Vermont Journalism Trust/VTDigger.org Policy Guidelines

The Publisher-Editor Role
A publisher’s job is to provide the editor with the trust and resources needed to gather and report news without fear or favor. The editor’s job is to know when to consult a publisher about matters that may threaten the welfare of the news operation or compromise the public’s trust. The line in some cases may be fine, but when in doubt, the public’s trust should prevail. Without it, neither publisher nor editor can function.

Editorial Policy
Our policy is to use VTDigger.org as a timely vehicle to collect and deliver information on public affairs, including government, politics and economics, that is useful on a daily basis to Vermonters and others interested in the affairs and future of Vermont.
All decisions as to what information meets those goals rest exclusively with the editorial staff of VTDigger.org. Information from all sources will be examined by that staff and judged according to verifiable accuracy, pertinence to our mission, and relative usefulness to our readers. We will solicit information from a wide array of sources, and make judgments about unsolicited reports or opinions on a case-by-case basis. We will report errors and correct them immediately if we commit them, but we will not be swayed by unproven claims or by threats from whatever source.
The Vermont Journalism Trust shall provide the editor of VTDigger.org, and any other news outlet the organization might own or operate, with the maximum amount of editorial independence that the law allows. This means that neither the board nor any individual members of the board will interfere with the day-to-day decisions of the editor. Such day-to-day decisions include but are not limited to determinations of which stories to publish and how such stories are edited. The editor will not abuse her editorial freedom by publishing any statement she knows to be false. Neither will she publish any statement with reckless indifference to the statement's truth or falsity.
At her discretion, the editor may appoint a five-member editorial board to provide her with editorial assistance or advice as she deems necessary.
The VTDigger.org news staff and board members who are directly responsible for the news content of VTDigger.org shall not make financial or in-kind contributions to political candidates or parties.

**Reader guidelines/submissions**

* VTDigger.org does not accept anonymous submissions for publication. All submissions must include verifiable names to qualify for posting, along with valid e-mail and mailing addresses for verification purposes only.
* Issues are VTDigger's stock-in-trade. Comments or commentaries that cross the line into personal attacks or hate speech will be rejected; also, any commentary intended primarily to promote a business.
* The editor will endeavor to be as transparent with readers as possible, and will include context for substantive corrections or clarifications.

**VTDigger Advertising Policy**

VTDigger accepts commercial, advocacy and political advertising that is consistent in tone and sensibility with VTDigger’s coverage philosophy, which is to provide deeply-reported, even-handed coverage of issues important to Vermonters and to facilitate civil discussion. We encourage our advertisers to conform with that spirit. VTDigger endorses no political candidates or causes and seeks to present a broad spectrum of views. Similarly, we welcome advertising from all perspectives. All advertising is subject to VTDigger approval and should include verifiable sources of funding.

While VTDigger staff may end up talking to experts and officials who work at foundations or other sponsors that fund us, we will not discuss coverage planning with underwriters or other sponsors. If VTDigger.org reports on an organization or individual who funds us, we will disclose that relationship if the subject of the report is directly related to the thrust of the funds or sponsorships we received.