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Dear Freelance Contributor:

I am pleased to welcome you as a freelance contributor to the Tribune. The enclosed contract, which we ask that you sign and return, lays out the terms of our agreement. I would like to add here some of our ethical standards and expectations.

Credibility is an indispensable asset of the Chicago Tribune and we expect that all who contribute editorially to the newspaper will avoid conflicts of interest or any activities that would compromise their journalistic integrity. Any who do compromise themselves will jeopardize their relationship with the Tribune.

We expect writers to avoid conflicts of interest *and* the appearance of such conflicts. This means, for example, that a freelance writer would not accept free entertainment or a gift of any substantial value from a source or a publicist—the current newsroom standard is nothing more valuable than a key chain. It means a writer would not write about a business in which he or she has a financial interest, or the principals of which are relatives or close friends. It means the writer would not write about an organization of which she or he is a member, and would not use a relative, close friend or neighbor as a source. In cases where a writer thinks an exception to one of these standards is warranted, we encourage her or him to consult with editors.

Additionally, we expect freelancers to use the newspaper's name only in conducting the newspaper's business, not to gain advantage in personal business matters such as making a consumer complaint.

If at any time you have questions about contractual issues or ethical matters, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,

CHICAGO TRIBUNE COMPANY