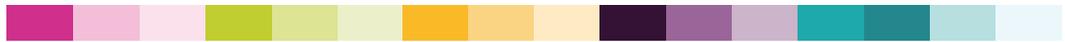


WIC



STYLE GUIDE



Our goal is to promote consistency in our communications with potential and current WIC participants, WIC partners, and WIC staff. By using this guide, you are helping to achieve that goal.

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DESIGN GUIDELINES

A Design Guide for Designers

WIC materials are designed to be engaging, interesting, user friendly and create an emotional connection with various WIC target markets:

Outreach – Potential WIC participants and general public

Client Education – Current WIC participants

WIC Employees – State office and local agency staff and clinic staff

Partners – Healthcare providers including physicians, nurses (RNs and LVNs), dietitians (RDs), peer counselors, nutritionists, and hospital administrators/staff and business services providers including WIC EBT certified retail and systems vendors, and contractors

Design Style

Use the following four design elements to illustrate the WIC design style:

Hierarchy – Visual hierarchy aids comprehension, reinforces the message, and guides the reader using mastheads, heads, and subheads.

Grid – The grid system organizes content on a page, using margins, guides, rows and columns, and creates consistency in the design. Breaking out of the grid highlights specific topics and creates interest.

Typography – Two important factors when choosing fonts are legibility and readability.

Legibility is a function of typeface design and a measure of how easy it is to recognize one letter or word from another and how easy blocks of text are to read. Font size is critical to legibility.

Readability is a function of how typefaces are used. White space between letters, lines, paragraph breaks and images affect readability.

Fonts in WIC Materials should be used as follows:

- Fonts should be limited to three or fewer per publication and at the designers discretion. Use sans serif fonts for heads and subheads and throughout WIC web sites.
- Use a minimum line spacing of at least 2 points greater than the font size.
- Legibility studies suggest a minimum of 12 points for body copy but some fonts at 10 points are more legible than others at 12 points. Use discretion and select a font size that is legible.
- Readability studies recommend using sans serif fonts for heads, subheads and web pages but a serif or decorative font may be used when needed for emphasis. Sans serif fonts used on WIC materials include but are not limited to the following:

Museo Sans **Neutraface** **Priori Sans OT** **Proxima Nova** **Trebuchet MS**

- Serif font for body copy on print materials is recommended for best readability. Sans serif fonts may be used for body copy on print materials if you increase the point size, the white space between letters, lines and paragraph breaks and images to maximize readability. Serif fonts used on WIC materials include but are not limited to the following:

Georgia **Minion Pro**

Color – Color impacts design, look, and feel and should be used on WIC Materials as follows:

- Use bright energizing colors on materials targeting the WIC Outreach and Client Education markets.
- Use more conservative colors on materials targeting the WIC Employee and Partners markets.

The palette below is just a guide and is not intended to be the only color options used in WIC materials. Additional colors may be used at the designers discretion taking into consideration the elements, images and target market of the publication.

Web	CMYK	RGB	Color
FFFFFF	C0 M0 Y0 K0	R255 G255 B255	White
000000	C0 M0 Y0 K100	R0 G0 B0	Black
4D4D4D	C65 M58 Y57 K37	R77 G77 B77	Grey
D23789	C14 M92 Y9 K0	R210 G55 B137	Pink
F3BED8	C1 M31 Y0 K0	R244 G190 B216	Medium Pink
F8DFEC	C1 M14 Y0 K0	R1 G14 B0	Light Pink
C1CC23	C29 M6 Y100 K0	R193 G204 B35	Lime Green
DCE295	C15 M2 Y52 K0	R220 G226 B149	Medium Lime Green
FCE9C4	C7 M1 Y25 K0	R252 G233 B196	Light Lime Green
FCBA30	C1 M29 Y92 K0	R252 G186 B48	Gold
FDD684	C1 M16 Y56 K0	R253 G214 B132	Medium Gold
FCE9C4	C1 M7 Y25 K0	R252 G233 B196	Light Gold
341336	C74 M91 Y46 K57	R52 G19 B54	Deep Purple
9B679A	C44 M69 Y14 K0	R155 G103 B154	Medium Purple
CDB5CC	C18 M29 Y6 K0	R205 G181 B204	Light Purple
5160AC	C77 M68 Y0 K0	R81 G96 B72	Royal Blue
7DB6D3	C15 M50 Y9 K0	R125 G182 B211	Sky Blue
BEDBE9	C24 M5 Y4 K0	R190 G219 B233	Medium Sky Blue
DDEBF3	C12 M2 Y2 K0	R221 G235 B243	Light Sky Blue
238386	C82 M32 Y45 K6	R35 G131 B134	Deep Teal
00A8AC	C78 M11 Y35 K0	R0 G168 B172	Teal
B3DEE0	C28 M1 Y12 K0	R179 G222 B224	Medium Teal
E5FCFC	C8 M0 Y2 K0	R229 G252 B252	Light Teal
F68E50	C0 M54 Y75 K0	R246 G142 B80	Tangerine
FCC6A6	C0 M26 Y33 K0	R252 G198 B166	Medium Tangerine
FEE3D3	C0 M12 Y14 K0	R254 G227 B211	Light Tangerine

WIC Logos

Use the WIC logo on print materials for WIC participants & WIC Employees.



Colors used in the WIC logo:

Web	CMYK	RGB	Color
F05A28	C0 M80 Y95 K0	R240 G90 B40	Orange
FAA519	C0 M40 Y100 K0	R250 G165 B25	Dark Gold
“Star” Outline – Orange/Dark Gold Gradient			
FBAF25	C0 M35 Y95 K0	R251 G175 B37	Medium Gold
FFFBAD	C0 M0 Y40 K0	R255 G248 B173	Yellow
“Star” Center – Medium Gold/Yellow Gradient			
6F2B90	C70 M100 Y0 K0	R111 G43 B144	Purple
00A7E0	C75 M15 Y0 K0	R0 G167 B224	Sky Blue
“W” Gradient – Purple/Sky Blue Gradient			
02943F	C80 M0 Y100 K20	R2 G148 B63	Medium Green
8CC63E	C50 M0 Y100 K0	R140 G198 B62	Lime Green
“I” Gradient – Medium Green/Lime Green Gradient			
C4151C	C0 M100 Y100 K20	R196 G21 B28	Dark Red
F16549	C0 M75 Y75 K0	R241 G101 B73	Salmon
“C” Gradient – Dark Red/Watermelon Gradient			
F05A47	C0 M80 Y75 K0	R240 G90 B71	Watermelon

Use the TexasWIC.org logo on the texaswic.org website. Add “Visit our website” to the left of the logo when placing it on participants’ and health partners’ materials as shown below.

Visit our website at **Texas WIC .org**

Web	CMYK	RGB	Color
000000	C0 M0 Y0 K100	R0 G0 B0	Black
D23789	C14 M92 Y9 K0	R210 G55 B137	Pink

Use the TexasWICStaff.gov logo on the texaswicstaff.gov website in addition to the DSHS logo.



Web	CMYK	RGB	Color
000000	C0 M0 Y0 K100	R0 G0 B0	Black

Use the Breastmilk Every Ounce Counts logo on the breastmilkcounts.com website. Use it on print materials for participants and partners in addition to the DSHS and WIC logos.



Web	CMYK	RGB	Color
ECA3B1	C4 M43 Y5 K0	R235 G163 B177	Pink 494
673919	C39 M73 Y96 K46	R103 G57 B25	Brown 1545

Use the Texas Ten Step logo on the texastenstep.org website. Use it on print materials for participants and partners in addition to the DSHS and WIC logos.



TEXAS 10 STEP
PROGRAM

Web	CMYK	RGB	Color
D3B7EA	C16 M29 Y K0	R211 G183 B234	Purple 9344
512C1E	C44 M73 Y80 K59	R81 G44 B30	Brown 4625

Use the DSHS logos on all WIC websites and on all WIC materials. For usage information go to <http://online.dshs.state.tx.us/content.aspx?id=4882>. To download the DSHS logo go to <http://hhscx.hhsc.state.tx.us/news/logos/filelist.html#dshs>.



Non-discrimination Statement

The following approved USDA Nondiscrimination Statement in English and Spanish (current as of 4/11) and the name of the agency, bureau and program must be used on all public materials.

English (Long Version)

In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free 1-866-632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339; or 1-800-845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

OR English (Short Version)

This institution is an equal-opportunity provider.

Department of State Health Services. Nutrition Services Section.

Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

Spanish (Long Version)

De acuerdo con la ley federal y las políticas del Departamento de Agricultura de los EE.UU. (USDA, sigla en inglés), se le prohíbe a esta institución que discrimine por razón de raza, color, origen, sexo, edad, o discapacidad.

Para presentar una queja sobre discriminación, escriba a USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, o llame gratis al 1-866-632-9992 (voz). Personas con discapacidad auditiva o del habla pueden contactar con USDA por medio del Servicio Federal de Relevos (Federal Relay Service) al 1-800-845-6136 (español) o 1-800-877-8339 (inglés). USDA es un proveedor y empleador que ofrece oportunidad igual para todos.

OR Spanish (Short Version)

Esta institución ofrece igualdad en las oportunidades de servicios para todos.

Departamento Estatal de Servicios de Salud. Sección de Servicios de Nutrición.

Programa Especial de Nutrición Suplementaria para Mujeres, Bebés y Niños (WIC)

How to use the Copyright with the Non-Discrimination Statement

All materials created by WIC must have a copyright symbol and the year the material was produced. The copyright symbol is designated by a © (a circled capital letter “C”). The copyright and non-discrimination statement should be formatted in the same font size as the body of the publication when possible.

See various examples of the copyright statement and short non-discrimination statement used with logos for WIC materials as follows.

Use the WIC and DSHS logos on the back cover page of all WIC participants' and partners' materials with the copyright and non-discrimination statements.

Visit our website at **Texas WIC.org**



This institution is an equal-opportunity provider.

© 2013. Department of State Health Services. Nutrition Services Section.
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

Visite nuestro sitio web en **Texas WIC.org**



Esta institución ofrece igualdad en las oportunidades de servicios para todos.

© 2013. Departamento Estatal de Servicios de Salud. Sección de Servicios de Nutrición.
Programa especial de nutrición complementaria para mujeres, bebés y niños (WIC)

Hãy vào mạng **Texas WIC.org**



Đây là cơ quan phục vụ bình đẳng.

© 2010. Bộ Phục Vụ Y-Tế Toàn Bang. Ngành Phục Vụ Dinh Dưỡng. Cơ quan giữ bản quyền.
Chương Trình Dinh Dưỡng Phụ Trội Đặc Biệt cho Phụ Nữ, Trẻ Sơ Sinh và Trẻ Em.

Use the WIC and DSHS logos with the copyright and non-discrimination statements on the back page of employees' materials as shown below.

Visit the WIC staff website at **Texas WIC Staff.gov**



© 2013. Department of State Health Services. Nutrition Services Section.
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

WIC breastfeeding materials target new WIC moms and use a breastmilk logo on print materials and on the breastmilkcounts.com website. Always use the Texas WIC logo and the DSHS logo on print materials with the Breastmilk logo.



BREASTMILK
EVERY OUNCE COUNTS™



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Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

Texas Ten Step materials target health partners including hospitals. Use the Texas Ten Step logo on these print materials and on the texastenstep.com website.



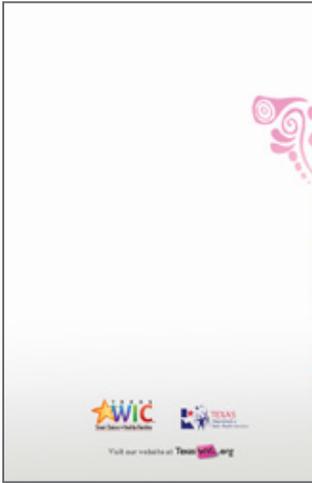
TEXAS 10 STEP
PROGRAM



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Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).

Design Concepts

Outreach — WIC Growing Healthy Families



back cover with logos

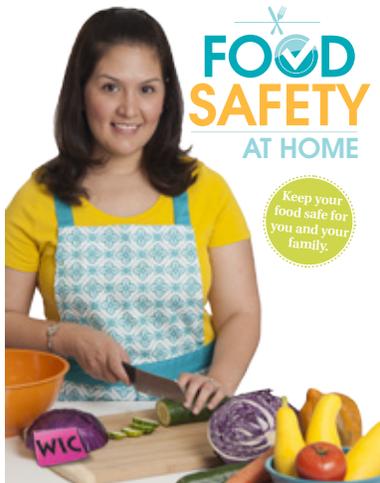


front cover and pink sticker

Client Education — Food Safety at Home

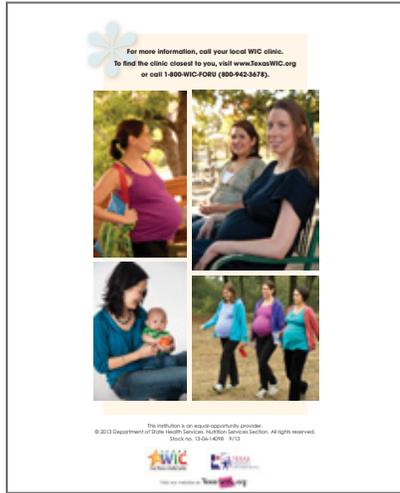


back cover with logos

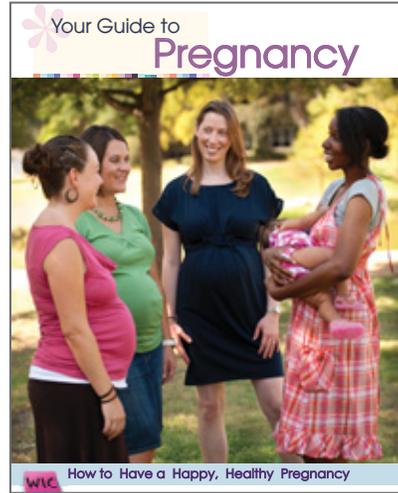


front cover and pink sticker

Client Education — Your Guide to Pregnancy



back cover with logos



front cover and pink sticker

WRITING GUIDELINES

A Writing Guide for Content Experts

When writing complex nutrition and health information for online and print publications keep in mind that our readers fall into different demographics and have different degrees of understanding.

- Know your target audience. Generally, WIC moms are between 24 to 28 years old and WIC staff are 30 to 50 years old, but use research to get the most up-to-date information. You can find participant data on the DSHS WIC website and in this style guide or use surveys and focus groups to help you target success.
- Write for the appropriate grade level reader. The general United States population reads from sixth to eighth grade level. Write materials at a sixth to eighth grade reading level for WIC employees and partners and third to fifth grade level (low literacy) for WIC participants.
- It's usually a good idea to have a target audience focus group to test readability for client documents. Before you schedule a focus group you can use this website for free to check with SMOG, statistics, syllable, readability, clear tests to help you identify your grade level and help to simplify your language. <http://www.wordscount.info/index.html>
- In order for WIC to present a cohesive message to everyone we reach, always write with the WIC voice. For WIC materials to present the same message to all of our audience members, all authors writing for WIC should become familiar with the Texas WIC Style Guide and tailor their materials accordingly.

Voice

Voice describes the way you speak or write that is unique to you or your organization; it is like personality. You can make a direct analogy to the speaking voice. Your friends and family know who is speaking when they hear your voice. We want our audience to know who is "speaking" when they hear or see WIC materials.

Just like you, WIC is many things to many people: Compassionate, warm, friendly, professional, welcoming, scientific, knowledgeable, accommodating, and useful. Whether training co-workers, providing supplemental foods for participants or conveying state news to staff, one thing we always want to be is helpful. WIC always reaches out. WIC always makes the extra effort. We bring the most current information into play. When you think about the passion and commitment you put into your work, think about conveying information in a helpful voice.

Tone

While we can imagine a helpful voice, what about our differing demographics and audience needs? Won't the voice change? In a word, no. We will always sound like WIC, so our voice doesn't change. But we do need to take our readers into account and we do that with tone. Every voice, yours or mine, no matter how recognizable, uses different tones to convey:

- The nature of the subject.
- The familiarity with the audience.
- The intent of the information provider.

Your tone may be serious, light, professional, official or empathetic. Depending on the subject and audience, you will need to choose your language carefully. For example, you might use a friendly, but official tone when writing WIC staff materials and an empathetic tone when writing about infant problems for WIC participants. Before you start writing, here are a few things to consider.

- Find alternatives to jargon, technical or scientific language, even WIC-specific terms.
- At times, specific words will be needed. Explain unfamiliar terms clearly on first use and even offer pronunciation.
- If writing for physicians or vendors, some subject-specific language will be appropriate.
- In most cases strive for clarity and simplicity; avoid slang, culture-specific language, even humor that could be misconstrued.

How to Use Voice and Tone

Choose “helping” verbs, a polite and friendly approach and a direct and positive address to write with a helpful voice.

Example of a helpful voice:

“Many WIC participants are pleased to find our classes online and at the clinic. We added this service so that you can choose the best way to use your time. The information we offer in the lessons is based on what our clients tell us they want to know. We hope you will join the group of happy WIC customers who say WIC’s lessons made a difference in their lives.”

Compared to:

“WIC lessons are now available online. You must complete the assigned class to get your benefits approved.”

Change the tone by changing the words you choose to tell the same story to convey a serious but uplifting tone.

“WIC has developed a new web-based educational system for participants who need to have the lesson portion of their visit authorized but would prefer to take the WIC lessons on the computer instead of in the classroom.”

How to Write WIC Materials

These guidelines promote the use of plain, clear language when writing materials for WIC participants.

Refer to this guide first for program specific information including grammar rules and examples of how to write for WIC. Use the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook as a second reference if you cannot find the information you need in the Texas WIC Style Guide.

Define your message

- What is it you want the reader to know?
- What outcome or action do you want them to achieve?
- Focus on 2 to 3 key concepts.
- Split the message into different materials if you defined 5 or more concepts.

- Use stories as examples.
- Organize your information so it is easy to read, understand and use.
- Arrange content in logical order.

Engage your WIC target audience

- Write directly to the reader and use words like “you” instead of “the participant.”
- Use active “voice” and “action verbs.”

Example of Passive Voice:

“This form will determine if the participant is eligible for WIC benefits.”

Example of Active Voice:

“Fill out this form to see if your child is eligible for WIC benefits.”

- Be positive and emphasize the benefits of the desired action.
- Give step-by-step directions.
- Keep descriptions and sentence variety in mind.
- Use descriptive language – “the nutritionist said.”
- Avoid bias or awkward phrases – “he or she said.”

Follow grammar rules

- Use correct sentence structure and punctuate cleanly.
- Exclamation points only belong after exclamations, for example: “Oh!”
- Avoid semi-colons. It is usually simpler to write two separate sentences.
- Use complete sentences with both a subject (noun) and a verb (action word).
- Clauses do not have a subject and a verb and therefore cannot stand alone as a sentence.
- Noun verb agreement and hanging clauses can be difficult to understand. For examples see <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/exercises/5/>.
- Don’t change verbs into nouns.

Use plain language

- Be clear – use short common words and short sentences whenever possible.
- Be concise – write only what the reader needs to know.
- Be specific – write exactly what you need the reader to know.

Other writing guidelines

- Be consistent in style, language, and format for clarity and understanding.
- Use the present tense whenever possible.
- Avoid acronyms. Unfamiliar acronyms can stop the flow and undermine understanding.
- Similarly, avoid jargon, figures of speech and humor.

Make the page more appealing to the reader

- Use headings that highlight the action you want the reader to take.
- Follow the heading with the most important information in the paragraph.
- Lead each paragraph with a clear concept sentence and follow with details and explanations.
- Break up large paragraphs of text into smaller ones.
- Use bullet points grouped under headings that identify a common theme. Try to keep bullet lists between 4 to 7 items in a group.
- Use simple graphics or icons to communicate ideas where appropriate.

Useful Terminology

- A **lede** or **lead** is the first paragraph of a news story and should entice the reader to read the full story. Make ledes short and active and, if possible, even punchy.
- A **headline** is located at the top of a newspaper story or article usually printed in large type and giving the gist of the story or article that follows. Every main headline has an active verb, almost always in present tense.
- **Subheads** are a sort of sub-headline, a phrase or two between the headline and the body of the article that explains what the story is about. Don't let same word appear in subheads or head's decks on facing pages.
- Photo **cutlines** or photo **captions** are the words describing the photograph. Write cutlines or captions in the present tense and use active verbs. Every photo should have a cutline.
- A **byline** is a short phrase or paragraph that indicates the name of the author. The byline commonly appears between the headline and the start of the article. The first line of the byline should include the writer's name, all credentials above a bachelor's degree, and any accreditations. The second line should have the writer's formal or working title.
- A **pullout quote** is a small selection of text "pulled out and quoted" in a larger typeface. It may be framed by rules, placed within the article, or placed in an empty column near the article.

How to Write for WIC Websites

- Say it quick and say it well — the attention span of an internet consumer is very short. Tell the reader what they need and want to know and no more.
- Keep key information near the top of the screen in the viewing window of the monitor so the user does not have to scroll to see your content.
- Split the content into two or more relevant, easy to understand, web pages if you have more content than can easily fit on a standard screen.
- Use bullet points and create easy to understand wording for subheads and link names to enable users to quickly get to the information they need.

ALPHABETICAL LISTING

abbreviations and acronyms – When possible, avoid using abbreviations or acronyms, instead spell it out. Don't reduce a name to an abbreviation or acronym just to save a few words.

A good rule to follow is if an abbreviation or acronym wouldn't be clear without an earlier reference, which included the full name of the organization immediately followed by the acronym, do not use it.

If you have to use an acronym, most organizations recommend introducing the acronym or abbreviation in parentheses immediately after the full name of an organization.

Some terms should always be spelled out. See Chart of Acronyms on page 32 for a list of commonly used acronyms and the recommendations on their use.

DEFINITION: An acronym is an abbreviation that's pronounced as a word, such as *CORE* or *UNESCO* or *PETA*; some are lower-case: *radar*, *snafu*, *scuba*.

Small caps can be used; just use them consistently.

NAMES OF STATES: In text, use the classic Associated Press abbreviations (five-letter states have no abbreviation).

Postal all-caps style is OK in address blocks only.

Postal all-caps style can also be OK in bibliographic references and footnotes.

PEDIGREES: When stringing alphabet-soup abbreviations after a credentialed person's name, put the highest academic degree first, followed by accreditations: *Janet Rourke, M.P.H., C.L.E.* (master's in public health, certified lactation educator) or *Reyn Archer, M.D., I.B.C.L.C.* (medical doctor, International Board of Certified Lactation Consultants).

See separate **acronyms** chart on page 32 and **pedigrees** chart on page 33.

Also see **capitalization**.

abstinence

academic degrees – Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts, Bachelor of Science, Master of Science or bachelor's degree, master's degree or bachelor's, master's are acceptable in any reference.

access – in client level material use – use

acre – A unit of land measurement. Never correct: *an acre of land*.

adipose – (adjective) fat

adiposity – (noun) fat

AFDC – See TANF.

affect vs. effect – Each can be used either as a noun or a verb.

Affect is usually used as a verb meaning 'change' or 'have an effect on.' There is also a noun *affect*, accentuated on the first syllable, used in psychological jargon to mean 'emotionality.' *Effect* is most commonly a noun meaning 'result' or the opposite of 'cause.' When used as a verb, *effect* is transitive and means 'create,' 'set up,' or 'put into effect.'

The downsizing will not affect our division. The patient was catatonic and completely lacking in affect. The antibiotics had little effect on the infection. The CEO was unable to effect cost reductions and was replaced.

African American – (noun)

African-American – (preceding adjective)

age – Always use numerals to indicate the age of a sentient being, but not of things.

WITH FRACTIONS: Don't go overboard; either rewrite or limit yourself to ½: the *2½-week-old infant*. *The boy is 4½ years old*.

HOW TO HYPHENATE: *The 3-year-old child is 36 months old. The 3- and 4-year-olds are playing together. The 15-month-old spilled something on his 5-year-old sister's lap.*

Do not mention the age that isn't included in the group. For example:

WRONG: *Children under 16 years old can be in this program.*

RIGHT: *Children age 15 and younger can be in this program.*

or

Children 15 years old and younger can be in this program.

Whenever possible, use years when describing age. Only use months when referring to children 18 months old and younger, and only when the age has to be expressed in partial years. For example:

RIGHT: *Children should get this vaccine between the ages of 18 months old and 2 years old.*

WRONG: *Children should get this vaccine between the ages of 1 1/2 years old and 24 months old.*

The wrong example above displays two wrong examples: The phrase "1 1/2 years old" should be displayed as "18 months old." The phrase "24 months old" should be displayed as "2 years old" since that age can be expressed in whole years without reference to partial years.

Refer to the age of a newborn as "birth." For example:

RIGHT: *This applies to babies from birth through 3 months old.*

WRONG: *This applies to babies 0 through 3 months old.*

See **over, under**.

age, ages – Not aged. Cheese and wine are aged, not humans. A child can be *age 4 years*, but never *aged 4 years*; children can be *ages 3 and 5 months*, but never *aged 3 and 5 months*.

a lot – Never "alot." *A lot of people think Mary Ann was cuter than Ginger.*

alien – Use undocumented immigrant.

all right – Never "alright." *Everything's going to be all right. It's all right if we go there.* Hyphenate only if used colloquially as a compound modifier: *He is an all-right guy.*

alternative – in client level material use – choice

Alzheimer's disease

AMA – American Medical Association.

ameba – Perhaps not in common use, but this is the preferred spelling *in a strictly medical context* for the protozoan. *Amoeba* may be preferable in materials for the general public.

American Indian – Preferred over "Native American," but best to use name of tribe or tribes of origin.

ampersand (&) – Use only when part of the formal name of a company or organization.

The word "and" should be used instead.

RIGHT: *Texas Health and Human Services Commission.*

WRONG: *Texas Health & Human Services Commission*

and/or – Avoid by rewriting. Usually, "and" can be eliminated without changing

annual – in client level material use – once a year

annually – in client level material use – yearly

anthropometry – Body measurements.

apostrophe (') – Use curved, not straight, apostrophes.

Do not use apostrophes to form a plural.
See pluralizing.

OMITTED LETTERS OR FIGURES: *y'all, let's go dancin', 'cause, 'tis, the class of '74, the roaring '20s*. (Don't let your computer default you to an opening single quotation mark; it curves in the wrong direction. You can outwit your machine.)

IN POSSESSIVES: *nine months' gestation, three years' probation*.

POSSESSIVES OF PROPER NAMES: Proper names ending in "s" get 's at the end: *James's, Reynolds's*.

Exceptions: state names (*Arkansas, Kansas, Texas*) and some ancient names "grandfathered in": *Moses, Jesus, Zeus, Achilles*. Also, don't add s if it will make a triple (or quadruple) sibilant, whether written or pronounced: *boss' day* (not *boss's*); *for conscience' sake*.

See two-page entry on **apostrophes** in AP's chapter on punctuation.

applicant – should usually be avoided.

Example: Instead of "*Medicaid applicant*," use "*person who applied for Medicaid*"

appoint – in client level material use – name

approximately – in client level material use – about

Asian, not "Oriental" – Try to use the nation or area of origin: Korean, East Asian.

assist – in client level material use – help

attempt – in client level material use – try

available – in client level material use – ready

baby-bottle tooth decay – in client level material use – tooth decay

Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Science – See academic degrees

bandana

basis – Often redundant, especially with expressions of time. "*Repeat on a daily basis*" should be shortened to "*Repeat daily*."

beginning – Use beginning ("beginning Dec. 1, 2009") rather than as of ("as of Dec. 1, 2009").

bigger/better/faster – A trendy exception to the rule against use of slashes in text.

birthweight – One word; thus, *low-birthweight baby, high-birthweight baby*.

black – Not capitalized, even to designate race.

bloc, block – Different words. *The old-timers voted as a bloc to defeat the younger and less experienced candidate. The police placed barricades at the end of each block.*

Body Mass Index (BMI) – BMI is a number calculated from a person's weight and height. BMI provides a reliable indicator of body fatness for most people and is used to screen for weight categories that may lead to health problems.

Formula to calculate BMI is weight in pounds (lbs) by height in inches (in) squared and multiplied by a conversion factor of 703.

born, borne – Different words. *The twins were born before the doctor arrived. Since her brother's death, she had borne her grief with dignity.*

bottle-fed, bottle-feeding – See **formula-fed**.

brackets ([]) – Primary use is for editorial interpretations in quoted material: "*In addition*," writes Chang, "*results for the third quarter [of 1999] were artificially inflated by Y2K-related spending.*"

Also use brackets in place of parentheses when the parenthetical material itself contains parentheses (or rewrite to avoid): *Torres (1998a) ascribes the error to poor management [a conclusion fiercely condemned by Scott (2000)]*. In this example

the brackets could be eliminated by inserting an em dash after *management*.

breastfeeding – (noun, verb, and adjective) No hyphen.

breastmilk – One word, no hyphen.

breast pump – (noun) Two words.

breast-pump – (preceding adjective)

brussels sprouts – Note the s on brussels.

bulleted lists – Generally the lead-in line will end with a colon in most cases, but other punctuation is possible as appropriate (such as a period or em dash).

Use periods at the end of every bulleted item except if the listed items are like those on an inventory sheet or shopping list.

Do not use semicolons or commas after bulleted items.

Capitalize the first letter of the first word in each bullet.

It is acceptable to begin a bullet with a numeral.

WRITING TIPS:

Break up long lists into smaller groups using headings to identify the common theme. When possible, try to keep the number of bulleted items in a list to 3 to 7 items.

Be consistent when using bullets – either make them in list form (or phrases), or make all of the bullets complete sentences.

Call Center/Contact Center Names – When possible, avoid listing a call or contact center name. For example:

WRONG: Call the PCCM Client Help Line at 1-888-302-6688.

RIGHT: To learn more about Medicaid services, call 1-888-302-6688.

capitalization – Always minimize use of capital letters.

Capitalization is archaic, anti-egalitarian, and forelock-tugging, and we're not.

TITLES: Do not capitalize titles, even exalted ones, after a person's name: *David Lakey, M.D., Texas commissioner of health. John F. Kennedy, president of the United States. Gen. Eisenhower, supreme commander in Europe.*

And keep capped titles before names to an absolute minimum. Often, formal titles can be replaced with working titles or descriptive phrases.

Never capitalize titles without a name: *The pope is Polish. The president has two daughters. The queen is dead; long live the king. The emperor has no clothes.*

WITH HYPHENS: Capitalize second word in a hyphenated word/phrase/title if first word is already capitalized, too.

'THE': Don't capitalize "the" as part of an organization's name, unless it's for the one-in-a-million name.

RIGHT: The University of Texas.

WRONG: The Texas Department of State Health Services.

REGIONS: Capitalize nouns (but not adjectives) relating to distinct, self-contained geographical regions. Thus, *the South* is the southern United States, but *the south* is the direction.

Likewise, re Texas, capitalize *Texas Hill Country* or *the Hill Country, the Valley, the Panhandle, the Big Bend*.

IN FULL NAMES USUALLY PUT INTO ACRONYM FORM: If an acronym includes an upper-case letter in it that would normally be lower-case in the full name, that word can be capped in the full name: *FEAST* is the acronym for *Feedback, Evaluation, And*

Software Technology. Note the oddly capped *And*.

See **colon**.

Also see **headlines and composition titles**.

category - in client level material use – group

cavity/cavities – in client level material use – tooth decay

CDC – An abbreviation still in use for the Centers [*not Center*] for Disease Control and Prevention, dating from when the words *and Prevention* had not yet been added to the name. Since the abbreviation may be unclear, this is an exception to the rule forbidding the identification of an abbreviation in parentheses immediately after the full name. In other words, it is acceptable to write *the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)* ... Please note that *Centers* is plural. See **abbreviations and acronyms**.

cf. – See **Latin terms**.

check up or check-up – use – checkup

child care – (noun) Not *childcare*.

child-care – (preceding adjective)

Not *childcare*.

children's – Never *childrens'*.

CHIP/Children's Medicaid – Children's Health Insurance Program (via Medicaid).

choose – in client level material use - pick

cite, site, sight – Different words. *Make sure you cite the proper statute in the example. The leaking drums contaminated the entire site. The Basenji is considered a sight hound.*

civil rights – (noun)

civil-rights – (lower-case preceding adjective)

client – should usually be avoided.

EXAMPLES: Instead of "*Medicaid client*," use "*person with Medicaid*" or "*a person who has Medicaid*."

Instead of "*is your child a CHIP client*" use "*does your child have CHIP coverage*."

colon (:) – Don't capitalize words in text following a colon, even if a full sentence follows the colon. Right: *The problem was obvious: he was drunk*. Also right: *The problem was obvious: drunkenness*.

IN TITLES AND HEADLINES: Do capitalize the word immediately following colon, whether title's style is uppercase or lowercase. Right: *The sorrows of young Werther: A play for our times*. Also right: *The Sorrows of Young Werther: A Play for Our Times*.

comma (,) – In most cases, we do use the serial comma preceding "and" or "or."

NEW NOUN-VERB SET: Insert a comma between any two complete subject-predicate clauses: *He went to the store, and the oranges were on sale. The client asked for help, and the therapist gave it. There are some simple truths, and the dogs know what they are.*

INTRODUCTORY PHRASES: *After the fall, the Garden of Eden was empty.*

This rule includes "vocatives": *Dude, you're gettin' a Dell! Mommy, I'm hurt. Hey, this is insane.*

MODIFYING PHRASES: *Travis County voters, by a wide margin, booted the rascals out. Jesus, savior of mankind, wept.*

ITEMS IN ADDRESSES: *Kabul, Afghanistan, is one heck of a town. One Rockefeller Center, New York, is a famous address.*

COMPOUND MEASUREMENTS: *With a birthweight of just 3 pounds, 14 ounces, the infant was underweight. At 6 feet, 7 inches,*

that lumberjack is quite tall. The child's age is 3 years, 4 months.

ITEMS IN DATES: *The conference on June 4, 2002, attracted thousands. The terrorist attack of Sept. 11, 2001, killed Manuel Flores, a New York City waiter. Born January 25, 1956, she's a boomer baby.*

ITEMS IN GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES: *Residents in Austin, Texas, and some in Washington, D.C., offered to help. She's facing trial in Alexandria, Va., on charges of high treason. Sasquatch might live in the Portland, Ore., area.*

ITEMS IN TITLES AND DEGREES: *John Smith, Ph.D., finally met his long-lost twin, Jon Smith, M.D. David Lakey, M.D., Texas commissioner of health, has plenty on his plate.*

DON'T BREAK UP SUBJECT-OBJECT SETS: Do not insert an unneeded comma between a subject and its object. Wrong: *The cat spotted, chased, mangled, and devoured, the mouse. I gave Moe, Curley, and Larry, my permission to use our photos.*

communicate – in client level material use – talk

community-service aide – Instead of C.S.A. or CSA.

competent – in client level material use – able

completion – in client level material use – end / finish

comply – in client level material use – meet the program rules

consent – in client level material use – agree to

continue – in client level material use – keep getting or keep going

contact us – in client level material use – call (if only a phone number is listed) / e-mail (if only an e-mail address is listed)

Can also use “*send you*” if referring to mail correspondence.

EXAMPLE: *We will send you a copy of the member directory.*

coordinate, coordination – Not *co-ordinate* or *coördinate*.

county – The word “county” is capitalized when it appears as part of a proper name, but not in the case of plurals.

EXAMPLES:

Bexar County

Bexar and Travis counties

co-worker – Note hyphen.

cow's milk – Not *cows' milk*.

CPR – Cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

dash (—) – Do not use two hyphens to create a dash.

See **em dashes** and **en dashes**.

data – Usually plural. When used as a collective noun, takes singular verbs and pronouns.

database – One word.

dates – Use Arabic numbers only.

Never add ordinal suffixes: *st, nd, rd, th* (except in bibliographies: *3rd ed.*).

Avoid constructions with “of”: *February 2001*, not *February of 2001*.

SEQUENCE: Month, date, year: *Oct. 12, 1492*, not *12 Oct. 1492*. Not military style, not rest-of-the-world style.

DO ABBREVIATE: With a specific date, abbreviate names of months with more than five letters: *Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov.,* and *Dec.*

DON'T ABBREVIATE: Do not abbreviate *March, April, May, June,* and *July.*

Also, don't abbreviate the name of any month if it's standing alone or only with a year: *He visited in October. He visited in*

October 2001. (But: *He visited us on Oct. 15, 2001.*)

COMMAS: Use only in complete dates: *The Declaration of Independence was signed on July 4, 1776. But: July 1776 was a momentous month.*

IN TABULAR MATERIAL: Use these three-letter forms without periods: *Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec.*

JUST NUMERALS: Not for text.

Keep sequence the same: month, date, year: *3/15/02.*

Use numerals-only style for full dates only: *2/14/02*, but not *2/14* or *2/02*.

Use only the final two digits of the year: *3/15/02*, not *3/15/2002*; *12/25/99*, not *12/25/1999*.

Use a zero with date or year to create a two-digit entry. Do not use a zero with the month.

RIGHT: *3/09/02*

WRONG: *03/09/02*, and *3/9/2*.

DATE RANGES must be specific.

EXAMPLES: *Within 10 days of when you first noticed the symptoms.*

Return the documents within 10 business days (not including Saturdays, Sundays and holidays) from the date of this letter.

day care – (noun) Not *daycare*.

day-care – (preceding adjective) Not *daycare*.

decimals – The need for a decimal overrides the spell-out-numbers-less-than-10 rule: *2.5 million clients, not two and a half million clients.*

Except in rare cases, don't exceed two decimal places in text.

When citing a fraction of 1, use a leading 0.

Ex: *Less than 0.2 percent is considered OK.*

When the number is less than 0, add a 0 before the decimal point. Ex: *0.25* not *.25*

decision-making – (noun and adjective)

decrease – in client level material use – reduce / lower

degrees – Use symbols. When citing temperatures do not use spaces between the degree of temperature and the Fahrenheit or Centegrade symbols.

Right: *98.6°F*, and *100°C*

Wrong: *98.6° F*, and *100° C*

demonstrate – in client level material use – show

Depo-Provera – A type of birth control. Note the use of the hyphen.

detect – in client level material use – find

determine – in client level material use – find out / see if / decide

dietitian – Not *dietician*.

difficulties – in client level material use – problems / trouble

discontinue – in client level material use – stop

disqualified – in client level material use – no longer meets the program rules / can no longer be in the program / not able to get

doctor – Almost always, you should be specific and replace *Dr. John Doe* with *John Doe, Ph.D., John Doe, M.D.*, or whichever specific variation of doctordom is appropriate.

On second reference, he's *Doe*, not *Dr. Doe*, unless you have a strong justification for the obsequiousness.

See **honorifics**.

dollars – Spell out only in cases without a figure or with an indefinite amount: *My dad gave*

me a couple of dollars. There must be millions of dollars in this crate.

Otherwise, always use figures and the \$ sign: *My dad gave me \$2. The crate contains \$4.5 million.*

doughnut – Not *donut*.

doula – Non-clinical assistant during labor and delivery.

Down syndrome – Not *Down’s syndrome*

drugs – The brand name should appear in italics. Do not include the registered trademark symbol (®). The correct portion of the name to italicize can usually be found by checking the manufacturer’s website. For example, “*Synagis* (palivizumab) is a benefit of the Texas Medicaid Program.”

When in doubt as to the proper spelling of the drug term, use the Drugs@FDA search engine (www.fda.gov/Cder/drugsatfda/glossary.htm).

EBT – “Electronic benefits transfer”: DSHS plan for public-health clients to use a universal-ID-style card to “access” their benefits.

ECI – Early Childhood Intervention.

educated (v) or be informed – in client level material use – be told

effect vs. affect – See affect.

effective date – in client level material use – start date / the date you can start getting service

e.g. – See Latin terms.

electronic addresses – When writing an e-mail address or website address, do not italicize, bold, underline, or set it off with parentheses, quotation marks, or brackets.

Use standard end-of-phrase or end-of-sentence punctuation, as appropriate.

In URLs always include *http://* and *www*, if any.

eligible – in client level material use – are able to get

“Eligible” and “eligibility” are both complex, multi-syllabic words. Try to avoid using them by restructuring the sentence.

ellipsis – Treat an ellipsis (...) as a three-letter word, with spaces before and after, as appropriate.

There are no spaces between the three periods. Don’t let a line of text break between the periods. To avoid line breaks, you can create and use a single “special character” called a piece ellipsis, or use a soft return to adjust where the line breaks.

See AP entry in “punctuation” section regarding related rules. It’s nothing hard; just think of it as representing any word or phrase, either within a sentence, between sentences, or at the beginning or end of one.

e-mail, e-mailed, e-mailing

em dashes – The longer ones.

- Used in text to separate phrases more strongly than a comma would, and to set off interjections and other interruptions in flow.
- In MS Word, create by hitting the “control alt minus” keys. In most programs, alt+0+151.
- Normally takes a space band on each side.
- For the “three-em dash,” see **reference** and **bibliography**.

en dashes – The shorter ones.

- Note that an en dash is being used after entry names throughout this listing. In any other usage, do not space en dashes.
- Can be used in place of a hyphen to indicate ‘to’ or ‘through’: *During 1976–88, hurricanes struck during the August–October period annually.*

- Rewriting is best, but an en dash can also be used as a hyphen in some chains of hyphenated modifiers to separate the subset from the set, or compound a phrase with a word (when the phrase cannot be hyphenated, such as a proper noun) — *non-Gram-negative bacteria, low literacy-specific points, editorial group-determined policies, post-World War II period, Dallas-Ft. Worth Region*. (Note that most modifier chains have equal components and no subset: *merry-go-round, sister-in-law*.) Or, just use hyphens. Whatever you choose, be consistent.

- In MS Word, create by hitting the “control minus” keys. In most programs, using the keypad to type numbers, Alt+0+150.

encourage – in client level material use – urge

endeavor – in client level material use – try

enroll – in client level material use – join

ensure – Means to make sure. See **insure**.

EPSDT or Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment - Texas Health Steps

Texas Health Steps is the federal court-approved name for these Medicaid services for children.

See **Texas Health Steps**.

equal-opportunity – (preceding adjective)

Esq. – follows the name of an attorney, and is preceded by a comma. *Joyce James, Esq.*

et al. – See **Latin terms**.

etc. – See **Latin terms**.

every day – (adverb) *Eat five servings of fruits and vegetables every day.*

everyday – (adjective) *It's just an everyday sort of meal.*

exceeds – in client level material use – is more than

exclamation mark (!) – Avoid exclamation marks, even in quotes, unless under extreme duress or in very rare cases, e.g. after an exclamation. Ha!

exhausted (v) – in client level material use – gone through

ext. – Not *extension*. Always preceded by a comma.

For example, “Call 512-555-5555, *ext.* 67000.”

See **telephone numbers**.

facilitate – in client level material use – help / ease

facsimile – Always use the shorter “fax.” It is capitalized when used as part of address information and lowercase when used within a sentence.

fat-free – (preceding adjective) Right: *The fat-free yogurt was tasty.* Also right: *That tasty yogurt was fat free.*

farmers' market – Note that it's plural possessive; note that it's not capitalized.

farmers'-market – (preceding adjective) *The farmers'-market produce is more fresh than the grocery-store produce.*

farmworker – One word.

feasible – in client level material use – can be done

fee-for-service Medicaid – in client level material use – traditional Medicaid

feel bad, feel badly – Both right, but with different meanings.

In first case, *feel* is same as is and thus takes an adjective: *I feel bad because my dear friend is in mourning.*

In second case, *feel* literally means to touch and thus takes an adverb: *I feel badly because my fingertips are crushed.*

Wrong: *I feel badly that you're so sad.*

feel good, feel well – Similar to above. Both right, but with different meanings.

In first case, *feel* is same as *is* and thus takes an adjective: *I feel good about this marvelous weather.*

In second case, *feel* can again be same as *is* and thus takes an adjective: *I feel well enough to run the marathon.* Or it can again literally mean to touch and thus takes an adverb: *I can feel well enough to read a book in Braille.*

MORE CASES OF 'FEEL' AS 'IS': *It feels real. It feels cold. I feel hurt. He feels vindicated. They feel confused.*

first aid – (noun) *The victim was given first aid.*

first-aid – (preceding adjective) *Using her first-aid skills along with her first-aid kit, she saved the day.*

Fiscal Year – On first reference, use Fiscal Year 2003, then on second reference, use FY 2003. To show a span, use FY 2003–04.

flier – A pamphlet; not flyer.

flip chart – This term hasn't made the leap to common usage as one word. Give it time.

follow up – (verb) *It's time to follow up on this study.*

follow-up – (noun and adjective) *It's time to do a follow-up. Here's the follow-up report.*

foodborne illness – No hyphen.

Food Stamps – See **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

for more information – in client level material use – to learn more / Question? Call 1-xxx-xxx-xxxx.

form names and numbers – When including a reference to a specific form, write the form name exactly as it is written on the form and in title case. If a form number needs

to be included, put it in parenthesis. Form numbers are not always required.

EXAMPLES:

We will mail you a Report of Change form (Form H1019).

We sent you one or both of the following forms:

- *Medicaid for Breast and Cervical Cancer Renewal Application (Form H2340).*
- *Medicaid for Breast and Cervical Cancer Treatment Verification (Form H1551).*

formatting for emphasis – In general, the preference is to not bold, italicize, underline, capitalize or set text in quotation marks to give it emphasis. Instead, write the text so it is clear concise and specific. In some cases, bolding text may be appropriate; for example, to emphasize a due date that is in the middle of a paragraph.

formula-fed, formula-feeding – Preferred over *bottle-fed, bottle-feeding* to indicate a non-breastfed baby, because it's specific (after all, bottles can contain breastmilk).

forward, foreword – Different words. *Foreword* is the term for a brief statement (seldom longer than a page and a half) at the beginning of a book, generally preceding the introduction (if any). A foreword may be appropriate if the introduction is very long and a short statement to prospective readers is also desired, or if the introduction is by someone other than the author (thus the author may also make a brief introductory statement in the foreword). EXAMPLE: *Nancy crept forward in the dark, holding the flashlight with a shaky hand. Asking Clancy to write the foreword to his new book was a shrewd move.*

Fort – Spell out in all instances: names of cities and military posts.

fractions – In text, spell out amounts of less than 1 (“two-thirds,” “three-eighths”).

Don't mix styles, like "¾" with "3/4."

See **age**.

french fries – Not *French fries*.

frequently – in client level material use – often

FTE – Full-time employee. Not for regular text.

fundamental – in client level material use – basic

goat's milk – Not *goats' milk*.

gloss – Brief explanatory definition giving the meaning of a foreign or otherwise unfamiliar word. See **quotation marks**.

hanged, hung – A human being is hanged; a nonhuman object is hung: *The prisoner hanged himself in his cell using a rope he'd hung from the ceiling.*

See **who, that** for another perk of being human.

HB 359 – Texas House Bill 359, signed into law in June 1995, affirmed a woman's right to breastfeed in public. It has since been codified, so instead refer to it as Texas Health and Safety Code sections 165.001-034, or 165.001-034 Health and Safety Code.

he, she – Avoid constructions with *he/she, he or she, or he and/or she* (likewise *him/her, his/hers*, etc.).

Alternatives: Go to plural, make it passive, replace pronoun with one, or choose one gender.

Head Start – Not *Headstart*.

health-care, health care, healthcare – Health care should be written as two words. Hyphenate the two words only when modifying another word: "*health-care program*."

In general, do not use the word "*services*" after health care because it is redundant.

EXCEPTION: Do not use "*healthcare*" unless it is used in a company or program name that specifically uses it as one word (e.g., Texas Medicaid & Healthcare Partnership and Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System).

healthy, healthful – *Healthy* is always correct as a condition of people and other living things (also metaphorically living things, such as businesses). *Healthful* is preferable for things that promote health such as foods, diets, etc. However, constructions such as healthy diet are permissible in a less formal context, such as social-marketing materials.

Help Line, Helpline – Use help line (two words) in most instances (a help line operated by HHSC). Use helpline (one word) only when the word is part of the official name of the telephone line (The Health and Human Services Commission Helpline).

Hispanic – (adjective) Of or relating to Spain or Spanish-speaking Latin America; or of or relating to a Spanish-speaking people or culture.

Hispanic – (noun) A Spanish-speaking person or a U.S. citizen or resident of Latin-American or Spanish descent.

honorifics – Never use honorifics (*Dr., Mrs., Ms., Mr.*) except in a direct quote.

hotline – (noun)

hyphen (-) – Use in grammar-defying compound modifiers preceding a noun: *full-time job, know-it-all attitude, nutrition-education program, little-known rule, field-based conclusion, Mexican-American customs, soft-spoken visitor.*

SUSPENSIVE HYPHENS: Rephrase when possible; otherwise, space as follows: *The first- and second-graders performed in a school play. Scientific tickling was enjoyed by all 3- to 8-year-olds in the experiment. The ship's*

collision with an iceberg ripped a 25- to 30-foot gash into the bow. The event was recorded on audio- and videotape.

IN DATES: Do not use hyphens in dates, even to indicate a span. Use an en dash: *The event is set for June 8–10, 2003.*

Do not use in place of a slash: 3/09/02, not 3-09-02.

AT ENDS OF LINES: Don't bunch 'em up. Never have more than three consecutive lines ending in hyphens, and try for fewer in ragged right text or wide columns.

Also see **hyphen** entry in AP's section on punctuation.

hyperlinks – For hard copy materials, remove special formatting such as the underline (right click on the hyperlink and choose "remove hyperlink").

Whenever possible, avoid using long hyperlinks by giving a shorter link and directions for getting to the web page or document.

AVOID: *To find an HHSC benefits office near you, visit https://www.yourtexasbenefits.com/wps/themes/html/SSPortal/downloads/H1010_April2008English.pdf*

PREFERRED WORDING: *To find an HHSC benefits office near you, visit <http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us>. Click on "How to get help." Then click on "Search our office locations."*

ibid. – see **Latin terms**

identical – in client level material use – same

i.e. – see **Latin terms**

immunizations nurse – Not *immunization nurse*; note no 's.

impact – (noun) For verb, use *affect* or *influence* or other choice. Don't use as a synonym for *effect*, because it often implies a dramatic, sometimes negative result.

impair – in client level material use – harm

incident vs. **incidence** – An incident is a single occurrence; an incidence is a rate of occurrences.

Despite a few recently publicized incidents of child abduction, the incidence of such kidnappings is actually declining.

Indian – A person from India, also called East Indian. See **American Indian**.

individual – in client level material use – person

Use "*person*" unless there's a need to distinguish the person you're referring to from a multiple-person unit.

Never use simply as a synonym for *person*. Avoid the law-enforcement usage as a clumsy synonym for *perpetrator* or *suspect*. Do use when making an explicit contrast between single persons and a larger group: *While average viral load has diminished in this population, a few individuals experienced sharp increases.* For most other instances of *individual(s)*, *person(s)* will suffice.

See **person**.

ineligible – in client level material use – not able to get

inform – in client level material use – tell

information – in client level material use – fact

initial – in client level material use – first

initials – No space, not even a thin space, between initials in a name of a person or organization: *J.T., F.W. Woolworth, J.C. Penney*. The only exception to this is in references and bibliographies.

initiate – in client level material use – begin / start

insure – Means 'contract to cover another's financial losses.' When the meaning is 'make sure,' use *ensure*.

Internet

intranet

IQ – Not I.Q.

it, she; its, her – *It* and *its* are the correct pronouns, not *she* and *her*, for nations and ships.

Right: *Israel's right to defend its borders is being questioned. The ship and its crew were lost at sea.*

Wrong: *Israel's right to defend her borders is being questioned. The ship and her crew were lost at sea.*

it, they – It is the correct pronoun, not they, for collective nouns: crowd, jury, agency, department, program, government, group, committee, audience, nation, pack, horde, herd, litter.

Use they if the verb is plural: *The couple are enjoying their new home.*

italics – Use to designate emphasis. Don't cap, bold, or underline for emphasis. In a context of all italics, roman takes the place of italics.

EXCEPTIONS: Very rarely, bold can be OK for emphasis in some training materials or in copy that's already heavy with italics. If doing so, be sure to be consistent.

COMPOSITION TITLES AND FOREIGN WORDS: Italics are also used in the titles of standalone creative works (journals, books, pamphlets, brochures, fliers, posters, videos, record albums, films, TV shows), and to introduce foreign words.

WORDS OR PHRASES CONSIDERED AS THINGS IN THEMSELVES – Use italics when a word itself is being described, rather than the thing the word denotes: *The name Greg has four letters. Two of them are Gs.*

See **titles of compositions**.

Also see **quotation marks**.

jargon – Program-related jargon or technical terminology should not be used in writing letters or other materials for consumers. Examples of such jargon include "TP" or "Type Program," "EBT" or "electronic benefit transfer," and "TIERS" or "Texas Integrated Eligibility Redesign System."

judgment – Just one e.

La Leche League – Breastfeeding supporters.

last, past – Use last to mean final.

Right: *In the past two weeks, we've learned a lot. The last days of Pompeii were humid.*

Wrong: *In the last two weeks, we've learned a lot.*

latch-on – Noun or adjective

Latin terms – Generally, avoid 'em or use 'em frugally. Our audience is the Texas public, not Oxford dons.

The following Latin terms are now English, so they're not foreign and thus not italicized:

- **cf.** – compare (*confer*)
- **et al.** – and others (*et alii*)
- **etc.** – and so forth (*et cetera*)
- **e.g.** – for example (*exempli gratia*)
- **ibid.** – in the same place (*ibidem*)
- **i.e.** – that is (*id est*)
- **N.B.** – take careful note (*nota bene*)
- **sic** – so, thus (*sic*). Identifies an error in the original quotation. Because of sic's peculiar use in quoted matter, it should be italicized and enclosed in brackets. *They are furnished "separate [sic] but equal facilities."*
- **viz.** – 'like this', namely (contraction of *videlicet*, meaning 'it is permitted to see')

Use commas after e.g. and i.e. Use a comma before them if the break is minor. If the break is greater than that signaled by a comma,

use a semicolon or em dash or enclose the expression in parentheses.

Latin American – (noun)

Latin-American – (adjective)

Latina/Latino – (noun) A Latin American; a person of Hispanic, especially Latin-American, descent, often one living in the United States. Latina refers to female/Latino refers to male.

legislature – Always cap when preceded by the name of the state: *the Texas Legislature*, and when the state name is dropped, but the reference is specifically to that state's legislature.

Use lowercase when used generically: *Few legislatures abide by the Freedom of Information Act.*

Also use lowercase for plural references: Both the *Pennsylvania and New Jersey legislatures are struggling with this issue.*

less, fewer – Less modifies mass nouns; fewer modifies plural nouns: *less water, less money, less hope*, but *fewer raindrops, fewer dollars, fewer hopes*.

let-down – (adjective or noun)

license, licensed

Lions Club – No apostrophe.

listing multiple program names – When referencing multiple programs, do not combine the program titles. For example, use *“the Integrated Care Management program and Children with Special Health Care Needs Program”* rather than *“the Integrated Care Management and Children with Special Health Care Needs Programs.”*

Listserv – E-mail list-management software. Capitalized because it's the name of the product and a registered trademark.

local agency – Texas WIC's administrative breakdown of field services. There are maybe 80 local agencies in the state, each with several clinics, sometimes called *sites*.

Do not cap unless referring to a specific one: *Local Agency 18*

Hyphenate when it's a preceding modifier. Abbreviate as *LA*, with no periods.

log in, log out – (verbs)

log-in, log-out – (adjectives and nouns)

low-fat

maintain your health – in client level material use – stay healthy

make sure to... – should usually be avoided

NOT CORRECT: *Make sure to apply for Medicaid.*

CORRECT: *Apply for Medicaid.*

or

Remember to apply for Medicaid.

Master of Arts, Master of Science – See academic degrees

may – in client level material use – can / might

may, might, must, can – Be specific in the use of these words:

- Use may when referring to a recommendation or option. (*“Parents may download an application from the website.”*)

- Use might when referring to a potential outcome or result. (*“Children might be approved for CHIP or Children's Medicaid.”*)

- Use must when referring to a requirement that has a legal or financial consequence. (*“Parents must enroll their children in a health plan before coverage can begin.”*)

- Use can to express a person's ability to do something. (*“Parents can pick a primary care provider.”*)

media – Plural noun, but can be used in singular constructions.

Medicaid – A state program that provides some medical care to some low-income people of all ages.

Medicaid is always written as “*Medicaid*” or “*Texas Medicaid*,” not “*the Medicaid Program*.”

If the name of the specific type of Medicaid program must be used, only use the full name on the first reference, then use “Medicaid” in later references.

The initials “TP” or the phrase “*Type program*” should never be used in consumer materials.

RIGHT: *You have been certified for Medicaid for Pregnant Women.*

WRONG: *You have been certified for TP 40.*

See [person on Medicaid](#) listing.

Medicaid ID form – in client level material use – Medicaid ID

Medical Transportation Program or MTP – in client level material use – medical transportation services.

Brand the services, not the program that administers the services.

Medicare – A federal program that provides some medical care to some elderly and disabled people.

Mexican American – (noun) A citizen of the United States who is of Mexican descent.

Mexican-American – (adjective)

micro (in the metric system) – When possible, use the Greek μ , not the letter “u,” for ‘micro’ in the metric system.

monetary figures – Use a comma after the first digit, when referencing monetary figures that are four-digit whole numbers (“between \$1,000 and \$9,999”).

monitrice – Clinical assistant during labor and delivery.

Mother-Friendly Worksite Program

National Institutes of Health – plural.

Native American – See *American Indian*.

neural-tube defects

No. – Use abbreviation for number when writing the printshop stock number. Don’t use *number*, *nr.*, nor # when writing out the stock number. EXAMPLE: *The flier, stock no. 87-009, contains factual errors.*

nonfat

notification – in client level material use – notice

notify – in client level material use – tell

number – Do not use the abbreviation “No.”

numbers – Spell out numbers nine and lower, except when referring to age.

Ex. The child is 4-years-old.

Use numerals for numbers 10 and above. Avoid beginning a sentence with a numeral. If you must start a sentence with a number, spell out the number.

numerals – Obey AP. Use commas in 4-digit numerals.

numerical ranges – In a sentence, use the word “to” as a bridge between numbers in a range. (“Answer questions 1 to 6.”) Never use a dash to express a range in a sentence. In a table, use a dash with no spaces on either side.

nutrition education – (noun) *WIC clinics offer classes in nutrition education.*

nutrition-education – (preceding adjective) *Nutrition-education materials are offered in WIC clinics.*

nutrition-education classes – Don’t use. It’s redundant. Simply say *nutrition classes*.

N.B. – See Latin terms

occur – in client level material use – happen

OK, OK'd, OKing, OKs – Not *O.K., okay, okey, o.k.,* or *ok.*

omega-3 fatty acids

online

ordinal suffixes (-st, -nd, -rd, -th) – Never use in dates: *April 22, 1999*, not *April 22nd, 1999*.

OK: This is the 22nd time I've had to review this with you.

Never superscript them; just override any software's insane insistence on this.

Oriental – A no-no; see **Asian**

ounces – Spell out. The exception to this is when describing a baby's weight: *8 lbs. 4 oz.* or when use in a chart of tabular format.

opportunity – in client level material use – chance

option – in client level material use – choice

over, under – Per AP, use for spatial descriptions; don't use in relation to age. Replace with more than or less than.

pedigrees – Nickname for academic degrees and professional certifications. An academic degree precedes any professional certifications in the sequence following the person's name. See chart on page 34.

See **bylines** in "Reporting with Style" section.

PEDIGREE ABBREVIATIONS: Use periods — and no spaces — in abbreviations of "pedigrees" (academic degrees or professional certifications).

RIGHT: *Ph.D., M.D., R.D.*

WRONG: *PhD, MD, RD.*

peer counselor – (noun)

EXAMPLE: *In WIC clinics and in maternity wards, peer counselors advise new moms who choose breastfeeding.*

peer-counselor – (adjective)

EXAMPLE: *Each WIC local agency has a peer-counselor program.*

period (.) – Space only once after a period that ends a sentence.

LISTS: When numbering items in a list, place a period after the number, not a parenthesis.

permission – in client level material use – agree to

person on Medicaid – in client level material use – person who has Medicaid

NOT CORRECT: *Texas Health Steps checkups are free as long as your child is on Medicaid.*

CORRECT: *Texas Health Steps checkups are free as long as your child has Medicaid.*

persons – in client level material use – people

person(s) – The correct term for a small, countable number of human beings. Use people for aggregates or large numbers: Five persons in the Corpus Christi area were diagnosed with hantavirus infections. Hantavirus affects hundreds of people across Texas every year.

See also **individual**.

personal pronouns (I, Me, We, Us, Our, You, Your) – Personal pronouns are acceptable and usually preferred in client materials.

EXAMPLES:

Send us the documents we have requested so we can finish work on your application.

Brush your child's teeth twice a day until they can handle brushing their teeth by themselves.

pH – Not *PH* or other variants. A measure of the acidity or alkalinity of a solution. A pH of 7.0 is neutral; the range is from 0 (maximum

acid) to 14 (maximum base). Query as incorrect any pH figure outside this range.

pharmacy – in client level material use – drug store

phosphorus vs. phosphorous – Phosphorus is far more common; note the Latin ending in -us, the sign of a noun (gladiolus, animus, radius, etc.). Phosphorous is a rare adjectival form, usually used in clinical terms: phosphorous acid.

physician – in client level material use – doctor / clinic / primary care provider

pluralizing – Just add an s to pluralize single digits and other figures: *There were five size 7s. That custom started in the 1920s. The temperature will soar into the high 80s on Christmas Day.*

Do not use the apostrophe to form plurals. When the meaning is the plural of an individual letter, italicize the letter but leave the pluralizing “s” in roman: The name Moog is spelled with two Os.

Learn the “plurals,” “possessives,” and “apostrophes” entries in AP.

PO Box – The U.S. Post Office prefers no periods in “PO Box,” but a space before *box*.

policy-making – (noun and adjective)

possessives – Use ‘s to show possession in words ending in z or x: *Dr. Sanchez’s idea, the box’s corner.*

Overall, follow AP stylebook; see its “possessives” entry in main text and its “apostrophe” entry in punctuation section.

postpartum – Not post-partum.

preemie – Not *premie*.

preterm – Not *pre-term*.

preventive – Not *preventative*.

primary care provider – Should usually be avoided.

You can use “primary care provider” when the information sent to a consumer is specifically referring to choosing or changing a primary care provider.

If you must use “primary care provider,” include a sentence similar to the following near the first reference:

EXAMPLE: *A primary care provider can be a doctor, nurse, or clinic that gives you most of your health care.*

private health insurance – in client level material use – other health insurance

problem-solving – (noun and adjective)

process – Often unnecessary, especially when preceded by a noun.

WRONG: *The party will lose three seats in the reapportionment process.*

RIGHT: *The party will lose three seats in reapportionment.*

process – (v) in client level material use – to do work on

program – Do not capitalize alone, and do not capitalize unless part of the formal name of a program.

RIGHT: *The WIC program hired us.*

ALSO RIGHT: *The Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children.*

ALL WRONG: *The Texas WIC Program is a Program that I consider to be my kind of Program.*

pronouns – Be careful with pronouns used in double objects; use objective case, not subjective case.

RIGHT: *He gave the assignment to Brent and me. They invited my mother and me.*

Wrong: *He gave the assignment to Brent and I. They invited my mother and I.*

provide – in client level material use – give / offer

prior to – in client level material use – before

public health, public-health – Hyphenating this as a compound modifier is a judgment call. Whatever you decide, be consistent.

qualified – in client level material use – are able to get

quotation marks – Use curved, not straight, quotation marks (curved quotes are sometimes called “curly quotes,” “typographer’s quotes,” or “smart quotes”).

SINGLE QUOTES: Use these for quotes within quotes: *“My mother saw the mouse and shrieked out, ‘Yikes!’ before she grabbed the broom,” the child breathlessly reported.*

Also, use single quotes in headlines and cutlines wherever italics or double quotes would be used in text: *Jerusalem a ‘city of peace’*

As a judgment call, single quotes can be used in glosses, which are brief explanatory definitions giving the meaning of foreign or otherwise unfamiliar words. The *word* *papa* meaning ‘potato’ is feminine, but *papa* as ‘pope’ is masculine.

WITH PERIODS AND COMMAS: Periods and commas always go inside the quote: *The word she chose was “alien.” “The word she chose,” said Fred, “was ‘alien.’”*

WITH COLONS AND SEMICOLONS: Colons and semicolons go outside the quotes: *They called the wind “Miriah”; the wind called them nothing. She made a list of what he said were “minor obstacles”: greed, avarice, and larceny.*

IN COMPOSITION TITLES: Place quotation marks around titles of articles within journals, chapters within books, sections

within brochures, scenes within videos, or names of a specific night’s TV show within the program’s series title.

See **italics**.

Also see **titles**.

STRAIGHT QUOTATION MARKS: An uncurved quotation mark (double, of course) is used after a digit to represent inches. A single one indicates feet.

Never use these symbols in text.

The straight quotes can be special characters called “prime” and “double prime”: 5’9”.

reduced-fat – (adjective)

reference and **bibliography** – In general, follow Chicago Manual of Style. Some specifics:

- Only the first author goes last name first, for alphabetical purposes. Second and any subsequent authors use first name first.
- When there is more than one work by the same author, in place of the author’s last name, use a *three-em dash* (made by typing three em dashes side by side, with no space between). Follow with a period unless there is a co-author who was not a co-author of the preceding work cited; in that case, no punct. following the dash; use the word *and* as usual.
- References can be collected at the end of each part or chapter, or combined at the end in one large bibliography. Use the former method when there are few references or when most references are specific to a part or chapter. Combine into a bibliography in the backmatter if the same references are to recur throughout various parts or chapters.
- Preferred citation is by author’s name, date, and page number(s), viz: *According to a published study (Jones 1998: 36) ...* The corresponding bibliographic entry

might be: *Jones, R.D. 1998. Body mass in breastfeeding mothers. Lactation 5(4): 33–39. See **en dash** on its use meaning ‘through’ with inclusive page numbers.*

- Alternatively, in a medical or nursing context, it is acceptable to use numbers in parentheses for citations, with a numbered list of references at the end of each chapter or part. This system is more awkward, though, because adding or deleting any one reference means renumbering the rest. For this reason, never use this system when references are gathered in one large bibliography in the backmatter.
- Use footnotes for explanation, not references. Exception: If an entire chapter or part must be credited to a source, do so in an unnumbered/unstarred footnote on the first page of the chapter or part.
- If a document has been done consistently in some other style, say one used by medical professionals, converting it to a different standard style is usually not worth the trouble, as mistakes are almost certain to result.
- In 2004, various authorities on bibliographic citation moved the humanities style closer to the scientific style by adopting sentence case (initial word only is capped) for both article and book titles. In addition, when citing the title of the work being referenced, it is no longer proper to use quotation marks before and after the title. Only journal titles get caps on all important words other than short prepositions, conjunctions, etc.
- Also, you’re going to find all kinds of situations never covered in a manual, for which common sense must rule.

Ex: Lawrence, P.B. 1994. Breastmilk: Best source of nutrition for term and preterm infants. *Pediatric Clinics of North America*. 41(5): 925-41

Ex: Riordan, Jan, and Kathleen Auerbach. 1999. *Breastfeeding and human lactation*. 2nd ed. Totonto:Jones and Bartlett

registered dietitian – Not *Registered Dietitian*.

relating to – in client level material use – about

request – in client level material use – ask for

required – in client level material use – need or needed

resolve – in client level material use – fix

résumé – (noun)

revision date – When noting that a document has been revised, it is OK to use the lower case abbreviation — rev. 12/13.

Rh factor

rock ‘n’ roll

salutations – Do not use a general greeting or closing, such as “*Dear Client*” or “*Sincerely, HHSC*” in a letter. Only use a greeting if a specifically named person is being addressed. Only use a closing if the letter is signed.

SB 30 – Texas Senate Bill 30, signed into law in 1999, allows waivers to the requirement that parents be notified of a minor’s intention to abort her pregnancy. It has since been codified, so instead refer to it as Texas Family Code sections 33.001-011, or 33.001-011 Family Code.

scientific names of organisms, such as bacteria or plants, are italicized. Cap the genus name and lowercase the species name: *Yersinia pestis*, *Chlamydia spp.*, *Salvia gregorii*.

select – in client level material use – pick

self pronouns – Reflexive only.

RIGHT: *I cut myself. He looked at himself in the mirror. We congratulated ourselves. Fred invited Bob and her. The book was acceptable to everyone but Bob and myself.*

WRONG: *I cut me. He looked at him [meaning himself] in the mirror. We congratulated us. Fred invited Bob and herself.*

self- – Always hyphenate as a prefix: *self-confidence, self-image, self-defense, self-taught, self-trained.*

set up – (verb)

setup – (noun and adjective)

several – in client level material use – many

shots – in client level material use – vaccines

EXCEPTION: When writing about flu shots in English materials, the word “shot” is ok to use.

sic – See **Latin terms.**

situation – Often unnecessary, especially when preceded by a noun. A phrase such as “*an uncontrollable epidemic situation*” should read simply “*an uncontrollable epidemic.*”

slash mark (/) – Avoid using slashes in text. Just write your way around them.

See **he, she.**

In poetry not broken into lines of verse, a slash mark with a space on either side indicates an intended line break in the verse.

SNAP – See **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

SNS – A supplemental nursing system; spell out on first reference.

soy milk – Not soymilk.

special characters – When possible, use the Greek μ , not the letter “u,” for “micro” in the metric system. Do not use the German β (double “s”) when Greek β (“beta”) is meant.

split infinitives – Like other split verb sets, split infinitives are normally just fine; rewrite only if awkward.

squash – The plural, squashes, is used when more than one type of squash is referenced.

OK: *The recipe called for two acorn squash.*

OK: *Select acorn, zucchini, and yellow squashes for the best result.*

SSI – Supplemental security income.

state – Keep it in lower case: We live in the state of Texas. “Hey! I got something official from the state of Texas.”

Avoid using “State of Texas” or “State” when referring to state agencies that administer programs such as Medicaid or Texas Health Steps.

RIGHT: *It is important to tell HHSC about your move so you can keep your Medicaid benefits.*

WRONG: *It is important to tell the State about your move so you can keep your Medicaid benefits.*

state office, state agency – Texas WIC’s way of referring to its headquarters.

Do not cap.

Hyphenate as preceding modifier.

statue, statute – Different words. *Monument Avenue, named for its huge statues of Confederate War heroes, is one of Richmond’s few remaining cobblestone streets. The commission ruled based on the attorney’s interpretation of the statute.*

stock no. – When followed by a numeral; otherwise, spell out number.

St. – Not Saint; abbreviate in all instances.

subject/verb agreement – If you do not know if there are one or several children in the family, use “*children*” and be consistent with

that use throughout the document. Do not try to cover all situations by using “child(ren).”

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

superscript – Do not use in text.

Do not superscript ordinal suffixes (*-st, -nd, -rd, and -th*).

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

– SNAP is the name for the Federal Food Stamp Program as of 2008. The name reflects the focus on nutrition and improvement in accessibility. SNAP is the federal name for the program; some State programs may have a different name.

table of contents – As a heading, just write *contents*.

TANF – Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, formerly AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children).

teenager, teenage – One word, no hyphens.

telephone – in client level material use – phone

telephone numbers – Follow AP which are shown in the following example. Note: Use a hyphen in “*toll-free number*,” but not in “*Call toll free*.”

Do not use slashes, periods or number symbols (#) when writing a phone number.

Right: 1-512-406-0700, ext. 262, and toll-free at 1-800-555-1212

Wrong: #1-800-514-6667, 512.406.0700, or #512/406-0700.

Use “1-” in front of all phone numbers that include an area code. An exception to this might be when the number that is listed is a local call for the client and they live in a large metropolitan area like Austin, Houston and Dallas/Fort Worth. Local calls in these cities require the use of an area code, but no leading “1.”

In the case of vanity phone numbers, always present the digit-only version first.

EXAMPLES:

1-877-543-7669 (1-877-KIDS-NOW).

1-877-847-8377 (1-877-THSTEPS)

The term “toll-free” should always be hyphenated when referring to free long distance calls.

terminate – in client level material use – end

TALWD – Texas Association of Local WIC Directors. No periods between letters.

Texas’ – See **apostrophe**.

Texas A&M – No spaces between A&M.

Texas Health Steps – A Medicaid program for youngsters. Until mid-1990s, was named EPSDT (Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, Treatment).

On second reference, *Health Steps* OK.

In materials for the public, do not call it *THSteps*.

Texas Ten Step Hospital – No hyphen.

Texas WIC – Texas branch of national Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children.

Texas WIC News – Not just *WIC News*.

TexCare Partnership – Now known as **CHIP/Children’s Medicaid**

Tex-Mex

that, which – Use *that* for essential clauses and *which* for nonessential clauses. If you can remove the clause and not lose the meaning of the sentence, use *which*. If not, use *that*. *Which* clauses are surrounded by commas; no commas are used with *that* clauses.

THAT: *I saw the movie that won the Academy Award.*

WHICH: *While at the theater, which was not very crowded, we decided to have popcorn.*

that, who – See **who, that**.

the Valley – Refers to the Lower Rio Grande Valley, which runs from Roma in Starr County, through Hidalgo and Willacy Counties, before ending in Brownsville in Cameron County.

third party insurance or third party liability – in client level material use – other insurance

THSteps – in client level material use – Texas Health Steps

EXCEPTION: 1-877-8377 (1-877-THSteps)

till, 'til and until – From *Lapsing Into a Comma*: “*Till* is a perfectly good word meaning ‘until.’ (In fact, *till* existed before until.) ‘Til is a bastard child created through confusion — people heard *till* and assumed it was a contraction of *until*. Use *until* in most cases and *till* when an informal touch is called for; never use ‘til.”

time – Show *a.m.* and *p.m.* in lowercase letters without internal space. When writing a specific “top of the hour” time, do not use “:00” at the end.

EXAMPLES:

9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

In a sentence showing a range of days of the week, use the word “to” as a bridge. (“*The call center is open Monday to Friday.*”)

titles – Italics are used in the titles of publications (journals, books, pamphlets, brochures, fliers, posters, videos, films, TV shows) and to introduce foreign words. Place **quotation marks** around titles of articles within journals, chapters within books, sections

within brochures, scenes within videos, or names of a specific night’s TV show within the program’s series title.

TP or Type Program – use the name of the Medicaid Program.

tract, track – Different words. *The tract of land sold immediately. They set out to track the fugitive.*

trademarks, service marks – Use generic term when possible. *Keep snacks fresh by putting them in zip-top bags. (Not Ziploc bags.) Give children frozen fruit-juice bars. (Not Popsicles.)*

If you must use a product name, capitalize the first letter and do not include a TM or [®] following the word or term. *They threw a Frisbee around. Cheerios is one of the cereals allowed on the WIC program.*

ultimate – in client level material use – last / final

understand – in client level material use – know

United States – Noun only.

USA – Use only in direct quotes.

U.S. – Adjective only.

USDA – The federal agency that funds the nationwide WIC program.

No periods. It’s not *U.S.D.A.*

On first reference, it’s the U.S. Department of Agriculture; never call it the *United States Department of Agriculture*.

utilize – in client level material use – use

vaccinations – in client level material use – vaccines

vegan

veggie

vendor – Not vender.

verification – in client level material use – proof

vitamin – Do not capitalize: Oranges contain more vitamin C than strawberries do. Tomatoes are high in vitamins A and C.

vitamin-enriched

viz. – See **Latin terms**.

we are writing to tell you... – Should usually be avoided.

website, Web page, webcam, webcast, webmaster – For our purposes, website is spelled as one word, not capitalized. Be aware that many style guides (including AP) prefer the two word capitalized version.

A website refers to a set of interconnected Web pages. A Web page refers to a specific page within a website. Websites usually include a home page (two words) and are prepared and maintained as a collection of information by a person, group, or organization. Webcam, webcast, and webmaster are written as one word and lowercase unless at the beginning of a sentence.

In printed materials, e-mail and Web addresses (URLs) should not be italicized, bold, underlined, or set off with parentheses or angle brackets at the beginning and the end of the address.

WRONG: <http://www.msnbc.com>

RIGHT: godzilla@hotmail.net

webinar – A web conference or a live meeting where each participant sits at his or her own computer and is connected to other participants via the internet.

webisode – A webisode is a short episode which airs initially as an Internet download or stream as opposed to first airing on broadcast or cable television. The format can

be used as a preview, a promotion, as part of a collection of shorts, or a commercial.

who, that – *That* refers to objects and critters; *who* refers to humans: *She's the nutritionist who said it's dangerous to eat vegetables that are bright blue or animals that devour their own young.*

who, whom – *Who* refers to subjects, *whom* to objects: *Who hired whom? Hu, who is on first, threw the ball to What, on second, to whom the joke was a mystery.*

If confused, just think, *he, him; they, them; or I, me*. If it's him, it's whom. If it's them, it's whom.

WHO – World Health Organization.

WIC – Federal food and nutrition-education program: Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children.

WIC-Approved Foods list – Use hyphen. Do not use quotes as used previously.

WIC program – Do not uppercase program

you are required to, you are responsible for – in client level material use – you must

Chart of Acronyms

Terms to ALWAYS spell out

Americans with Disabilities Act	Not ADA
Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program	Not BCCCP
Central nervous system	Not CNS
Central Time	Not CT
Claim type	Not CT
Community-based organization	Not CBO
Disability Determination Services	Not DDS
Family planning	Not FP
Federal Poverty Limits	Not FPL or FPIL
Home and Community Services	Not HCS
Long-Term Care	Not LTC
Medicaid Buy-In	Not MBI
Office of the Inspector General	Not OIG
Plan to Achieve Self-Support	Not PASS
Primary care provider	Not PCP
Prior authorization	Not PA
Proficiency test	Not PT
Remittance advice	Not RA
Remittance notice	Not RN
Texas Health Steps	Not THSteps
Women’s Health Program	Not WHP

Terms that don’t need spelling out- can be used as first reference

- ID
- STAR
- STAR+PLUS
- SNAP food benefits

Program Acronyms and Abbreviations- use on second reference

Child Protective Services	CPS
Children’s Health Insurance Program	CHIP
Community Living Assistance and Support Services	CLASS
Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities	MEPD
Primary Care Case Management	PCCM
Qualifying Individuals-1	QI-1
Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries	QMB
Social Security number	SSN
Specified Low Income Medicare Beneficiaries	SLMB
State Kids’ Insurance Program	SKIP
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	TANF
Women, Infants, and Children	WIC

Agencies

Child Protective Services	CPS
Children’s Health Insurance Program	CHIP
Community Living Assistance and Support Services	CLASS
Medicaid for the Elderly and People with Disabilities	MEPD
Primary Care Case Management	PCCM
Qualified Medicare Beneficiaries	QMB
Qualifying Individuals-1	QI-1
Social Security number	SSN
Specified Low Income Medicare Beneficiaries	SLMB
State Kids’ Insurance Program	SKIP
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	TANF
Women, Infants, and Children	WIC

Other

American Medical Association	AMA
Body Mass Index	BMI
Cardiopulmonary resuscitation	CPR
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention	CDC
Children’s Health Insurance Program- via Medicaid	CHIP
Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act	COBRA
Durable medical equipment	DME
Early Childhood Intervention	ECI
Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment	EPSDT
Electronic benefits transfer	EBT
Federal Insurance Contributions Act	FICA
Frequently Asked Questions	FAQs
Full-time employee	FTE
Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act	HIPAA
Health Maintenance Organization	HMO
Individual Retirement Account	IRA
Obstetrician/Gynecologist	OB/GYN
Personal Identification Number	PIN
Pregnancy, Education, and Parenting program	PEP
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children	WIC
Supplemental nursing system	SNS
Supplemental Security Income	SSI
Texas Association of Local WIC directors- no periods	TALWD
Texas Medicaid & Healthcare Partnership	TMHP
United States Department of Agriculture	USDA
World Health Organization	WHO

Chart of Pedigrees

Always put highest degree first, followed by accreditations

A.A.M.A.	Member of the American Academy of Medical Acupuncturists	L.C.S.W.	Licensed clinical social worker
A.M.T.A.	American Massage Therapy Association	L.D.	Licensed dietitian
A.P.	Acupuncture Physician	LL.B.	Bachelor of laws-a lawyer
B.A.	Bachelor of arts- four year degree	L.M.F.T.	Licensed marriage and family therapist
B.J.	Bachelor of Journalism- four year degree	L.M.H.C.	Licensed mental-health counselor
B.M.	Bachelor of Medicine	L.M.T.	Licensed massage therapist
B.S.	Bachelor of Science	LP	Licensed psychologist
B.S.N.	Bachelor of science in nursing- the equivalent of being board-certified	L.P.N.	Licensed practical nurse-an equivalent to an L.V.N.- not a Texas accreditation
B.S.W.	Bachelor of science in social work	L.V.N.	Licensed vocational nurse-equivalent to L.P.N. with one year of nursing education
CA	Certifying authority	M.A.	Master of arts
C.A.	Certified acupuncturist	M.Ac.	Master of acupuncture
C.C.N.	Certified clinical nutritionist	M.A.L.S.	Master of arts in library science
CEO	Chief Executive Officer- no periods	M.B.A.	Master of business administration
C.H.E.S.	Certified health education specialist	M.D.	Medical doctor
C.L.C.	Certified lactation consultant	M.D.(H).	Licensed homeopathic physician
C.L.E.	Certified lactation educator	M.Ed.	Master of education
C.M.T.	Certified massage therapist	M.P.A.	Master of public affairs
C.N.	Certified nutritionist	M.P.H.	Master of public health
C.N.M.	Certified nurse midwife	M.S.	Master of science
COHN	Certified occupational health nurse	M.S.H.P.	Master of science in health professions
CPA	Certified professional authority- now obsolete- use CA	M.S.N.	Master of science in nursing
C.S.W.	Certified social worker	M.S.P.H.	Master of science in public health
D.C.	Doctor of chiropractic	M.S.W.	Master of social work
D.D.S.	Doctor of dental surgery	N.D.	Doctor of naturopathic medicine
D.M.D.	Doctor of dental surgery	N.P.	Nurse practitioner
D.O.	Doctor of osteopathy- a bone doctor	O.M.D.	Asian medical doctor
D.O.M.	Doctor of Oriental medicine	O.T.	Occupational therapist
D.P.M.	Doctor of podiatric medicine- a foot doctor	P.A.	Physician's assistant
Dr.P.H.	Doctor of public health- not a medical doctor	Pharm.D.	Doctor of pharmacy
D.Sc.	Doctor of science- not a medical doctor	Ph.D.	Doctor of philosophy
D.V.M.	Doctor of veterinary medicine	P.H.N.	Public-health nurse
Ed.D.	Doctor of education	P.T.	Physical therapist
FACCE	Fellow, American College of Childbirth Educators	R.D.	Registered dietitian
I.B.C.L.C.	International Board of Certified Lactation Consultants	R.D.H.	Registered dental hygienist
J.D.	Doctor of jurisprudence- a lawyer	R.N.	Registered nurse- a four year degree
L.Ac.	Licensed acupuncturist	R.N., B.S.	Registered nurse with an additional four-year degree
		R.Ph.	Registered pharmacist-licensed by state board and authorized to practice
		R.T.	Registered therapist