

News Article Removal Request Checklist

Work through it top to bottom before you contact a publisher or file a request with Google.

1. Before you send anything

- ☐ Save dated screenshots and PDF copies of the article, and of every other URL where it appears.
- ☐ List every live copy: the original, syndicated versions, archives, and aggregator pages.
- ☐ Gather your documentation: court records showing dropped charges, an acquittal, or an expunged or sealed case; proof of any factual error; records of threats tied to the story.
- ☐ Check the article for personal details covered by Google policy: home address, phone number, email, government ID numbers, bank or card numbers, signature or ID images, medical records, and login credentials.

2. Match the article to a route

- ☐ **Personal details Google covers:** request removal through Google's removal form or the Results About You tool. This deindexes the URL; the page stays live.
- ☐ **A false statement of fact that harmed you:** speak with a defamation attorney before the statute of limitations in your state runs out.
- ☐ **A factual error, dropped charges, an expunged case, or a safety risk:** send the publisher an unpublishing request.
- ☐ **Accurate reporting on a matter of public concern:** plan suppression with owned assets, time, and consistency.

3. Write the publisher request

- ☐ Address it to the managing editor or standards editor by name. The reporter usually cannot change the archive.
- ☐ Keep it short and factual, and say exactly what you want: deletion, an update, a correction, or your name removed.
- ☐ Give a reason other than embarrassment, and attach the documentation from step 1.
- ☐ Ask whether the outlet has a formal process for older coverage. Some newsrooms review requests to update or anonymize older stories.
- ☐ Never offer money to a newsroom. It damages the request and can become its own story.

4. After you send it

- ☐ Track every request and reply in one place, with dates.
- ☐ Once the page changes or comes down, use Google's Outdated Content tool to refresh the snippet or drop the dead link.
- ☐ Follow up on syndicated copies one by one. Changing the original does not remove them.