



ENTITY American Heart Association (AHA)	NUMBER
MANUAL Scientific Publishing Policy and Procedure	EFFECTIVE DATE 10/03
SUBJECT Ethical Conduct in Authorship and Publication	REVISED 5/04, 10/04

1.0 PURPOSE

This policy concerns ethical standards for the steps in scientific publication from writing a paper to its publication and dissemination. Ethical standards for research are covered separately by the AHA policy Standards on Falsification of Scientific Data, Plagiarism and Academic Fraud.

2.0 POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

All AHA Journals follow the Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journal.¹

3.0 General

3.1 Manuscripts

Manuscripts are considered on the understanding that they contain original material, that the manuscript and material within the manuscript have not been published and are not being considered for publications elsewhere in whole or in part in any language, including publicly accessible web sites or e-print servers, except as an abstract. The authors also certify that any and all other work in preparation, submitted, in press, or published that is potentially overlapping either in the actual data presented or in the conceptual approach is enclosed along with the original submission. Any material within the manuscript that has appeared elsewhere must be cross-referenced and permission to use or adapt the material must be received, in writing, from the copyright holder.

These restrictions generally do not apply to presentations or press reports published in connection with scientific meetings, or to poster presentations at scientific meetings that are videotaped provided that the material has not been widely circulated, copyrighted or sold. Posting an audio recording, video recording, or short summary of a presentation made at a professional meeting on the Internet would be considered as a meeting presentation by the American Heart Association journals and would not compromise AHA journal consideration of a submission. Direct release of information through press releases or media briefings may preclude publication. . Authors having questions on these matters should, however, discuss the matter with the Editor if they have any concerns.

(note, above addition as worded approved by the editors in late summer, 2003. Possible language re: abstract publication might also be added (publishing abstracts in more than one journal)

3.2 Authorship Requirements

As stated in the Uniform Requirements, credit for authorship requires substantial contributions to: conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and final approval of the version to be published.

All three conditions must be met.

Each author must sign a the Authorship Responsibility and Copyright Transfer Agreement Form attesting that he or she fulfils the authorship criteria. Authors are required to identify their contributions to the work described in the manuscript.

Any change in authorship after submission must be approved in writing by all authors.

One author should be designated as a corresponding author and he or she will be identified as such in the published article.

3.3 Conflict of Interest

All authors must complete the Author Conflict of Interest Disclosure Questionnaire. Each author must disclose any financial, personal or professional relationships with other people or organizations that could reasonably be perceived as conflicts of interest or as potentially influencing or biasing their work.

This disclosure will be published as after acknowledgements in the accepted article.

Each author is required to identify all relationships within the last 2 years that are **relevant** to the topic of the manuscript and might be perceived as a real or potential conflict of interest. A relationship is "**relevant**" if the relationship or interest relates to the topic in terms of any of the following: the same or similar subject matter or topic; the same, similar or competing drug or device, product or service, intellectual property or asset; a drug or device company or its competitor; or has the reasonable potential to result in financial, professional or other personal gain or loss for you, members of your household or employer.

Each author is required to classify each disclosed relationship as either "Significant" or "Modest". A relationship is considered to be "Significant" if (a) the person receives \$10,000 or more during any 12 month period, or 5% or more of the person's gross income; or (b) the person owns 5% or more of the voting stock or share of the entity, or owns \$10,000 or more of the fair market value of the entity. A relationship is considered to be "Modest" if it is less than "Significant" under the preceding definition.

If an author has no conflicts to declare, he or she must indicate None.

3.4 Acknowledgments

The Acknowledgments section recognizes all sources of research support plus substantive contributions of individuals.

Authors **must** obtain written permission/approval from all individuals named in an Acknowledgment as readers may infer their endorsement of data and conclusions. The corresponding author must sign the Acknowledgment statement.

Authors **must** completely spell out the names of all grant-funding agencies, with the exception of NIH.

3.5 Data Access and Responsibility

At least one author should indicate that he or she had full access to all the data in the study and takes responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the data analysis

3.6 Review Process

All submitted manuscripts are reviewed initially by an editor [this will vary by AHA journal and Instructions to Authors for each will need to reflect journal practice]. Manuscripts with insufficient priority for publication or that are inappropriate for the scope of the journal are rejected. All others are sent to expert consultants for peer review. All reviewers are required to complete a conflict of interest statement and will be required to

- (1) warrant that he or she has no actual or perceived conflicts of interest with the authors, institutions, or sponsors of the manuscript; and
- (2) report any such conflict discovered after initial review of the manuscript.

In the event that an editor or a member of the editorial staff is asked to review a manuscript on which he or she has a potential conflict of interest, he or she will disqualify him- or herself from any decision-making role. (see section 2.3.4 of Disclosure-Conflict of Interest Policy)

3.7 Embargo Policy

All information regarding the content and publication date of accepted manuscripts is strictly confidential. Any information about or contained in an accepted paper cannot appear in the media (in print or electronic form) before its publication date and, if it does so, it may preclude publication. Authors who receive media requests should contact the Editor.

3.8 Copyright

The AHA is the owner of all copyright to any work published in an AHA Journal. Each author must sign and submit an Authorship Responsibility and Copyright Transfer Agreement Form. Authors agree to execute this form with respect to their articles accepted by the AHA. The AHA and its licensees have the right to use, reproduce, transmit, derive works from, publish, and distribute the contribution in any form or medium. Authors will not use or authorize the use of the contribution without written permission from the AHA.

4.0 Inappropriate Acts in the Publication Process

Redundant or duplicate publication is publication of a paper that overlaps substantially with one already published. Plagiarism is the un-referenced use of others' published and unpublished ideas. Fraud is the fabrication of a report of research or the suppression or altering of data to agree with one's conclusions. Failure of the authors to disclose all relevant financial relationships is also considered inappropriate. All reviewers have a responsibility to report to the Editor any suspected duplicate publication, plagiarism to the Editor. Readers may report having seen the same article elsewhere, or authors may see their own published work being plagiarized.

It is the responsibility of the Journal to distinguish between errors and deficiencies or honest mistakes and understandings.

When an accusation of a violation of our published guidelines is received, the Editor shall promptly determine whether the allegation(s) contains sufficient detail to permit action or is seemingly frivolous or misguided. If the Editors have any concerns or questions regarding the allegation(s), they will write the accused first requesting more information.

If the Editor believes that an allegation(s) of potential misconduct merits further action, the following procedures will be initiated:

The Editor will inform the Chairman of the Scientific Publishing Committee and AHA's Corporate Counsel through the Director of Publications, who will supply (1) copies of the relevant material and (2) a draft letter to the corresponding author requesting an explanation. The Chairman of SPC approves the final text to the corresponding author.

If the infraction is deemed not to be severe (for example, including in the submitted manuscript material (a figure or table, etc.) that has not been properly reference or for which permission to reproduce has not been obtained) and the paper has not been published, the Editor may request the author to write both the author of the previously published paper and the publisher or copyright holder to obtain permission to reproduce the material in the submitted manuscript. If permission is not granted, the Editor may reject the paper.

If the paper has been published, and it is deemed that the infraction was an instance of misunderstanding or oversight the Editor may publish an Apology or a Retraction. In either event, the Apology or Retraction will appear on a numbered page in a prominent place in the Journal, will include in its heading the title of the original article, will be listed in the Index or Table of Contents; and publisher will ensure that the Apology or Retraction is included in any indexing services. The text of the Retraction should explain why the article is being retracted and include a bibliographic reference to it. The authors should be invited to prepare the retraction, which should be submitted with an assignment of copyright statement that has been signed by all authors.

If the infraction is more serious (e.g., data have been duplicated, text that is identical to text from a previously published paper), the Editor will request a review by the institution(s) where the research was carried out, by the funding agency, or by an independent body having a mandate to investigate such matters. During the review process, the author will be not be barred from submitting work to the Journal or any other AHA journal. However, any such submission must be accompanied by a signed letter from the dean or a designated institution officer attesting to the fact that the work has been reviewed and deemed appropriate for submission.

If it is deemed that an infraction has occurred, the Journal will publish a Notice or a Notice of Retraction.

In the case of duplicate publication, a Notice of Redundant Publication is published and may include a Letter to the Editor from the reader(s) who drew attention to the infraction and a response from the authors.

The Notice of Redundant Publication will appear on a numbered page in a prominent place in the Journal, will include in its heading the title of the original article, will be listed in the Index of Table of Contents. The Notice will include:

- (1) a statement of the AHA policy regarding duplicate publication and assignment of copyright,
- (2) a chronology of events,
- (3) an explanation or response from the author(s), and
- (4) the Editor's comments or conclusions based on the above.

The Editor may also take the opportunity to publish an editorial or an expression of concern.

Instances of plagiarism, or redundant or duplication publication will be shared with the editors of the other AHA journals [and the members of the HEART Group?]. The Editor may wish to

impose sanctions, notify editors of other biomedical journals, or notify the authors' deans, departmental chairs, and institution directors.

When more serious misconduct (e.g., fraud, including disclosure fraud) has been established, the Journal will publish a Notice of Retraction as above. The Editor will notify the editors of the other AHA journals [members of the HEART Group?] and may send the author(s) a formal letter of reprimand, may impose sanctions, notify editors of other biomedical journals, or notify the authors' deans, departmental chairs, institution directors.

The Chair of the Scientific Publishing Committee and AHA Corporate Counsel must approve any decision deemed serious enough to warrant imposing publishing sanctions or notifying the author's institution. The author will have the right of appeal and to present his or her position to the Scientific Publications Committee [and the AHA Corporate Counsel?].

APPROVALS:

AHA Legal: 11/04

AHA Scientific Publishing 10/03, 9/04

1. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Uniform requirements for manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals. Available: <http://www.icmje.org/index.html> (accessed 2004, May 19).