

MEMORANDUM

To: Freddie Kunkle
From: Tracy Grant
Date: Sept. 5, 2017
Re: Written Warning

The purpose of this memorandum is to issue a written warning for your willful and intentional violation of The Washington Post's standards and ethics policy by freelancing for a competing publication without permission.

On Sept. 1, the Huffington Post published a piece that you wrote. The Huffington Post is clearly a digital competitor of The Washington Post.

The policy that governs this behavior, which is stated in the Standards and Ethics guide for newsroom employees and is readily available on The Source, is as follows:

"We freelance for no one and accept no speaking engagements without permission from department heads. Permission to freelance will be granted only if The Post has no interest in the story and only if it is to appear in a medium that does not compete with The Post."

On August 31, when I learned from Marty Baron that you had submitted work to Huffington Post for publication, I asked you to come to my office. During the course of a 40-minute conversation, I showed you the policy and explained that publishing work in Huffington Post would violate Post policy. You initially said that you thought that the only hurdle you needed to clear was to give The Post right of first refusal, which you did by offering the piece to Adam Kushner for Outlook. When I pointed out the policy in writing, you stated that you were unaware of the policy. But you concluded our conversation by telling me, "I understand that it's a violation of Post policy." Despite being made aware that you would be violating a Post policy and despite having the opportunity to rectify the situation, you did nothing to try to stop publication by Huffington Post

We consider this an egregious violation of The Post's ethics policy on freelancing. We are choosing at this juncture to issue only a written warning for your willful and intentional violation of the ethics policy. But any similar or repeated infractions will result in increased disciplinary action, up to and including the termination of your employment.

Cc: Director
Labor Relations
Human Resources
Washington-Baltimore Newspaper Guild, Local 32035