

Reviewer *Frequently Asked Questions*

Why review for AJPM?

Reviewing for AJPM is an opportunity to advance preventive medicine and public health research by acting as an advisor to journal editors, enabling them to identify only the most timely and important manuscripts. It is an invitation to read the latest research in your field before the general readership. Additionally, the critical analysis skills developed while reviewing the work of others will help researchers look at their own work more critically.

What type of research does AJPM publish?

AJPM publishes original research papers on the following issues:

- Interventions aimed at the prevention of chronic and acute disease and the promotion of individual and community health.
- Primary and secondary prevention of important clinical, behavioral and public health issues such as injury and violence, infectious disease, women's health, smoking, sedentary behaviors and physical activity, nutrition, diabetes, obesity, and substance use disorders.
- Educational initiatives aimed at improving the ability of health professionals to provide effective clinical prevention and public health services.
- Health services research pertinent to prevention and public health.
- Official policy statements from the two co-sponsoring organizations, review articles, media reviews, and editorials.
- Supplement and special theme issues devoted to areas of current interest to the prevention community.

What is the Timeline for Reviewing?

AJPM expects reviewers to complete feedback in a 2-week timeframe. The majority of accepted papers go through all three of the following stages of review:

Review Type	Speed of Decision	Feedback to Author
In-house Editorial Office review	Less than one week	Reason for rejection or confirmation that manuscript is being forwarded for peer review
External peer review	Approximately 6 weeks (may be longer if undergoing Editorial Office statistical review)	Detailed review comments
Additional review	2 – 3 weeks	Detailed review comments

Some manuscript types, such as book reviews and commentaries, do not require peer review, and in rare instances, a peer reviewed paper may not require re-review before acceptance.

May I have more than 2 weeks to review?

AJPM requests reviewer feedback within two weeks. While the Editorial Office is happy to accommodate an extended schedule for you if possible, AJPM aims to provide authors with editorial decisions in a timely manner. Regardless of whether the Editorial Office extends your due date, you should only agree to review if you can deliver your feedback on time.

I know the authors, is that a conflict of interest?

You may not undertake peer review for a manuscript if you have a conflict of interest (personal, financial, or professional) or any competing financial demands with the manuscript content you are invited to review.

Please note that having previously worked with authors on separate projects does not necessarily constitute a conflict of interest. It is a conflict, however, if you feel you will lack objectivity in your review.

If you accept the invitation to review and, while reading the full manuscript, you come to the conclusion that you do have a conflict of interest, you are required to withdraw from review. Should this happen, please inform the Editorial Office immediately and we will secure another reviewer.

What happens if I can no longer complete my review after agreeing to review?

If you are no longer able to review, please contact the Editorial Office at ajpm@umich.edu as soon as possible, and we will be happy to find a replacement reviewer. In these instances, we do welcome reviewer recommendations as they help us keep peer review on schedule.

How do I register to review with AJPM?

You can register to review by clicking [this link](#). Once registered, keep your profile current with appropriate and detailed classifications of your research expertise so your name can be found in relation to particular subject areas. Your classifications should identify your expertise in a clear and detailed fashion. Please go through the choices carefully to make certain all relevant options are selected. Please refrain from selecting areas of peripheral interest, as that may lead to inappropriate invitations to review.

I cannot log in.

To recover your login password, please click the 'Forgot Password' link in the Sign in box of Editorial Manager. Your username is the email address at which you received a review invitation.

For reviewers who previously had accounts with us, we migrated to a new online editorial platform in July 2019, and you will need to log into your account and accept the updated privacy policy before you can resume using it.

For other technical problems logging in, please contact support@elsevier.com.

I am new to reviewing. Does AJPM have any resources for me?

Yes, we have created [A Guide to Peer Review](#), which will walk you through the review process.

What is the difference between Comments to Authors and Comments to Editors?

In addition to your comments and recommendations for authors, AJPM provides you with the opportunity to communicate directly to editors. Comments to editors are not typically provided to authors. Please do not use comments to the editors to make substantive review points. Any general concerns that impact your overall recommendation should be clearly indicated in your author feedback, and the tone of your comments to editors should be consistent with that to authors (for example, please avoid writing constructive comments with mild criticism to authors, coupled with more detailed critique or a different recommendation to editors. If significant

disparity exists between your comments to authors and to editors, editor comments may be disclosed to authors).

May I include my post-doc/doctoral student in my review?

Yes, you are welcome to use reviewing for AJPM as a mentoring activity. If you opt to do so, please mention your student or post-doc by name in the confidential comments to editors for our records. Please note that all reviewers must treat the manuscript with confidentiality.

What is considered a quality review?

In general, when you approach your review task, you should 'do as you would be done by'. The best reviewers are separated from the rest by their ability to be objective, constructive, systematic and conscientious. These are the attributes to strive for. Your review should:

- Discuss article originality and contribution to current scholarship and science
- Discuss the value of the topic to AJPM readership
- Acknowledge strengths and weaknesses of study design, data collection, and data analysis
- Discuss the author's interpretation of results
- Comment on manuscript writing, organization, statistical approach, and tables and figures
- Supply evidence and references (within text and in literature) to substantiate critical comments
- Give a clear recommendation, with constructive comments in courteous tone
- Complete original review and any re-reviews in a timely fashion
- Refrain from making personal comments, such as those related to the author's affiliation, rank, or previous publication history

The AJPM Editorial Office has created [A Guide for Peer Review](#), which covers the elements of a good review more thoroughly.

How many reviewers are assigned to a manuscript?

The number of reviewers often varies by manuscript type. Most papers receive feedback from three peer reviewers. Shorter papers, such as brief reports or current issues, may receive feedback from two peer reviewers. Some journal submissions such as commentaries and book reviews are reviewed by AJPM editors and do not undergo external peer review.

How does AJPM handle disagreement among reviewers?

It is common for reviewers to disagree both about specific points within an article as well as whether the work should be published. If editors cannot reach their own decision after assessing reviewer comments, the Editorial Office will send the manuscript to an additional reviewer(s) in order to resolve the matter.

Will I get feedback on my review?

When editors make a final decision on a manuscript, the decision and reviewer comments are sent in a letter to the corresponding author. The Editorial Office may also provide this letter to reviewers so that you know the final status of the paper and can see other reviewer's feedback. This feedback allows reviewers to assess whether there were important problems with the manuscript that they might have missed and gives you an opportunity to compare the tone and scope of your comments with those of your co-reviewers.

What is re-review? Will I be asked to re-review the manuscript?

In cases where Editors request that authors revise and resubmit their manuscript, the revised submission is generally sent back to some or all original peer reviewers for re-review. Manuscript re-review is a critical

component of peer review because you will see whether authors have adequately addressed your prior concerns. Approximately half of all papers that go through peer review also require re-review.

AJPM asks you to indicate in your initial review whether you are willing to review the manuscript again after it has been revised (but may send the manuscript to you again even if you have not specified you would like to re-review). The Editorial Office requires that authors provide a cover letter outlining the changes that they have made in response to reviewer comments to assist in the re-review process.

I have been asked to review a supplement or theme article. Are there different review procedures for these article types?

The same review guidelines apply to supplement and theme articles; however, it is important to note that these articles are often framed as reviews, policy overviews, or program summaries and may not be as data-driven as submissions to AJPM's regular issue. We encourage reviewers to provide feedback on strengths and weaknesses of the paper but recognize that article types other than research manuscripts are common in AJPM supplement and theme issues.

How I can get credit for my review?

If you need documentation that you completed a review for us, please contact us at ajpm@umich.edu, and we will send you a reviewer certificate. Also, we publish a list of all reviewers for a given calendar year every April. This list appears both on the website and in print.

What are the AJPM Top Reviewer awards?

We all understand the critical role of peer review in increasing trust in scientific discoveries and recommendations, as well as how challenging it can be to find and retain quality reviewers. Recognizing and rewarding reviewers who respond when needed, provide objective, high-quality reviews, and/or have gone the extra mile for AJPM is a vital initiative of the Editorial Office.

By numerically scoring each review, and keeping qualitative descriptions of reviewers who go beyond what is generally required or expected, the Editor-in-Chief and Deputy Editor note reviewers who truly excel for AJPM.

At the end of each calendar year AJPM recognizes reviewers who have made outstanding contributions to the journal. These reviewers will have their names appear on the AJPM website and in the printed journal.

What if my question is not on this list?

Questions may be sent to our Editorial Staff at ajpm@umich.edu.

A Guide to Peer Review:

The AJPM Editorial Office has created [A Guide for Peer Review](#), with the goal of both guiding new reviewers through the elements of thorough review and serving as a checklist to seasoned reviewers to make certain all concerns have been addressed. AJPM also has [Reviewer Checklists](#) that help guide the reviewer through some of the necessary details of conducting a quality review.