PUBLICATION WITHDRAWAL:

GUIDE [FOR EDITORS]

**Summary:**

Editors of journals should consider the opinion of a publication if:

• they have clear evidence of inaccuracy of the information published, arising either as a result of deliberate acts (e.g., falsification of data), either due to honest errors (e.g., errors in calculations or experiments);

• the findings have previously been published in another edition, but absent appropriate references, permission and justification for re-publishing (i.e. cases of redundant publication);

• it is plagiarism;

• describes unethical research.

**Editors of journals should consider the expression of concern if:**

• they received information about inappropriate actions of the authors, but no clear evidence of such behavior;

• there are arguments that the results are unreliable, and the institution where the authors work, not going to find out the truth;

• they believe that the investigation into the alleged violations committed by authors in connection with the publication, or was not, or will not be fair, impartial and credible;

• investigation of violations of authors, but the results are not expected in a fairly short time.

**Editors of journals should consider amendments, if:**

• a small part of otherwise high-quality publication is unreliable (especially because of honest error);

• list of authors/sponsors contains errors (that is, there is no one who is worthy to be the author, or include the person who does not meet the criteria for authorship).

**In most cases, opinion is not appropriate if:**

• you want to change the authorship, but there is no reason to doubt the validity of the conclusions.

**Notice of withdrawal must:**

• it is possible to have a hyperlink to recall an article (in electronic versions);

• clearly identify the recalled article (for example, contain the title and author in the title of notices of withdrawal);

• be clearly identified as opinion (that is different from other types of amendments and reviews);

• be published promptly to minimize the negative consequences of false publications;

• to be freely available to all readers (i.e. not be in restricted access or available only to subscribers);

• specify who withdraws article;

• indicate the reasons for recall (to distinguish deliberate misconduct from honest error);

• to avoid potentially damaging or defamatory statements.

**Purpose of review**

Feedback is a correction of published information and alert readers to publications that contain such serious flaws or erroneous data that cannot be trusted. The unreliability of the data may be the result of bona fide error or deliberate violations.

Reviews are also used for warning the readers about cases of redundant publication (i.e. when authors present the same data in several publications), plagiarism, and conceal important conflicts of interest that may affect the interpretation of the data or recommendations about their use.

The main purpose of feedback is to correct published information and ensure its integrity rather than to punish authors who committed the violation.

**What form should the feedback take?**

A revocation notice must contain the reasons and basis of opinion, to distinguish between violations and bona fide errors; it also needs to be specified person withdrawing the article. Notices must be published in all versions of the journal (i.e. print and / or electronic). You must include the authors and title withdrawn the article in the title of the notification of revocation.

Retracted articles should be clearly marked as such in all electronic sources (e.g. web site log in any bibliographic databases). Editors are responsible for the fact that a withdrawn publications marked so that are well identified by all bibliographic databases (which should also include a link to the retracted article). The notice of withdrawal must be known to each search engine retracted publications.

Retracted articles should not be deleted nor printed copies of the journal (e.g. in libraries) nor from electronic archives but their status as withdrawn must be specified as clearly as possible.

**Which publications should be withdrawn?**

If only a small part of the article contains inaccurate information, especially as a result of bona fide error, the best method to solve the problem – a change or the entry in the list of errata. (The term "typo" usually refers to a technical error made by the journal. The term "fix" (or "amendment") usually refers to an author error.) Partial revocation is inappropriate because it complicates the determination of the status of the article by the readers and the reliability of its parts.

Similarly, if only a small part of the article (e.g., a few sentences in the discussion) is plagiarized, editors should consider whether readers (and the author of the original work) is better if the article would be amended (with the correct reference to the source) than if it is withdrawn the whole article completely, which can contain the meaning and the original data in other parts.

Reviews are usually recommended for publications with such serious violations (for whatever reason) that their findings cannot be considered reliable.

In cases of redundant publication (i.e. when authors published the same data or article in more than one journal without appropriate justification, permission, and cross-references), the journal first published the article may issue a notice of duplicate publication, but to withdraw the article it should only if its findings are unreliable. Any magazines, subsequently print a duplicate article, should withdraw it and to indicate the reason for the opinion.

If the article serves more than one journal at the same time, was adopted and is printed in both journals (either electronic or in printed form) at the same time, the priority can be set on the date on which the authors signed a publishing license or the contract on transfer of copyright.

In cases of overlap (i.e., when authors present some new insights in the article, which also contains a significant amount of previously published information) editors need to decide what's best for readers to recall the whole article, or to publish a notice of duplicate publication, including previously published pieces and putting cross-references to previous work. This will depend on the amount of duplication. Editors should keep in mind that the main purpose of feedback is to correct published information and ensure its integrity rather than to punish authors of offending.

Subject to review only published articles. Recommendations for dealing with duplicate content to their publications can be found in the COPE scheme [http://publicationethics.org/files/u2/01A\_Redundant\_ Submitted.pdf]. The publication of the final version on the website is a publication, even if the article has not appeared (or will appear) in print. If the article is withdrawn prior to the appearance of the printed version in the journal, the electronic version must be saved on the journal's website with a clear notice of the review and included in bibliographic databases (e.g. digital object identifier [doi] or any other permanent reference that determines its location), even if it does not appear in the printed version of the journal and, thus, will not be placed on the page. This is necessary because researchers could refer to it and quote the electronic version of the article, and they should be warned about her opinion.

**Who should conduct the review?**

Article may be revoked by their author (authors) or the editor of the magazine. In some cases, reviews are carried out jointly on behalf of the owner of the journal (for example, a scientific society or publisher). However, since the responsibility for the contents of the magazine rests with the editor, he/she should always make the final decision on the revocation of the article. The journal editors withdraw the publication (or publish an expression of regret), even if all or some of the authors refuse to retract the publication.

**When to withdraw the publication?**

The publication has to be withdrawn immediately after the editor of the journal will be convinced that the publication has serious violations and contains false information (or is redundant or plagiarism). The operational review should minimize the number of researchers who cite the erroneous work, guided by insights from them or come to the wrong conclusions, for example, using redundant publications in meta-analyses or similar procedures.

If editors have convincing evidence of the need for a review of the article, they should withdraw the publication immediately and not to postpone it opinion just because of the fact that the authors do not want to cooperate with them. However, if the statement about violations regarding potential review leads to disciplinary hearings or internal investigations of institutions where research was conducted must wait for their results before you make a review (but in the meantime you need to publish an expression of regret, to warn readers – see below).

**How to act if evidence of the unreliability of the publication is not sufficient?**

If you cannot obtain conclusive evidence of the validity of the publication (for example, if the authors provide contradictory information, the institution where the authors work, refuse to investigate alleged violations or to make public the results of such investigations, or if investigation was not carried out fairly or took an unreasonably long time), the editors must publish an expression of doubt, and not to withdraw the publication immediately.

Such expressions of doubt as the recall notices should clearly reference the original publication (that is, have a hyperlink in electronic databases, and include the author and title of the original publication in the title of the notification) and must contain the reasons for the expression of doubt.

If it later becomes available a more convincing proof of the accuracy of the publication, the expression of doubt should be replaced with a withdrawal notice (if the article were defined as unreliable) or a statement of justification associated with the expression of doubt (if you had the proven reliability of the article and the reputation of the author is restored).

**Can the feedback be used in cases of disputed authorship?**

Sometimes authors are asked to withdraw the article, when authorship is disputed after publication. If there is no reason to doubt the validity of the conclusions or reliability of the data, do not retract a publication solely on the basis of disputes about authorship. In such cases, the journal editor should inform the persons involved in the dispute that s/he cannot adjudicate in such cases but will be ready (ready) to publish the corrected list of authors, if the authors/contributors (or their institutions) provide appropriate proof that such a change is warranted.

**Do the sponsors the right to refuse publication revoked?**

If the opinion is associated with the actions of a few, but not all authors of a publication, it must be stated in the notice of revocation. However, most editors consider that authorship entails some degree of joint responsibility for the integrity of the study, it was unacceptable that the authors refused to publish revoked, even if they were not directly responsible for the violations.

**Is there a basis for litigation, if the author makes the magazine sued for opinion or for refusing to withdraw the publication?**

The authors disagree with the opinion of their article (or authors who were refused to withdraw the publication) sometimes threaten editors of journals with lawsuits. The desire to avoid a lawsuit may result in the refusal of the editors to withdraw the article, especially in the face of opposition from the authors.

Instructions for journal authors should contain an explanation of the procedure of review and a description of the conditions under which articles can be withdrawn. This information should be included (e.g., links) to publications and brought to the attention of the authors. However, even if the agreement on the publication or the journal's instructions do not establish the specific conditions of the review, the authors usually do not have grounds for taking legal action against the magazine for opinion if the opinion an investigation was conducted and performed all the procedures.

However, legal advice can be useful in formulating a revocation notice or an expression of doubt, but gave no discredit or slander. However, the revocation notice must always specify the reason (cause) of opinion to distinguish an honest mistake from the breach.

Whenever possible, editors should negotiate with authors and attempt to agree with them that the wording is clear and informative to readers and acceptable to all parties. If the consent of the authors with the wording of the statement of revocation is received, this provides protection against allegations of defamation. However, prolonged negotiations about wording should not unreasonably delay the publication of the review, and editors are obliged to publish a statement of opinion, even if consensus was not achieved.

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Elizabeth Wager, Virginia Barbour, Steven Yentis, Sabine Kleinert

(Elizabeth Wager, The Virginia Barbour, Steven Yentis, Sabin Kleinert)

on behalf of the Council COPE