### Headline guidelines

#### 1. Use the present tense (with rare exceptions).

2. Use strong, active verbs that add punch to your headlines. Avoid passive voice.

3. Avoid using forms of the verb "to be" unless they are essential to the meaning of the headline.

4. Have a subject and a verb, even if it is understood.

5. Don't split parts of the verb and proper nouns between lines. Avoid splitting adjectives and nouns, and prepositions and their objects. People read the lines of a headline as complete thoughts. Don't make readers work to find the meaning of your headline.

6. Don't repeat words. The real estate is too valuable.

7. Don't use articles unless their elimination causes confusion. They waste space.

8. Use single quotation marks.

9. Keep acronyms to a minimum. Only use acronyms that are very familiar to your readers.

10. Avoid “headlinese.”

11. Watch out for ambiguity. Read the headline a second time, looking for possible hidden meanings.

14. The headline should reflect what is in the story. Don't go beyond the story or sensationalize the headlines. Stick to the facts.