PJP Editorial Policy

**Editorial Independence and Transparency:** PJP is an independent, non-profit, and nonpartisan initiative. Our news judgments are made independently, and we are committed to transparency about our editorial process.

**Verification of writers:** Writers must either provide their prison identification number or a photo of an identification card. The Prison Journalism Project will only use this information to verify the writer’s identity. It will not make this information public.

**Anonymity of writers:** PJP believes that journalism is more credible if the writer is identified, but incarcerated writers sometimes face a risk of reprisal. In such cases PJP may withhold the writer’s identity or allow the use of a first name only or a pen name. PJP will disclose the fact that we have withheld the writer’s identity and the reason and will keep the identity confidential unless ordered by a court to disclose it. Writers, who do not disclose their names, must still comply with the verification policy.

**Disclaimer:** To make clear PJP’s independence, all work is accompanied by the following statement: **The views in this article are those of the author. The Prison Journalism Project has verified the writer’s identity and basic facts such as the names of institutions mentioned. The work is lightly edited but has not been otherwise fact-checked.**

**Content policy:** PJP aims to publish as much as possible, but we do not accept work that falls under the following categories:

a. pornographic or gratuitously violent (aim for PG-13 or R at the most)

b. contradicts known/proven facts (e.g. conspiracy theories about COVID-19)

c. re-victimizes individuals or justifies crimes (e.g. stories that justify rape or child pornography)

d. work that shows bias against an individual or a group based on race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, national origin or any other discriminatory characteristic.

e. stories that seek to re-litigate individual cases

f. accuse a specific person, group or institution of wrongdoing without documented proof that can be examined by PJP editors.

g. academic research papers

h. legal documents

i. work we cannot understand

**Data:** Data that is not attributed to a source will be removed from stories or replaced by similar data researched by PJP staff.
**Human Sources**: Quotes and paraphrased assertions or observations by someone other than the writer must be attributed. The writer need not name the source, but they should disclose enough information for the reader to assess the source's trustworthiness.

**Fact-checking**: Writers are responsible for checking the facts in their stories. PJP verifies the identity of the writer and performs rudimentary fact-checking on stories, but we do not have the staffing to put every story through a thorough fact-checking process.

**Use of racial slurs and other derogatory terms**: PJP will not publish derogatory terms and racial slurs unless it is part of a quote and/or crucial to the understanding of the story or news event. When it is used, we will refer to such words with dashes except in the rarest of circumstances when a writer provides a compelling reason for spelling out the full word.