR ENTRY TO:

303 W. Madison, Suite 925, Chicago, Illinois 60606 USA

Attn: Melisa Maisel Vanis, Professional Development Manager

P: 312.368.1494 F: 312.368.1854

E-mail: mmaisel@iadclaw.org www.iadclaw.org

2016 Legal Writing Contest *Entry Certificate and Assignment of Copyright*

Name _____

Law School _____

Year in Law School _____

Forwarding Address (Valid Post-Graduation) _____

Telephone _____

Forwarding E-mail (Valid Post-Graduation) _____

I hereby submit my entry entitled _____

for the 2016 International Association of Defense Counsel (IADC) Legal Writing Contest.

I certify that my entry is my original work, of which I am the sole author; that my entry has not been previously published or accepted for publication; that I have not heretofore assigned or agreed to assign the copyright to my entry; that the entry does not violate or infringe upon any copyright or other proprietary right; and that I am free to execute the following assignment to IADC. I further certify that I have read the Legal Writing Contest rules and writing guidelines and agree to abide by and be bound by them and the decisions of the IADC Judges Committee.

I hereby assign to IADC the entire copyright and all rights protected thereunder in and to the enclosed article in the event that it is published in the IADC's publication, *Defense Counsel Journal*.

DATED: _____, _____

**ALL ENTRIES
MUST BE
SUBMITTED BY
MAY 20, 2016**

Signature of entrant

Printed name