



Corporate Style Guide

Revised March 2022

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Introduction

The Corporate Style Guide contains Lexipol's house rules for language usage, spelling, punctuation, citations, and other style issues.

In Lexipol's earliest days, Lexipol leaders recognized that consistency and clarity are hallmarks of professionalism and quality. They decided Lexipol would follow Associated Press (AP) style with some documented exceptions, apropos of common language usage in the public safety industry. The Lexipol Style Guide documents and explains the exceptions. It also reproduces the AP Stylebook's guidance for topics of particular relevance and importance to Lexipol content.

Although this guide is divided into sections with a Table of Contents, the "Search" function is often the quickest way to locate the information you're looking for. In cases where this guide does not answer a question, the *Associated Press Stylebook* is the next source to check. If the information isn't there, consult *Merriam-Webster's Unabridged Dictionary*. These are our primary reference sources. If you still don't find an answer, use your best judgment and what works best for your content, striving first and foremost for readability. Any written material should be easily and clearly understood by its intended audience.

Because language usage constantly evolves and new technology brings new concepts, terminology, and tools to the public safety industry, Lexipol's Editorial Services team updates this document regularly. They provide a summary of the changes after this introduction.

Lexipol employees: You can access the latest edition on the **Team Lexipol** site (click on the Documents tab).

Agency users: You can access the latest version of this guide in our Knowledge Management System (KMS) by going to the "Help" tab, where the Style Guide is listed in the left-hand menu, under Guides. You may notice that as Lexipol releases updated policy content to you, it follows the standards documented here. Some minor style changes will not be immediately retrofitted to the rest of your policy manual.

For instance, the term "internet" no longer requires capitalization, a change initiated by AP and most publishers in 2016. An update to the policy about social media use will follow the current lowercased style rule, but other references to "internet" elsewhere in the policy manual may remain capitalized.

This gradual approach to the implementation of minor style changes reflects Lexipol's intentional balancing of our commitment to quality with awareness of the impact changes have to policies already in use.

If you have suggestions about content in the Style Guide, please feel free to contact us:

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What's New in This Edition

The *Lexipol Style Guide* has been the official record of Lexipol's commitment to quality and professionalism in language usage for more than a decade. In honor of this milestone, the 2022 edition is newly organized, with all entries other than a few major topics, alphabetized in the **Alphabetical Style Guide Entries** section for easiest reference.

We've refreshed the formatting of the document also to make it easier to read on a screen. We've also inserted additional sub-headings and bulleted lists to enable easier scanning of longer entries.



Key points of information—the terminology, style, and formatting rules that are most often requested or searched by users—are now highlighted with this icon.

The **Major Topics** section documents the general standards for style and formatting of several of Lexipol's products including **policy manuals** and **daily training bulletins**. Specific sections for **citations**, **text entities**, and **lists** document the standards for these elements within Lexipol's content. We've also added a section that explains how Lexipol measures "**readability**" to provide more visibility regarding Lexipol's commitment to quality and continuous improvement.

This edition acknowledges the increasing societal focus on inclusion and fairness with an expanded **Gender and Inclusive Language** entry. This entry offers examples of inclusive terminology. It also documents several writing strategies for revising content with gendered pronouns so that Lexipol content will increasingly be expressed with language that includes everyone. Expanded entries on **Race** and **Racism** also support this focus.

We refreshed and expanded the vertical-specific terminology sections to reflect growth in the organization – **Local Government**, **Juvenile Detention**, and **Cordico** – as well as changes in tools, technology, and issues (new entries for **electric vehicles**, **compassion fatigue**, **Child Sexual Abuse Material**, **pandemic**, **Zoom**, and others).

Language is multifaceted and immense in scope with depths of nuance. It is always changing with us and around us as we use it. This reality means that marshaling its use with consistency and professionalism requires collaboration, patience, and a healthy dose of common sense. If you are looking for guidance on a topic or a term that this document does not address, please feel free to contact me. By doing so, you can participate in the community of language users who respect the power of language and who care about quality.

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Major Topics

CITATIONS

Legal Citations for Policy Manuals

The legal citations in Lexipol policy manuals serve two primary purposes. They emphasize that the policy is based at least in part on the cited law or regulation, and they provide users with directions for looking up state and federal legislation.

Citations reference three types of sources:

- Statutes – Laws enacted by the U.S. Congress (federal) or state legislature (state).
- Regulations – Rules developed by executive bodies to carry out laws. Also called rules or administrative laws, they're authorized by statutes. So, law leads to the creation of regulations.
- Ordinances – Laws/statutes enacted at the county/municipal government level.

Lexipol customers must comply with statutes, ordinances, and regulations equally. The source (federal vs. state), however, can affect the Edit Level of the section.



Lexipol's standards for citation selection, placement, and formats are listed in Lexipol's *Citation Guide*. Note that citation formats vary by state. The *Citation Guide* also includes in-depth information about the Edit Levels: Federal, State, Best Practice, and Discretionary.

Source Citations for the Cordico Wellness App

Guides published in the Wellness Toolkit should include citations for content that is based on published research and other authoritative sources. Both paraphrased and quoted material require citations.

Lexipol does not use in-line citations in the Wellness Toolkit. Instead, we use a modified version of the title-author-date citation system defined by the American Psychological Association (APA). Both paraphrases and quotations require citations. Annotate sources with in-line, sequential, superscripted numbers that correspond to a citation listed at the end of each section of a Cordico guide or an item in the References or Sources

sections. The citation should include the source's title, author, publication name, and publication date.

Linked URLs for online sources are optional. But if a link is necessary, the citation should provide readers with, at minimum, the author's name, and date the information was accessed. Source information for a reproduced table or other graphic element should appear in the body of the section.

For examples of the citation format, see the *Cordico Wellness App* section in the *Vertical-Specific Terminology* chapter.

Common Grammar Misconceptions

When students are learning writing and grammar, their teachers may dictate strict rules that they must apply. These rules are useful in the same way that training wheels assist a child learning to ride a bike. As students gain knowledge and writing skill, some of these "training wheel rules" are no longer necessary.

This section covers a few of those rules, which we're calling misconceptions. That's because there's a misconception among less experienced writers that they're hard and fast rules. But experienced writers, having absorbed the importance and proper application of these rules, come to understand they may be broken at times.

Never start a sentence with however or because.

This is the traditional view, primarily because these words serve better when they're not in first position. When *however* comes first, it means *in whatever way* or *to whatever extent*. For example, *However you advise him, he will do as he thinks best*. Modern usage, however, has accepted the use of this word in first position, and generally uses it as a synonym for *nevertheless*.

As for the word *because*, people are often taught not to use it to start a sentence because it can lead to fragments. But it isn't wrong to use it to start a sentence, as long as it's attached to a complete thought: *Because we're restructuring, I have to redo the budget*.

Never end a sentence with a preposition.

An editor is said to have clumsily rearranged one of Winston Churchill's sentences to avoid having it end with a preposition. The story goes that Churchill, who was quite proud of his style, scribbled a note in reply along the lines of, "This is the sort of arrant pedantry up with which I will not put."

Standard English usage does allow you to end a sentence with a preposition but having been taught not to do this in grammar school, some readers will always think you're wrong if you do it. To avoid their ire, there's almost always a way you can write around the issue.

However, if you decide that ending with a preposition is the best, clearest way to state something, you can let the preposition have the last word.

Run-on sentences are really long.

In fact, run-on sentences can be short: *Policy has been updated and content has been relocated.*

Run-on sentences are created when two or more independent clauses are joined without the needed punctuation or conjunction. The example above could be correctly rewritten as *Policy has been updated, and content has been relocated.* Or, *Policy has been updated; content has been relocated.*

Use “a” before words that start with consonants and “an” before words that start with vowels.

This one will steer you right most of the time but it's also easy to prove it wrong: You wouldn't say “a hour” or “an unicorn.”

The correct rule is to go by the *sound* the word creates: Words that start with vowel sounds get “an,” while words that start with consonant sounds get “a.” Examples: *an MBA, a one-legged man, a unique policy, an honest mistake, a union of equals.*

Don't split infinitives.

Infinitives are verb forms that can behave as nouns or modifiers in a sentence and usually appear with the word “to” in front of them. (When you look up any verb in the dictionary, the definition is always an infinitive: *to go, to pull, to communicate.*)

In a split infinitive, another word separates the “to” from the infinitive: *to finally leave.* Many students were taught never to split infinitives, but there are many instances where doing so is acceptable, and sometimes you might want the extra emphasis that splitting the infinitive gives to the middle word: *To boldly go where no man has gone before.*

Don't start sentences with *and, but, or.*

And, but, and or are coordinating conjunctions that usually are used to combine independent thoughts within a sentence. But there are times when starting a new sentence with the conjunction is more forceful and highlights that second thought:

*Who would have thought it? And is it really true?
It's a great idea. But I don't think they'll buy into it.*

DAILY TRAINING BULLETINS

Daily Training Bulletins (DTBs) are created to follow a specific format, with sections for the Scenario, Manual (in KMS), Analysis, Conclusion, and Question.

The tone of DTBs is less formal and more conversational than the tone of a policy manual, although adhering to correct grammar and punctuation is still essential.

Note that Lexipol writes DTBs as coming from the end-user's agency, not directed at them (*our department* rather than *your department*).



The “us” of the DTB, and the main character especially, should always be presented as acting within policy and above reproach. The main character may see or hear others making errors or acting outside of policy limits and learn what not to do from that. If examined in a courtroom or elsewhere beyond the agency environment, the scenario of a DTB should never portray the agency negatively or reflect negatively on Lexipol as a training provider for the industry.

Characters and scenario dialogue

- When it's obvious who is speaking, it's OK to leave out attribution (dialog tag) here and there. This can help increase the pace of the action for the reader.
- Use fewer named characters when possible.
 - In short-form written content, having even three named characters can be confusing because readers will have trouble remembering who everyone is and what they're doing.
 - Names are especially confusing when a character is named in the scenario but takes no action in it. For these “bit parts,” mention the characters without giving them names – “another officer” or “the transporting deputy.”
- Use internal dialogue (words or phrases that represent a character's unspoken thoughts) sparingly if at all.
 - Show, don't tell: DTB scenarios should depict action wherever possible. DTBs that rely primarily on internal dialogue often lack action.
 - Since internal dialogue often shows the contrast between acceptable speech and less acceptable (wrong) thought, it could be used to negatively portray the profession.

- For the main character, a line of internal dialogue may be used to express the character’s decision-making process when making that decision is critical to the training point.
- For secondary characters, internal dialogue can be distracting for readers. It disrupts the DTB’s point of view, shifts focus away from the main character, and rarely helps achieve a training objective.
- If a character’s internal response is important, it can be written as dialogue muttered or spoken under the person’s breath or paraphrased as in the third example here.

Here are examples:



- Tactic to avoid: “There’s no way I’ll finish this report by end of shift,” Officer/Firefighter Andrea Clark thinks to herself.
 - Preferred tactic: “There’s no way I’ll finish this report by end of shift,” Officer/Firefighter Andrea Clark mutters.
 - Preferred tactic: Officer/Firefighter Andrea Clarks doubts she’ll be able to finish the report by the end of her shift.
- Style: Lexipol prefers quotation marks around internal dialogue over italics to indicate internal dialogue because italics may not display well on some user’s screens. Also, paraphrasing the “thought” can negate the whole quotation mark/italics issue. For example:

OK sometimes: *“There’s just one thin piece of cloth between my leg and that blade,” he thinks, jumping for cover.*

Better: *He jumps for cover, worried that only a thin piece of cloth separates his leg from the blade.*

Character names

DTBs feature the names of fictional officers/deputies/agents, firefighters, victims, witnesses, suspects, arrestees, probationers, inmates, and detained youths.

- Do not use joke names (e.g., Ben Lyon, Dinah Mite, Justin Case)
- Do not use names that suggest or perpetrate stereotypes.
- Introduce **officers/deputies/agents and firefighters** with their full name and title on first reference, and their title and last name on subsequent references:

You and [Officer/Deputy] Kyle Pearson are on patrol together. [Officer/Deputy] Pearson suggests you stop at the corner store to check in on the clerk.

At the scene of a high-rise fire, [Battalion_Chief] Will Roberts orders you to identify the fire floor and provide a size-up of the conditions. After reaching the fire floor, you radio back to [Battalion_Chief] Roberts.

- Introduce **adult victims, witnesses, and suspects** with their full name on first use and courtesy title and last name on subsequent uses: *You go to the home of Sam Waters to arrest him on an outstanding warrant. Mr. Waters answers the door and comes out on the front porch.* Use Ms. (not Mrs.) for women unless they have another title. For victims, witnesses, and suspects who are minors, and for victims of sexual assault regardless of age, use the first name and last initial on all uses (except when addressing a person in dialogue): *You take custody of Frank M. on a truancy charge. Frank, you are in my custody now.*
- Introduce **adult inmates** with the title “Inmate” with their full name on first reference and the title and last name on subsequent references: *During rounds, Inmate Byron Cleghorn demands to use the telephone in the dayroom. Inmate Cleghorn is serving a lengthy sentence in state prison and is temporarily in our custody.*
 - In Custody DTBs only, before booking, introduce a person with the title “Arrestee” with the person’s full name on first reference and the title and last name on subsequent references: *The booking officer searched Arrestee Janelle Smith for contraband. As part of the pre-booking screening, the deputy then asked Arrestee Smith whether she had any special needs related to religious practices.* Following booking, introduce a person with *Inmate*.
 - In all other DTBs, introduce adults who are not yet booked using *Ms./Mr.*
- For **juveniles** in all DTBs *except* Juvenile Detention DTBs, Lexipol uses the first name and last initial in all references.

Review and revision tips

- Writers: If feasible, take some time between writing a DTB and looking at it a second time. When you review it with fresh eyes, you’re more likely to catch small mistakes.
- Writers and Reviewers: When reviewing, read the DTB text aloud. You will hear problems and awkward passages that you may miss when reading silently.

Scenario question

The Scenario always includes an issue question posed to the reader.
Correct formatting for the question is:

ISSUE: Who does the [officer_deputy] need to contact in this situation?

Test question

The issue question and test question and answer, when seen together, should clearly reinforce the lesson of the DTB.

- Type of question:



- Preferred: Multiple choice
 - Secondary: True or False *Caution:* Developers should ensure that the question is specific enough to test whether the user has achieved the intended training objective. A True-or-False question that a user can answer without any reference to the rest of the DTB or to the policy is probably too simple and defeats the purpose of the DTB as a training tool.
 - Avoid: Fill in the blank. Manual language can vary by state, so **avoid quoting verbatim from the manual in a fill-in-the-blank format**, except in rare circumstances and with supervisor approval. In cases where the answer is not dependent on exact wording from the policy, you can use a fill-in-the-blank format, but it should not depend on verbatim policy language and should not be characterized as having been taken “from the policy language.”
- Formatting for the Question section at the end of the DTB.

Example of format for Question and Answers

QUESTION:

[Officers_Agents] on a scheduled day off cannot be recalled to service when the Emergency Plan has been activated.

ANSWERS:

(a) True

(b) False

CORRECT ANSWER:

(b) False

Text Entities in DTBs

In Juvenile Detention Manual DTBs only: Introduce juveniles housed in the facility with the title TE for “[Youth]” and their first name and last initial on first reference: *Wearing a big smile, [Youth] Jonathan G. gives you a thumbs-up and heads toward where you and [OfficerDeputy] Frank Walters are standing.*

Subsequent references should use the title TE for “[Youth]” and the first name, EXCEPT in dialogue addressing the detained juvenile, then use the first name only, no title. (In dialogue where officers/deputies are talking *about* a detained juvenile, use the title TE for “[Youth]” with the first name):

*“[Youth] Jonathan is being released tomorrow,” you tell [OfficerDeputy] Walters.
“What’s this I hear, Jonathan?” [OfficerDeputy] Walters says as [Youth] Jonathan approaches.*

For generic references, the lowercase TE [youth] is appropriate:
You are supervising [youths] in the dayroom.

TEs for Probation DTBs only



For adult probationers, use the TE [Probationer/Offender] as a title with the person’s full name on first use: *You are on the way to [Probationer] Thomas Brainard's house for a compliance check.*

Use the title and last name on subsequent uses, EXCEPT in dialogue addressing the adult probationer, then use the courtesy title (*Mr., Ms., Dr.*) with the last name. In dialogue where agents/officers are talking *about* a probationer, use the TE [Probationer/Offender] with the last name.:

You have information from a reliable source that [Probationer] Brainard is selling cocaine.

“Ma’am, it won’t take long, but search is one of Mr. Kirby's conditions,” [Officer/Agent] Anderson says.

“Did she tell you she saw [Probationer/Offender] Kuykendall at the gun show Saturday?” [Officer_Agent] Tipton says.

For juvenile probationers, use the title TE [Probationer] with the person’s first name and last initial on first reference: *[Probationer/Offender] John M. has been involved in an altercation at school.* On subsequent references and in dialogue addressing the juvenile probationer, use the first name only. Try to avoid a first reference to the person in dialogue. In subsequent references in dialogue about the person, use only the person’s first name.

For generic references, use the TE [probationer/offender] unless the term will be preceded by *a* or *an*, in which case use the TE [a probationer/an offender]. (Except in CA Probation, where a plain text “a” will be used before the [probationer] TE.)

Titles of Policies Within DTBs

- Use initial caps.
Examples: *Use of Department-Owned and Personal Property*
Criminal Activity Reporting
- For titles that include dashes, the standard format is: Topic (usually the policy title), space, dash, space, specific aspect of the topic.
Example: *Modified-Duty Assignments – Pregnancy*

Titles for people

- Courtesy titles: Use Ms. (not Mrs.) for women unless they have another title.
- Generally speaking, job titles are not courtesy titles. In other words, avoid content like “Receptionist Jones” or “Employee Smith.”
- Capitalize rank only when it precedes a name.

Wordiness and readability

- The Analysis section of DTBs is especially prone to long, complex sentences that can stop readers in their tracks. (*See the Run-on Sentences entry.*)
- In general, more short sentences and fewer long sentences improve readability. (*See the Readability entry.*) Varying the sentence length makes the writing more interesting and livelier. A long sentence is fine when it’s easy to understand.
- Avoid report-like language. For example, use “see” instead of “observe,” “says” instead of “states,” and “gets out of” or “leaves” instead of “exits.” Plain language is more readable.
- Favor the active voice over the passive voice. Active voice puts the actor of the sentence front and center. The action of the sentence then flows logically from start to finish. The result is a sentence that’s easier to understand and reads less like a report.



Bad: *The suspect was escorted by Officer Smith into the temporary holding area.*

Good: *Officer Smith led the suspect into the temporary holding area.*

Bad: *The gun was pointed in the officer’s direction by the fleeing suspect.*

Good: *The fleeing suspect pointed a gun in the officer’s direction.*

- Respect the reader’s time and focus by using the minimum number of words needed to communicate effectively.

LIST FORMATTING

All Content: List Punctuation

Leave a list without periods if the introductory sentence is a complete sentence and the items that follow are a simple list.

Example:

These shall be notified as soon as practicable:

- *[Chief of Police/Sheriff]*
- *[Investigation] [Division Commander]*
- *[OIS protocol] rollout team*
- *Civil liability response team*

Use a period if the listed items complete the introductory sentence (or if each of the items can be read as a complete sentence).

Example:

The member shall notify, as soon as practicable:

- *The [Chief of Police/Sheriff].*
- *The [Investigation] [Division Commander].*
- *The [OIS protocol] rollout team.*
- *The civil liability response team.*

Example:

A member who believes any written or verbal order to be unlawful or in conflict with another order shall:

- (a) Immediately inform the supervisor issuing the order, the member's immediate supervisor, or the [Watch Commander].*
- (b) Provide details explaining the grounds for believing there is a conflict or error.*
- (c) Request clarification, guidance, and direction regarding following the order.*
- (d) Request the order in writing, absent exigent circumstances, should the conflict or perceived error be unresolved.*

Lists In Policy and Procedure Manuals

- **Letters vs. Numbers**

Lists, whether ordered (alpha/numeric) or bulleted, should be subsets of the preceding paragraph or section.

Bulleted lists should be used sparingly and where individual elements within the list will not need to be referenced separately: *The officer violated 340.2.1, third bullet just doesn't work well.* Bullets are best used for lists of terms.

Note: The CA Juvenile Detention Manual does not use bulleted lists. All lists are alphanumeric.

Use letters for everything else, with numbers in any lists or paragraphs that are subsets of a lettered paragraph. Always capitalize the first word in a list.

Example:

000.2.2 ITEMIZED LISTS [BEST PRACTICE]

The following factors:

(a) Stuff

1. And more stuff

(a) And even more stuff

000.2.3 BULLET POINTS [STATE]

And these are bullet points

- *Points*

- *And even more points*



Avoid using more than one lettered list in a section or subsection; having multiple lettered lists makes it difficult for users to easily reference content in the manual by section number and letter.

- **Lists and spacing; PDF versus KMS display**

Single spacing should separate the items in a list. Note: You may see wider spacing in older sections of content that Lexipol has not updated since our change from KMS 3. PDFs generated from KMS will show lists formatted differently from the KMS display (e.g., the PDF will have more spacing between lines, and parentheses around letters and numbers, instead of periods). This occurs automatically and does not reflect an authoring error.

POLICY MANUALS

Lexipol policy manuals follow a specific formatting and outline style, which includes a preface, a table of contents, chapters, an index, and an appendix. We further divide chapters into policies, sections, subsections, and so on. We accompany most policies with a Guide Sheet that provides an agency with additional direction on how to customize the policy. To summarize changes we have made, Lexipol also creates Release Notes to accompany the updates to policies.

Note: In the California Juvenile Detention Manual, formatting styles, text entities (TEs), and overall content organization may differ from the Global Juvenile Detention Manual as well as other Lexipol manuals. For specific questions or concerns when editing in CA JDM, please reach out to the associated Editorial Services liaison or the Corrections Content Team members.

Policy References

When referring to a related policy or another policy section, do not use the policy or section number. Write out the policy title or section title:

The handling officer should establish a rapid response team in the event it becomes necessary to enter a building, structure, or vehicle, such as when the suspect is using deadly force against any hostages (see the Rapid Response and Deployment Policy).

When referring to two policies, follow this example: *(see the Use of Force and Standards of Conduct policies)*. Note that “Policy” isn’t included in each title.

When referring to more than two policies, use the full title of each:

(see the Use of Force Policy, the Standards of Conduct Policy, and the [Officer-Agent]-Involved Shootings and Death Policy).

When a sentence includes both a parenthetical policy reference and parenthetical citation, the citation should be separate and come after the policy reference: *Personnel records shall not be disclosed except as allowed by law (see the Records and Maintenance and Release Policy) (Penal Code § 832.7; Evidence Code § 1043).*

For brief parenthetical references to another policy, our style is generally to lowercase the word “see” and put the parenthetical reference inside the main sentence, as in the example above. A longer/more specific parenthetical reference can also be a stand-alone sentence: *(See the [Officer_Agent]-Involved Shootings and Deaths Policy for guidance in these cases.)*

When referring to policies, sections, or subsections within a policy, use initial caps and do not bold: *These photographs will be purged as described in the Purging the Field Photo File subsection of this policy.*

In Release Notes, Guide Sheets, and other references, policy sections and subsections should appear in all caps and bold type: *The language in **OFFICER RESPONSIBILITIES** is consistent with Kansas law and should not be altered.*

Purpose and Scope/Policy

Two of the most important sections in any policy are **PURPOSE AND SCOPE** and **POLICY**.



PURPOSE AND SCOPE is included in every policy as the first section.

It should identify the reason for the policy: *This policy provides guidelines for the use and maintenance of control devices.* Generally,

PURPOSE AND SCOPE doesn't change much from state to state. It may include a citation, but only if the citation directly applies and the cited statute or regulation specifies that the agency must have a policy on that particular topic: *The purpose of this policy is to provide general guidance for managing unpaid leave for eligible employees for qualified medical and family reasons (29 USC § 2612).*

- The **POLICY** section should clearly outline the agency's approach to a broad issue or legislative mandate: *It is the policy of this [agency/office] to protect the safety of staff, inmates, and visitors by conducting effective and appropriate searches of inmates and areas within the facility in accordance with applicable laws.* Again, the **POLICY** section shouldn't change a lot from state to state. This section should not include a citation.
- Note: Neither of these sections should include direction to employees or procedure about how the policy should be implemented.

Definitions

If a policy includes a **DEFINITIONS** subsection, it should always be under the **PURPOSE AND SCOPE** section. The phrase *Definitions related to this policy include:* should introduce the list of terms. The subsection is for clarification of uncommon words, terms with meanings specific to law, or terms specific to a particular policy. It is not for terms already provided in Chapter 1 under the Policy Manual Policy. (A term only used once in the policy will often have the definition worked into the content where it is needed, rather than in a **DEFINITIONS** subsection.)

Formatting standards for definitions:

- Use **boldface** for the term to be defined.
- Capitalize only the first word, unless the term is a formal title
- Separate the term from its definition with a hyphen.

- Capitalize the first word of the definition.
- Alphabetize multiple definitions.
- Note that a definition that spells out an acronym does not take a period unless it is at the end of a sentence.

Examples:

Computer system - All computers (on-site and portable), electronic devices, hardware, software, and resources owned, leased, rented, or licensed by the [Anytown Police Department] that are provided for official use by its members. This includes all access to, and use of, Internet Service Providers (ISPs) or other service providers provided through [department/office] funding.

DMV - Department of Motor Vehicles

Developer Language in Global Policies

In Global policies, italicize language that offers guidance for writing state-specific content. Do not italicize content within the developer language that suggests policy language options or that names manual content:

should/shall – *Use shall if the state adopts the CFR*

*** *check for accuracy: Use of Force Policy* ***.

READABILITY

Readability tests for grade-level and for “reading ease” help content publishers evaluate the suitability of texts for different readers.

The result of the grade-level test formula is a number that corresponds with a U.S. grade level or years of education required to understand the text. The grade-level formula, shown below, gives more weight to sentence length than to word length.

$$0.39 \left(\frac{\text{total words}}{\text{total sentences}} \right) + 11.8 \left(\frac{\text{total syllables}}{\text{total words}} \right) - 15.59$$

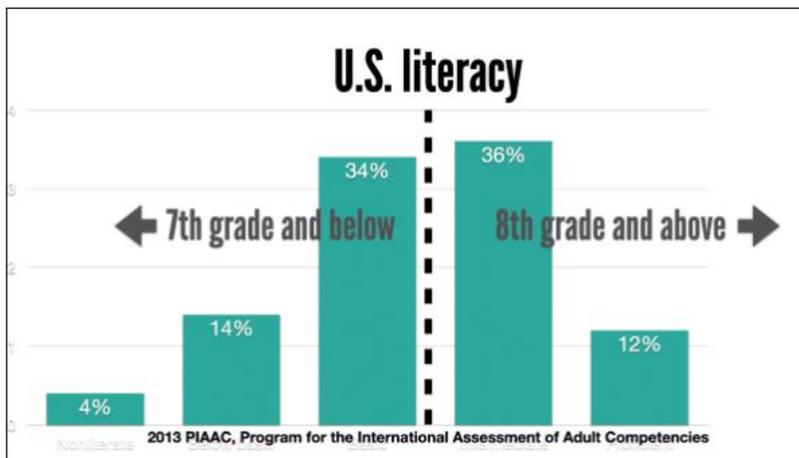
For the Flesch Reading Ease test, higher scores indicate text that is easier to read. Polysyllabic words affect the “reading ease” score significantly. To help counter the weight of many multi-syllable words, which can be dictated by topic, other elements of text can be simplified.

| Score | School level (US) | Notes |
|--------------|--------------------|---|
| 100.00–90.00 | 5th grade | Very easy to read. Easily understood by an average 11-year-old student. |
| 90.0–80.0 | 6th grade | Easy to read. Conversational English for consumers. |
| 80.0–70.0 | 7th grade | Fairly easy to read. |
| 70.0–60.0 | 8th & 9th grade | Plain English. Easily understood by 13- to 15-year-old students. |
| 60.0–50.0 | 10th to 12th grade | Fairly difficult to read. |
| 50.0–30.0 | College | Difficult to read. |
| 30.0–10.0 | College graduate | Very difficult to read. Best understood by university graduates. |
| 10.0–0.0 | Professional | Extremely difficult to read. Best understood by university graduates. |

Key Readability Facts

- Readers are most comfortable understanding text with a grade level score five years lower than their highest grade level completed.
- Research conducted by The Literacy Project has consistently shown that the average American adult reads at the 7th-8th grade level. For this reason, **Lexipol content should score no higher than the high school grade level.**
- Reading ease scores of 60 or higher are ideal.
- Editorial Services will suggest revisions to improve readability and can provide readability scores if requested.

Five Levels of Literacy in the U.S. (2013)



TEXT ENTITIES

TEs are placeholders. KMS automatically populates each manual with the correct wording. You should not make new TEs, and there is no need to change the wording inside the brackets.

Our manuals and Daily Training Bulletins use text entities (TEs) for words or phrases that the individual agency chooses during the customization process. While you are authoring policy or DTB language in our Knowledge Management System (KMS), these terms are shown in red brackets. For example: *The [Chief/Sheriff/Authority] will designate a member of this [departmentoffice] to act as the homeless liaison [officer deputy].*

KMS automatically fills in the blank based on the agency's answers to the General Information Questionnaire (GIQ). For example, the sentence above, appearing in a police department's manual, would read: *The Chief of Police will designate a member of this department to act as the homeless liaison officer.*

Capitalized and lowercase TEs

Follow the general guidelines in the examples below when deciding whether to use the capitalized form or the lowercase form of a TE.

[DepartmentOffice] and [departmentoffice]

Use the capitalized TE when:

- The TE begins a sentence: *[DepartmentOffice] personnel records are considered confidential except ...*
- The TE is a substitute for the name of an entity: *If members of the [DepartmentOffice] respond to an incident requiring permit-required confined space entry, a written evaluation shall be performed.*

Use the lowercase TE when:

- The TE is used as a modifier: *The analysis should focus on whether [departmentoffice] policies and procedures are in alignment with statutes, regulations, and court orders.*
- The TE comes after the word *this*: *The continued employment or appointment of every member of this [departmentoffice] shall be based on conduct that reasonably conforms to the guidelines set forth herein.*

- The TE is possessive: *Inmates may be placed into disciplinary segregation only after an impartial hearing to determine the facts of the rule violation, in accordance with the [departmentoffice]'s Inmate Discipline Policy.*

[Officer_Deputy] and *[officer_deputy]*:

Use the capitalized TE when:

- The TE begins a sentence: *[Officers/Deputies] who fail to ...*
- The TE is part of a reference to a specific person by name: *As he is moving through the crowd of concertgoers, [Officer/Deputy] John Simmons feels someone grab his arm, and he turns to face a woman who is obviously distraught.*
- The TE is substituting for a specific person's name: *"Please, [Officer/Deputy], help me. I can't find my son," the woman says.*

Otherwise, use the lowercase TE: *If the [officer/deputy] does not achieve a passing score on the second attempt, ...*

TE use after the indefinite article "a" or "an."

The TE *[an_officer-deputy]* contains the article (*a, an*) and will populate as *an officer* or *a deputy*.

For all other TEs that include term options beginning with a vowel, write around the need for *a* or *an* (e.g., by making the verb and TE plural). Be sure that any such changes preserve the intended meaning.

Do not use *a* or *an* before a TE that includes a term option beginning with a vowel. This is to avoid errors such as "a office" or "an department" when the TE is populated.

Plural TEs

Some terms have both a singular and a plural TE:

[Officers/deputies] should . . .

If the [officer_deputy] . . .

When there is not a plural TE, in most cases the term can be made plural by adding an "s" after the closing bracket of the TE. Whether this works for a particular TE should be discussed based on the term options the TE includes.

Alphabetical Style Guide Entries

Lexipol style uses words and phrases that are common to the law enforcement, corrections, fire service, and legal professions. Occasionally, such usage contradicts the guidelines found in reference manuals. For example, Lexipol uses *bloodborne*, whereas most reference sources specify *blood borne* or *blood-borne*. We differ because public safety readers more readily recognize *bloodborne*.

What follows is a list of words common to Lexipol in general, followed by industry-specific lists for law enforcement, fire, and corrections personnel. Some entries address whether the word is written as one word or two, others provide a definition, and still others are listed to show Lexipol style. If all else fails, write it in plain English.

This section also includes entries specifying Lexipol's style for other elements of language, such as numbers, punctuation, and acronyms.

A

A, an

Use *a* before words that begin with consonant sounds and *an* before words that begin with vowel sounds. With acronyms or initialisms, go with the way you would pronounce the abbreviation aloud: *a HUD grant, an HIV test; a LULAC spokesperson, an LA firefighter*.

A lot

Always two words. *A lot of people think "alot" is an actual word, but it isn't.*

Acknowledgement

With the "e"

Acronyms and Initialisms

Acronym, in its strictest usage, refers to an abbreviation formed from the first letters or the major parts of a compound term and pronounced as a single word: *CENTCOM (United States Central Command), HAZMAT (hazardous material), NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization), NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)*.

Initialisms, which are commonly confused with acronyms, are abbreviations formed from the first letter of each word in a compound term and pronounced as a series of letters:

CDC (Centers for Disease Control), FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation), OMB (Office of Management and Budget).



Acronyms and initialisms are common in public safety, as in many other fields, but it's best to use them sparingly. They can slow readers down as they try to mentally translate the acronym or initialism into the complete name. However, Lexipol does use acronyms and initialisms where they help simplify policy language or where they reflect common use within the field that the manual serves.

- Write the full name, phrase, or title on first reference in each policy or DTB as if the name/title had never been introduced before. Follow it with the acronym or initialism in parentheses: *Arizona Department of Public Safety (DPS)*. On all subsequent references, use the acronym or initialism only. Note: If the term is used only once in the policy or DTB, you don't need to add the acronym or initialism.
- Most acronyms and initialisms should be spelled out when starting a sentence, although it's acceptable to use widely known initialisms and acronyms, like FBI and NATO, to start a sentence.
- Do not turn commonly used phrases into acronyms or initialisms, as in *law enforcement community*, which the federal government has turned into LEC.
- Note that some phrases commonly referred to by capitalized initials are not proper nouns, and therefore the full phrase itself is not capitalized: *against medical advice (AMA)*; *personal protective equipment (PPE)*.
- Choose whether to use *a/an/the* before an acronym or initialism by considering how you would say the abbreviation aloud. For example, we don't usually refer to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as "the DHS," or to FEMA as "the FEMA" in conversation. That rule applies in writing: *If it is determined that the person is in the United States unlawfully, the [officer/deputy] will notify DHS. It is the policy of the [Anytown Fire Department] to consult with FEMA in the event of an urban disaster.* Sometimes, whether the abbreviation is pronounced as an acronym or as an initialism will determine use of *a* or *an* with it: *a HUD grant, an HIV test; a LULAC spokesperson, an LA firefighter.*
- If the acronym is a possessive, use an apostrophe: *The FTO's report on the trainee is due tomorrow.* When the plural form is necessary, do not use an apostrophe: *The training program for FTOs starts next week.*
- When using acronyms in policy titles/policy sections:
 - Policy titles – It's OK to include acronyms in policy titles (USAR, NFIRS) but not necessary. Examples: *Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs) Policy* and *Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Policy*.

Section/Subsection titles – Don't include the acronym in section or subsection titles. Spell out the term in the title and on the first use within

the section (unless it's been used earlier in the policy, in which case just use the acronym) and follow it with the acronym. Example:

204.1 *INCIDENT COMMANDER RESPONSIBILITIES*
The Incident Commander (IC) shall...

Acts

Capitalize formal titles of specific acts – *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)* – and write out completely on first reference with the acronym following in parentheses. In most cases, use the acronym in subsequent references. No underline or italics.

Adviser and advisory

Standard spelling is *adviser*; *advisor* is a variant. We use *adviser*. However, *advisory*, as in *advisory council*, is correct.

Almost

Like *only*, *almost* should be placed immediately before the word it modifies. *There is an almost childlike simplicity in her vision of the future.*

Already/all ready

Already has to do with time: *Are you finished already?* *All ready* is about preparation: *We are all ready to go.*

All right

Always two words: *It is never all right to use "alright."*

Altogether/all together

Altogether means completely: *The charges were altogether unfounded.*

All together means at one place or at the same time: *We were all together at the meeting. We recited the oath all together instead of individually.*

Ampersand (&)

Do not use. Use *and*. Exceptions: the name Smith & Wesson and some citations (see the Citation Guide).

Apostrophe

- Use an apostrophe to signify possession or ownership: *Gordon Graham's Tip of the Day.*
- When a singular possessive word ends in "s," add the apostrophe and "s": *The boss's iPhone was charging. The chassis's surface is rusted.* Exceptions: For proper nouns, such as names, do not add the "s": *Inmate Dickens' cell needed cleaning.*

- If the possessive word is plural, use just the apostrophe: *The officer recorded the witnesses' statements.*
- When an acronym or initialism is plural, you do not need an apostrophe. *The VA has opened three new CBOCs in North Dakota.*
- However, do use an apostrophe to indicate that an alphabet letter is plural. *The mayor's office directed the officers to "mind their p's and q's."*

Apostrophe rules are complex, and the AP notes other exceptions for special expressions. Contact an editor for more information if needed.

App/application

App is short for application and refers to programs that run on smartphones and tablets. App is acceptable on all references: *The Lexipol mobile app allows users to acknowledge DTBs using their smartphone.*

Automated/Automatic External Defibrillator (AED)

AED is written as both *Automated External Defibrillator* and *Automatic External Defibrillator*. We use *Automated External Defibrillator*.

Affect/effect

Affect, which is almost always a verb, means to influence, or to have an effect on. *Effect*, which is almost always a noun, means the outcome or the result. However, *effect* can also be a verb, meaning *to make happen* or *to produce*. We see this sometimes in our work: *to effect an arrest*.

AIDS

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome. *AIDS* is acceptable in all references. *AIDS* is caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV), which is also acceptable in all references. *HIV virus* is redundant.

Alien, illegal immigrant

Don't refer to a person as being illegal, as in *an illegal immigrant*. Instead, describe behavior: *entered the country illegally; has remained in the country on an expired visa*. Use *alien* for legal status only when the relevant statute uses this term. The term *undocumented immigrant* is acceptable.

Alternate

To interchange repeatedly, to change back and forth. *Day shift alternates with night shift*.

Alternative

A choice limited to one or two possibilities.

Amid/among

Not *amidst* or *amongst*.

Anti-vaxxer

Do not use this term for someone who opposes or is hesitant about vaccinations. If necessary in a direct quotation, explain it.

Any time

Two words, in all cases

As

Avoid using *as* to mean *since* or *because*.

Authorized designee (use with “the”)

Lexipol uses *the authorized designee* when writing *the [Chief of Police/Sheriff] or the authorized designee* (also applies to the Corrections and Fire manuals). This eliminates the previous incarnation, *his/her designee*, yet remains specific enough to avoid confusion about who the designee is or who authorized that person to be the designee.

B**Backseat/front seat**

Backseat is one word in all references. *Front seat* is two words in all references.

Back up/backup

This can be a noun or a verb. When using it as a noun or adjective, it is one word: *The officer called for backup. Officer Williams was the backup officer.* When using it as a verb, it is two words, without a hyphen: *You should back up Officer Smith when she attempts to serve that warrant.*

Backyard/front yard

Backyard is one word in all references. *Front yard* is two words.

Between/among

In general, *between* introduces two items and *among* introduces more than two: *The funds were divided among the participating agencies. The funds were divided between [Officer/Deputy] Smith and [Officer/Deputy] Jones.* However, *between* is correct when you're referring to choices that involve distinct items, even if it's more than two items: *The negotiations between the terrorist, the accomplices, and the officers progressed quickly.*

Biohazard/biohazardous

One word, no hyphen.

Bimonthly

One word. Means every other month.

Birthdate

One word. "Date of birth" is also correct.

Black

Use the capitalized term as an adjective in a racial, ethnic, or cultural sense: *Black people, Black culture, Black literature, Black studies, Black colleges.*

African American is also acceptable for those in the U.S. The terms are not necessarily interchangeable. Americans of Caribbean heritage, for example, generally refer to themselves as *Caribbean American*. Follow an individual's preference if it is known and be specific when possible and relevant. *Minneapolis has a large Somali American population because of refugee resettlement. The author is Senegalese American.*



Using the capitalized *Black* recognizes that language has evolved, along with the common understanding that, especially in the United States, the term reflects a shared identity and culture rather than a skin color alone.

Also use *Black* in racial, ethnic, and cultural differences outside the U.S. to avoid equating a person with a skin color.

Do not write in a way that assumes *white* is the default. Not: *The officer is accused of choking Owens, who is Black.* Instead: *The white officer is accused of choking Owens, who is Black.*

(See the *Racist/Racism* entry for more information.)

Bloodborne

Technically this is supposed to be two words. However, the CDC and OSHA use it as one word. Lexipol uses it as one word.

Board

Capitalize only when using the full title: *Use of Force Review Board*. Do not capitalize in all other references.

Bodily

Bodily fluids, not body fluids.

Break room

Two words.

Bureaus or units

Capitalize when referring to a specific bureau or unit: *Narcotics Unit, Internal Affairs Bureau*. Do not capitalize on general reference: *an internal affairs investigation*.

C

Call out/callout

Two words when acting as a transitive verb: *We had to call out troops to control rioting*.

One word, no hyphen, when acting as a noun or adjective: *The SWAT team is on a callout. The volunteer coordinator shall develop a plan outlining an emergency callout procedure for volunteers*.

Canine/K9

Use canine in all references.

Capitalization

Lexipol's capitalization standards for names and other terms are specified with examples within the alphabetized entries of this Guide. In general, capitalize the following:

- Acts: Formal titles of specific acts – *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*
- Bureaus or units, if a specific bureau or unit: *Narcotics Unit, Internal Affairs Bureau*
- Capitol: *U.S. Capitol* and the *Capitol*
- Courts: the full proper names of courts at all levels.
- Constitution: references to the U.S. Constitution, with or without the U.S. modifier. *The president says he supports the Constitution*.
- [Department/Office] and [Agency/Office] when substituting it for the full name of a department or an agency: *If members of the [Department/Agency] respond to an incident requiring permit-required confined space entry, a written hazard evaluation shall be performed*.
- [District/County Attorney] and [City Attorney] when using a formal name: *District Attorney John Smith*
- Federal only when referencing a proper noun, like a federal agency or an act: *Code of Federal Regulations*.
- Forms and form titles when using the proper name and there is a specific name for the form: *Requisition of Supplies Form*. When the reference describes the purpose of the form, do not capitalize *requisition form*.

- Policy titles when using the whole name: *Refer to the Use of Force Policy*. Do not capitalize if the idea of the policy is being mentioned: *Refer to the policy on the use of force*.
- Rank titles: Most of these are TEs and are automatically populated in the manuals. Capitalize high-ranking titles like Watch Commander, Commander, Chief and Sheriff in most instances. *Coordinator* is not capitalized because it is a job description, not a title: *canine coordinator, volunteer coordinator, reserve coordinator*.
- State Legislature when using the formal name: *Minnesota State Legislature*.

Capitol

Capitalize *U.S. Capitol* and the *Capitol* when referring to the building in Washington, D.C., or the building in a specific state.

Cardiopulmonary resuscitation/CPR

CPR is acceptable in all references.

Caregiver

A *caregiver* is a person who takes care of someone requiring close attention, such as a person with serious illnesses or age-related concerns. Generally, use that term, rather than *caretaker*, in situations involving people receiving care.

Cell phone

Two words. Cellular telephone is also acceptable.

CFR

Code of Federal Regulations

City/county

[City/County] is a TE and appears in the manual in the wording chosen by the agency. Although the TE is capitalized, don't capitalize when *city* or *county* appears in a sentence unless it is part of a proper name (e.g., Maricopa County Animal Shelter).

Chain of custody

Not chain of evidence or chain of possession, unless the state uses those terms.

Chairman/chairwoman/chairperson

Chairman or *chair* are generally considered gender-neutral. However, *chairperson* is acceptable as well.

Checklist

One word.

Child

See *juvenile*.

Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) vs. Child Pornography

Some organizations are choosing to use the term *child sexual abuse material (CSAM)* to refer to depictions that would have previously been identified as *child pornography*. They include the [INHOPE Association](#), [Stop It Now!](#), and the [National Center for Missing & Exploited Children](#), among many other national and international organizations. The reason for this change is that CSAM is a more accurate and comprehensive term; the terms *pornography* and *porn* trivialize and even normalize what is a devastating and traumatic crime.

Because Lexipol policy content leans heavily on state and federal law, policy manuals should mirror legislative language on this topic. Developers of non-policy material have leeway to be forward-thinking in their use of newer, more sensitive terminology, so for content in other areas, such as DTBs, the Lexipol blog, and in the Digital Media Communities, developers and editors should take advantage of opportunities to introduce and use the newer term, *child sexual abuse material*. You can also use the term *child sexual abuse images* instead of *child pornography*. Do not use the colloquial shortened version of *child pornography*: *child porn*.

Citywide/countywide

No hyphen. Note: These can also be TEs, in which case the proper format is: [City_County]wide or [city_county]wide (no space between TE and *wide*).

Clean up/cleanup

Clean up is a transitive verb: *Be sure to clean up before dinner*. *Cleanup* can be an adjective or a noun: *This will include proper posting of notices of trespass and cleanup operations*.

Close proximity

Redundant. Use either *close* or *in proximity*. (See Redundancies entry.)

Code 3/Code-3

Since Code 3 is not recognized in all states, we generally use the phrase *emergency lights and siren* or *emergency response*. However, if you want to use Code 3, hyphenate when using it as a compound modifier: *The officers engaged in a Code-3 pursuit*. Otherwise, use it without the hyphen: *The officer proceeded Code 3 to the scene*.

Collective bargaining agreement/memorandum of understanding (MOU)/labor agreement/employment agreement

These terms differ by state. *Collective bargaining agreement* or *memorandum of understanding* is common in union states and *labor agreement* in non-union states. Do not use *CBA* as an abbreviation for *collective bargaining agreement*; spell it out.

However, use the abbreviation *MOU* on second reference for *memorandum of understanding*.

You may find that management and executives are in a separate bargaining group from the rank-and-file members. However, both groups would use the term *collective bargaining agreement*. In other words, the city/county will enter into separate collective bargaining agreements: e.g., one for a firefighters' group, another for a fire management group, and another for the executive group. Also, miscellaneous employees and/or dispatchers could have their own separate groups. These are still considered *collective bargaining agreements*.

See also *memorandum of understanding/agreement (MOU/MOA)*.

Collective nouns

These are words that imply more than one person but can either be singular or plural, depending on whether they refer to a unit or to people acting as individuals. Some collective nouns are *group, team, class, committee, crowd, family, jury, crew*.

A unit (singular):

The committee is meeting to set its agenda.
The jury has announced its verdict.
The crew was called to a structure fire.

Individuals (plural):

The committee are required to live in the county.
The jury disagree on whether he is guilty.
The crew receive annual bonuses.

Most collective nouns in policy content will be singular.

Commas

As with all punctuation, the overriding goal in comma use is clarity.

The serial comma, or Oxford comma

Use the comma before the conjunction connecting the last item in a series. Here Lexipol has chosen to depart from AP style to avoid the possibility of misinterpretation or ambiguity created by leaving the serial comma out. In 2017, a high-profile court case was decided based on the absence of a serial comma in an employer's contract language. The court ruled that the employer had to pay millions of dollars in back overtime pay to workers who understood the policy differently because the comma was not included.

Here is correct use of the serial comma:

Persons who are known to be pregnant should be restrained in the least restrictive manner that is effective for officer safety. Leg irons, waist chains, or handcuffs behind the body should not be used unless the [officer_deputy] has a reasonable suspicion that the person may resist, attempt escape, injure herself or others, or damage property.

No person who is in labor, delivery, or recovery after delivery shall be handcuffed or restrained except in extraordinary circumstances and only when a supervisor makes an individualized determination that such restraints are necessary for the safety of the arrestee, [officers_deputies], or others.

Notice how the serial comma, or the absence of one, can convey meaning:

- *The governor convened his most trusted advisers, economist Olivia Schneider, and polling expert Carlton Torres.* (There are unidentified advisers plus Schneider and Torres.)
- *The governor convened his most trusted advisers, economist Olivia Schneider and polling expert Carlton Torres.* (Schneider and Torres are the advisers.)

Non-restrictive commas

Use commas to enclose descriptive words, phrases, or clauses that tell something extra about a person or thing in addition to the main idea of the sentence: *The inmate, fearing for his life, requested protective housing. This data, which should be free of identifying information, should be published in an annual report.* Note that such commas, which are sometimes called parenthetical commas, come in pairs (unless the something extra comes at the beginning or end of the sentence!).

Do not put commas around restrictive phrases or clauses (these narrow down *which one* or *what kind* about a person or thing and are thus part of the main idea): *The facility where he works is on lockdown. Facilities housing more than 50 inmates are subject to this requirement.*

Compound-sentence commas

Some sentences contain more than one complete thought. Separate complete thoughts within a sentence by:

- A comma followed by a coordinating conjunction (*and/but/or*) that shows the relationship between the complete thoughts: *The suspect climbers over the wall, and his companion tries to follow, but her injured ankle slows her down.*

- A semicolon to signal a longer pause (and thus a less close relationship) between the complete thoughts: *The suspect clammers over the wall; his companion tries to follow, but her injured ankle slows her down.*



Even when punctuated correctly, a long sentence can be awkward or confusing. Lexipol prefers shorter sentences because readers understand them more easily.

Run-on sentences

Similar to compound sentences, run-on sentences consist of two or more complete sentences (or independent clauses) that are incorrectly run together as one sentence. In many cases, the clauses are joined using only a conjunction (*and, but, or*) and no punctuation. You can correct or avoid these errors by adding punctuation. Run-on sentence: *POLICY has been updated for clarity and content has been moved to PURPOSE AND SCOPE.* Same wording with correct punctuation, an added comma between the two clauses: *POLICY has been updated for clarity, and content has been moved to PURPOSE AND SCOPE.*

Comma splices

In contrast to run-on sentences, a comma splice involves two independent clauses joined with a comma but no conjunction (*and, but, or*). Generally, using both a comma and an appropriate conjunction eliminates this error. Comma splice: *POLICY has been updated for clarity, content has been moved to PURPOSE AND SCOPE.* Corrected sentence with addition of the proper conjunction: *POLICY has been updated for clarity, and content has been moved to PURPOSE AND SCOPE.*

Comprises/Composed of

Comprise means to contain or include. *Composed of* means created or formed from two or more things. *The team comprises four members. The team is composed of four members. The U.S. comprises 50 states. The U.S. is composed of 50 states.*

Communication/communications

Use *communications* since it is the preferred language: *The call came in to the Communications Center.* The TE [comCenter] includes *the*, so you don't need "the" before the TE.

Compound subject

A compound subject contains two or more nouns joined by a conjunction (*and, or, nor*).

- When the subject of a sentence is two or more nouns or pronouns connected by *and*, use a plural verb. *She and her friend are at the fair.* (They are at the fair.) Exception: When the nouns and pronouns connected by *and* refer to a single

concept or idea, use a singular verb: *The wear and tear on the patrol car is tremendous.* (It is tremendous.)

- When two or more singular nouns or pronouns are connected by *or*, use a singular verb. *The physician or the physician assistant is authorized to access the records.*
- When a compound subject contains both a singular and a plural noun or pronoun joined by *or*, the verb should agree with the part of the subject that is nearest the verb: *The boy or his friends run every day. His friends or the boy runs every day.*

Constitution/constitutional

Capitalize references to the U.S. Constitution, with or without the U.S. modifier: *The president says he supports the Constitution.* Also:

- When referring to the constitutions of states, capitalize on formal reference: *Massachusetts Constitution.* Lowercase if you are not referring to a specific state: *state constitution* or *the constitution.*
- Do not capitalize the plural form, “constitutions”: *the United States and Tennessee constitutions.*
- Do not capitalize *constitutional* in all uses.

Continual/Continuous

Use continual when referring to something that starts and stops: *The continual issue of unscheduled system shutdowns forced us to install a new system.*

Use continuous when referring to something that is ongoing and without interruption: *The department is dedicated to continuous improvement.*

Control devices

General term for weapons (e.g., batons, chemical sprays, TASER) used to control individuals who are violent or demonstrate the intent to be violent. Do not use less-lethal, less than lethal, or non-lethal. Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence. See also *non-lethal* and *use-of-force continuum.*

Courts

Capitalize the full proper names of courts at all levels. Retain capitalization if U.S. or the state name is dropped: *the U.S. Supreme Court, the Supreme Court, the State Superior Court, the Superior Court.* Also:

- For courts identified by a number, use numerals rather than spelling out the ordinal: *2nd District Court, 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals* or *U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit.* Don’t use superscript for the *th* or the *nd*.

- Capitalize state Supreme Courts with the state name, *New Jersey Supreme Court*, and without the state name when the context makes it unnecessary: *the state Supreme Court*, *the Supreme Court*. However, when you're writing about the U.S. Supreme Court, on second reference it can be referred to as the Court (capitalized).
- Do not capitalize generic references to *court*.

COVID-19

Capitalized as above and with the hyphen. Per AP Stylebook, coronaviruses can cause the common cold or more severe diseases such as SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) and MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome). A new coronavirus first appeared in late 2019 in Wuhan, China. It causes a respiratory illness now called COVID-19, which stands for coronavirus disease 2019. The virus itself is named SARS-CoV-2 but avoid using that name.

Because COVID-19 is the name of the disease, not the virus, it is not accurate to write a virus called COVID-19.

The term coronavirus is generally acceptable in references to the pandemic: coronavirus cases, coronavirus tests, coronavirus variants. Use the term COVID-19 when referring specifically to the disease: COVID-19 treatments, COVID-19 patients, COVID-19 deaths, recovering from COVID-19.

Coworker

No hyphen.

Criteria/criterion

Criteria is plural: *The officer meets the criteria*. *Criterion* is singular: *The central criterion for participation in the debate is the realistic chance of being elected*.

Critical Incident Stress Debriefing

Law enforcement agencies and fire departments often conduct these debriefings following particularly emotional or stressful calls. Capitalize when referring to a specific program or event. No slash between Incident and Stress.

Cross-reference

Hyphenated form works for a noun or verb.

Custodian of Records

Capitalize, no acronym. This is a state-specific term; other commonly used terms include Keeper of Records and Official Custodian.

Cyber

Prefixed without a hyphen in cyberspace, cybercrime, cyberstalk, cyberterrorism, cyberthreat, cyberbully, cyberattack, cybersecurity, cybercafe.

Exceptions: cyber command, cyber-espionage.

Use *cyber* sparingly. In general, Lexipol prefers *internet*, *digital* or a similar term, as in *internet shopping* or *online security*.

D

Data

A collective noun. Whether *data* is singular or plural depends on if it is being used to mean a body of information or individual bits and pieces of fact: *The data shows that following Below 100 saves lives. The data from officer-involved shootings are collected throughout the country and reported to the U.S. Attorney General.* When in doubt, treat “data” as singular.

Day shift/night shift

Two words: *day shift*, *night shift*.

Decision-making/decision-maker

Two words, hyphenated.

Defuse/diffuse

Defuse (a transitive verb) - To remove the fuse from a mine or bomb, or to calm down: *defuse a situation*.

Diffuse (adjective) – Poured out, spread freely, scattered, broken up, or distributed: *the diffuse branches of a tree*, or *diffuse radiation*, or *diffuse light*.

De-escalate

Hyphenate.

Department/Departmental

[Departmental directives] is a common TE that appears in the manual as singular. Add an “s” after the TE if you want it to be plural.

Departmental can sound officious. For simplicity’s sake, use *department*. This is also true when using *government/governmental*. Use *government*.

Also: for the [Department/Office] and [Agency/Office] TEs:

- **Capitalize this TE** when substituting it for the full name of a department or an agency: *If members of the [Department/Agency] respond to an incident requiring permit-required confined space entry, a written hazard evaluation shall be performed.*
- **Do not capitalize** when it is used to modify: *The analysis should focus on whether [agency/office] policies and procedures are in alignment with statutes, regulations, and court orders.*
- **Do not capitalize** when it comes after the word *this*: *The continued employment or appointment of every member of this [department/office] shall be based on conduct that reasonably conforms to the guidelines set forth herein.*
- **Do not capitalize** when it is possessive: *Inmates may be placed into disciplinary segregation only after an impartial hearing to determine the facts of the rule violation, in accordance with the [agency/office]'s Inmate Discipline Policy.*

Designee

See *authorized designee*.

Different from

Always use *from* with *different*. *Different than* is never correct. (See, also, *separate from*.)

Disabled

Don't use *disabled* to describe a person. Instead, refer to *a person with a disability*. Do not describe an individual as having a disability unless it is clearly pertinent, and be specific about the type of disability or symptoms.

Disc/disk

- **Disc:** Media storage disc such as a CD, a DVD, a Blu-ray disc, a phonograph record; and a component of a brake system: *disc brakes*.
- **Disk:** A computer's optical disk drive (ODD), which uses a laser light to write onto or read media storage discs like the ones listed above; a similar computer hard drive component; and medical references: *a slipped disk*.

[District/County Attorney] and [City Attorney]

Capitalize when using a formal name: *District Attorney John Smith*. Note that when filling out the Questionnaire, agencies also have the choice of "Other," and can fill in their own title if needed. Be sure to capitalize *Office* when it immediately precedes or follows one of these TEs.

Do not capitalize elected local offices that are not part of a formal name, even if the reference is to a specific person (e.g., “the district attorney,” “the city attorney’s office”)

DNA

DNA is acceptable in all references. Our policy manuals generally use *biological sample* or *biological specimen*, rather than DNA, although state-specific content may require the use of DNA.

Driver’s license or driver license

Many states use *driver license*. Check to see which term the state uses.

DVD

OK in all references.

E

E.g. or i.e.

These Latin abbreviations are often confused.

- Basically, *i.e.* means “in other words” or “that is.” Use it to clarify a point that typically has one example. *The application of the [EMDT device] in the drive-stun mode (i.e., direct contact without probes) relies primarily on pain compliance.*
- The letters *e.g.* mean “for example.” Use them to list examples. *When a foot pursuit terminates, the [officer/deputy] will notify the [dispatcher] of the [officer/deputy]’s location and the status of the foot pursuit termination (e.g., suspect in custody, lost sight of suspect).*
- When *i.e.* or *e.g.* begins parenthetical language, use a comma after, as above.
- Do not include *and* before the concluding phrase, and do not use *etc.* in combination with *e.g.* or *i.e.*

Either/Or, Neither/Nor

When the alternate subjects in these pairings share one verb, the verb should agree with the nearest subject: *Neither they nor he is going. Neither he nor they are going.*

Em (—) dash and en (–) dash

Avoid these dashes. Use the hyphen instead, and be careful when copying text from Word because the auto correct inserts the em dash. KMS does not recognize em and en dashes.

Email

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence. Do not hyphenate.

Emergency Alert System

Capitalize; abbreviate as EAS after first use.

Employee/Member/Personnel/Sworn/Nonsworn



The Policy Manual Policy of each manual defines these terms specifically. Content writers should confirm the correct term for every usage. They are not interchangeable terms.

Member

Any person who is appointed or employed by the [Department/Agency/Office]. This includes:

- Full- and part-time employees
- Civilian employees
- Volunteers
- Reserve/auxiliary officers or firefighters
- Licensed/certified/sworn officers/deputies
- Sworn/appointed or elected firefighters

Note that contractors are not included in the definition of a member. If contractors are to be included or referenced in a policy, they should be named separately. This is most prevalent in Corrections.

Employee

Any person who is employed by the [Department/Agency/Office]. This does not include contractors, volunteers, or other non-employees. *Employee* is a more restrictive term than *member*. Some laws/regulations apply only to employees, while some apply to all members. For this reason, exercise caution when changing these terms in policy.

[Civilian_Nonsworn]

This is a TE to describe employees or volunteers who are not licensed or certified (depending on state terminology) law enforcement/peace officers/deputies/firefighters.

[Officer/Deputy]-Law Enforcement

All employees, regardless of rank, who are licensed/certified/sworn law enforcement or peace officers.

[Officer/Deputy]-Custody

All employees, regardless of rank, who are selected and trained in accordance with state law as [an officer/a deputy] of the [Anytown Sheriff's Office].

[Firefighter]Sworn**]**

All members, regardless of rank, who perform fire suppression duties as part of their primary duties as sworn, appointed, or elected members of the [Anytown Fire Department].

Epidemic, pandemic

An *epidemic* is the rapid spreading of disease in a certain population or region; a *pandemic* is an epidemic that has spread wider, usually to multiple countries or continents, affecting a large number of people.

Et seq.

A Latin phrase, *et sequentes*, meaning “and the following.” We use it when citing multiple sections of a citation without listing each one, and in situations where not all of the following citations are included.

Example: *16 CFR 682.1 et seq.* This refers to 16 CFR 682 and the sections that follow within that part/chapter.

- Do not use a comma before *et seq.* and place a period at the end.
- Don't use *et seq.* in the middle of the sentence, only in parentheses. For use in the middle of a sentence, use the common name of the chapter/part (e.g., Habitual Traffic Offenders Act, New York Freedom of Information Law), when possible, and include the code parenthetically.
- When there is no common name, you can refer to the chapter/part. *The [Anytown Fire Department] is committed to providing public access to records consistent with the New York Freedom of Information law (Public Officers Law § 85 et seq.).*

Etc.

Do not use in policy language or a DTB. Instead, indicate that a list isn't all-inclusive by characterizing the nature of the list and then using some variation of *e.g., such as, or including but not limited to.*

Evergreen content

When we describe content as evergreen, we mean that it continues to be relevant and fresh well into the future. A reader should not encounter anything that indicates certain content was written years ago and has never been revised or updated. Using the names of specific products, companies, events, or people will always raise the question of whether a section of content will make sense to readers years



from now. Making a reference to a specific social media platform, for example, is risky because that platform could fade into obscurity in the future.

Another strategy for ensuring content is evergreen is to avoid, to the extent possible, filling out too many contextual details. The shelf life of an otherwise evergreen discussion of police officer wellness can be shortened if the author overemphasizes the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic or makes abundant references to a summer full of civil unrest. This context simply won't be as meaningful to a reader years from now. That said, not all content is intended to be evergreen. Be aware of your audience and the expected lifespan of the content when determining how evergreen content should be.

Everyday/every day

Every day is an adverb: *I try to accomplish something every day.* *Everyday* is an adjective: *But an everyday feat would hardly be worth accomplishing.*

Everyone, every one

- *Everyone* is a singular indefinite pronoun meaning a person who is indicative of all people: *Everyone has his/her own idea of the perfect life.*
- *Every one* means each individual item counted one by one: *Every one of the clues was worthless.*

Exempt/exempted

Use *exempt*.

Express

Use *express*, not *expressed*, when using this word in a legal context. *Other than an emergency situation, inmates or [jail] staff shall not adjust or restrict the ventilation systems without the express permission of the supervisor.* Note: *Expressed* is correct when referring to expressing breast milk, as in our Lactation Breaks Policy. *Any member storing expressed milk in any authorized refrigerated area within the [Department/ Agency] shall clearly label it as such and shall remove it when the member ends her shift.*

Extrajurisdictional

Out of this jurisdiction.

Extraterrestrial

Out of this world.

F

Facebook

No copyright symbol necessary.

FaceTime

A video chat app for iPhone or iPad. FaceTime is used informally as a verb, but talked via FaceTime or used FaceTime is preferred.

Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Don't forget the *and*.

FBI

Acronym is acceptable in all references to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Federal/federal

Capitalize when referencing a proper noun, like a federal agency or an act: *Federal Bureau of Investigation, Code of Federal Regulations*. Do not capitalize when using in a more general sense: *federal government, federal law, federal regulation*.

Firepower

One word.

First aid

When used as a noun, do not hyphenate *first aid* or style it as one word. *Officers will provide first aid to injured parties*. When used as an adjective or modifier, hyphenate. *Officers will provide first-aid services to injured parties*. In this case, *first-aid* modifies the word *services*.

Follow up or follow-up

Follow-up is an adjective and compound modifier. *Follow-up* is also a noun. *Follow up* is a transitive verb, *to follow up*.

A preliminary determination that the pursuit appears to be in compliance with this policy or that additional review and/or follow-up is warranted.

Consider setting up a separate telephone line or cellular telephone for [department/office] use and follow up on all leads.

Foolproof

One word.

Forms and form titles

Capitalize when using the proper name and there is a specific name for the form: *Requisition of Supplies Form*. When the reference describes the purpose of the form, do not capitalize: *requisition form*.

Frontline

One word as an adjective: *The officers are the frontline response.* Two words as a noun: *They are the front line of law enforcement.*

Full time, full-time

Two words, no hyphen when it is not a modifier. *She works full time.* Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier: *She has a full-time job.*

G

Gender/inclusive language

Lexipol prefers inclusive language and is moving away from use of gendered words and pronouns. Do not make gender visible when it not relevant for communication. *Note:* A named character in a DTB or learning course scenario may still be referred to with gendered pronouns.

Write around the need for these gender-specific pronouns: he/she, his/her, him/himself/herself.

In all sections of policies being updated (including updates to the global masters), new content, and new learning course content, replace gendered words and pronouns (*he/she, him/her*) with inclusive wording in one of the following ways.

- 1. Replace the pronoun with a non-gendered noun (reuse the noun).**

Gendered: *An employee may be subject to disciplinary action if he/she is frequently tardy.*

Non-gendered: *An employee may be subject to disciplinary action if the employee is frequently tardy.*

- 2. Recast the entire clause or sentence as plural, without changing the meaning.**

Gendered: *A member should not use any medications that will impair his/her ability to perform his/her duties.*

Non-gendered: *Members should not use any medications that will impair their ability to perform their duties.*

- 3. Revise the sentence.**

Gendered: *The member discharges a firearm in the performance of his/her duties.*

Non-gendered: *The member discharges a firearm in the performance of duties.*

4. **For singular references when gender is not specified, use the pronouns.**
“they/them/their/themselves” despite the lack of agreement with singular verb forms. But revising the sentence as advised in the above three ways is preferable.

Exception: CA manuals. Revision for inclusive, non-gendered language should be more broadly applied (e.g., to all references within a policy being updated).

Avoid other gendered words. Here are some examples of inclusive terms.

| Inclusive | Gendered |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| adult | woman or man |
| partner, significant other, spouse | boyfriend/husband or girlfriend/wife |
| chairperson or chair | chairman |
| child | son or daughter |
| parent | mother or father |
| people | mankind |
| staffing, staff | manpower |
| synthetic, artificial, machine made | manmade |
| sibling | sister or brother |
| young person, youth, teen, child | girl or boy |

Additional guidelines are available on the United Nations’ website:

www.un.org/en/gender-inclusive-language/guidelines.shtml.

Gender vs. sex



In general, use sex when referring to biology. Use gender when referring to the social construct regarding the social and psychological distinctions between women and men. That said, some states prefer one term over the other, or prefer to use *gender* in all instances.

Per the *AP Stylebook*, “Not all people fall under one of two categories for *sex* or *gender*, according to leading medical organizations, so avoid reference to “both sexes,” “either sex,” or “the opposite sex” as a way to encompass all people. ... Language around gender is evolving. Newsrooms and organizations outside AP may need to make decisions, based on necessity and audience, on terms that differ from or are not covered by AP’s specific recommendations. For instance, the AP recommends the term *sex reassignment* for the medical procedures used for gender transition, while some groups use the term *gender confirmation* instead. The AP allows for *LGBT* and *LGBTQ* to be used on first reference without spelling out the acronyms.”

Government/governmental

Use *government* rather than *governmental*. Do not capitalize this word unless it starts a sentence.

Grand jury

Not capitalized unless it starts a sentence.

Gun

Gunbattle, gunboat, gunfight, gunfire, gunpoint, gunpowder

H

Half-hour

In formal writing, use *a half-hour*. In everyday speech (such as the Scenario section of a DTB), it’s OK to use *half an hour*.

Handheld

One word.

Handcuff/handcuffs

One word. Do not shorten it to *cuff* or *cuffs*.

Head count

Two words. This term refers to simple counts of people, such as in a correctional setting. Avoid the one-word spelling *headcount*. It is business jargon, often used as an adjective, e.g., a headcount reduction.

Health care

Two words.

High risk, low frequency

Hyphenate as compound modifiers, as in *high-risk, low-frequency events*, with a comma (not a /) separating the two. Use without the hyphens otherwise. *Failure to use a seat belt creates a high risk of injury in a crash.*

Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)

This is often miswritten as *HIPPA*.

Hyperlinks

Use hyperlinks sparingly, and generally link only to noncommercial (government) websites that have a permanent address. Linking to relevant news articles in DTBs may be tempting, but we have no control over the future availability or content of what is being linked to.

Hyphens

Hyphens are joiners. They are used to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words (a compound modifier).

- Avoiding ambiguity - *The president will speak to small-business owners.*
- Compound modifiers - These are two or more words that express a single thought or concept, such as *on-the-job training, self-initiated activity, department-related business*. Use a hyphen when the compound modifier comes before the noun, as in the examples above. Exception: Do not hyphenate if the first modifier is an adverb ending in *-ly*, as in *a privately owned vehicle*.
- When a modifier that would normally be hyphenated occurs after a form of the verb *to be*, retain the hyphen to avoid confusion. *The man is well-known. The woman is quick-witted.*
- A single idea - There are several phrases or combinations of words that we hyphenate to convey a single idea. For example, *ride-along, on-duty, off-duty, on-site*.

See also entries for *prefixes* and *non* words.

I

Identification/ID

Use *identification* in policy manuals. Use *ID* in DTBs since they have a less formal tone and style.

Illegal immigrant, alien

Don't refer to a person as being illegal, as in *an illegal immigrant*. Instead, describe behavior: *entered the country illegally; has remained in the country on an expired visa*.

Use *alien* for legal status only when the relevant statute uses this term. The term *undocumented immigrant* is acceptable.

Impact



Do not use as a verb. Usually, “affect” will suffice.

The recent court ruling affects agency retention of records.

(Exception: Release Notes for legislative updates will have “impact” as the verb in the first sentence: *This policy has been updated because legislative action impacts its content.*)

Including but not limited to

No comma between *including* and *but*, and no comma after *to*.

A comma may sometimes be used before *including*, depending on the sentence.

The victim shall be provided with any needed medical care, including but not limited to: .

..

The officer may face disciplinary action including but not limited to: . . .

Inclusive language

Lexipol uses inclusive language. See *Gender* entry for details.

Injuries

They may be suffered, sustained, or received. Simpler wording is often possible: *She was injured in the crash*, rather than *she sustained injuries in the crash*.

In service/in-service

Two words when used to describe officer status: *The officers were back in service following the call*. Hyphenate when it is a compound modifier: *We provided in-service training on the matter*.

Interjurisdictional

No hyphen.

Intraorganizational

No hyphen.

Internet

Do not capitalize.

Note that policy manual content may still have capitalized instances as a legacy of pre-2016 content. AP standard changed in 2016. New content should not capitalize. Updates to capitalized instances in policy are optional.

Irregardless

This is not a word. Use *regardless*.

Isolation, self-isolation, quarantine

In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, the terms isolation and quarantine generally are being used interchangeably.

The CDC makes this distinction: Isolation is separating sick people from healthy people to prevent spread of disease. For example, people believed to have COVID-19 or to have been exposed to the coronavirus are put in isolation in hospitals or are asked to isolate at home. Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.

It/There

Avoid starting a sentence with “there” or “it.” These words used as subjects are called expletive or “dummy” subjects because they are standing in for another word or noun phrase. Expletive sentence construction often adds unnecessary words. This construction also sets the writer up to make a subject-verb agreement error.

Examples:

Expletive construction: *It is important to log all incidents in the order of occurrence.*

Fix: Logging incidents in the order of occurrence is important.

Expletive construction: *There are many factors to consider when selecting equipment, as follows:*

Fix: *Consider the following factors when selecting equipment.*

J

Juvenile/child

Check the state’s language. Some states define *child* and *juvenile* differently, while other states use *child* and *juvenile* interchangeably. In states that use the terms interchangeably, choose one (usually *juvenile*) and use it throughout the manual to maintain consistency.

K

Kinetic energy projectile

Do not use *beanbag*.

L

Lawsuit

One word. FYI: *Civil lawsuit* is redundant.

Life-safety

Refers to the consideration of both the life and physical well-being of individuals. When used in this context, hyphenate.

Life saving/life-saving

Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier: *life-saving acts*.

Line-of-duty/line of duty

Use hyphens when modifying another word. Otherwise, do not hyphenate. *There were too many line-of-duty deaths this year. The officer died in the line of duty.*

Lineup/line up

Lineup is the noun, as in *a photo lineup*. To *line up* is the verb or transitive verb form.

Lockdown

One word.

Login, log on, log off

One word when used as a noun or adjective: *Be wary of messages with links that take you to a login screen*. Two words in verb form: *After each session, employees should log off the system to prevent unauthorized access. I log in to my computer.*

M

Mainstream media

Avoid as a descriptive term for large-outlet news media; use more specific language instead: *This shooting was widely reported in the Washington Post, the New York Times, and other large-circulation newspapers. The Battalion Chief appeared on several national TV cable and network Sunday morning news shows.*

Media/medium/press

Media, referring to ways of disseminating information, is plural for *medium*: *The media have covered the shooting extensively. He maintained that television is still the best medium for getting the word out about safety.*

Press, which refers to print media only, is singular: *The press has covered each demonstration.*

Memorandum of understanding/agreement (MOU/MOA)

The formatting of this phrase is often state specific. Some states use the phrase and then the acronym on subsequent reference. Some use only the phrase. (See collective bargaining agreement/memorandum of understanding (MOU)/labor agreement/employment agreement.)

Middle East

The preferred form (over *Mideast*) for referring to Iran, Iraq, Israel, Kuwait, Jordan, Lebanon, Oman, Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the eastern part of Turkey known as Asia Minor, United Arab Emirates and Yemen, and Northeastern Africa (Egypt and Sudan). *Middle Eastern food; Middle Eastern descent*. No hyphen is necessary.

Miles per gallon

Use *mpg* in all references.

Miles per hour

Use *mph* in all references.

Missing person/s

A missing person is someone whose location is not known to the reporting party, who then files a *missing person report*. Information about the missing person will be entered into the *missing persons' database*.

Mobile Audio/Video (MAV)

Refers to the in-vehicle recording systems on police and other emergency vehicles ("dashcams"). Capitalize and include / between audio and video. Some states use Mobile Video Recorder (MVR). General references to audio/video do not need to be capitalized.

Money

Spell out the word *cents* and do not capitalize, using numbers for amounts less than a dollar: *5 cents, 12 cents*. Use the \$ sign for larger amounts and use decimals only if needed: *\$500, \$50, \$1 million, \$1.01, \$2.50*.

Mug shot

Two words.

Multi

The prefix rule applies; generally do not hyphenate when using it with a word that starts with a consonant. *Multi-agency*, but *multijurisdictional*, *multistory*, *multicasualty*.

Muslim

The preferred term for followers of Islam. The term *Islamic* relates to, or is a characteristic of, one who professes Islam. The holy book is the *Quran*. The place of worship is a mosque, and the weekly holy day is Friday.

Mute/moot

Mute: Unable to speak, silent.

Moot: As a verb, discussed, debated. As an adjective, debatable, disputed, questionable or deprived of practical significance.

N

Neither/Nor (and either/or)

When the alternate subjects in these pairings share one verb, the verb should agree with the nearest subject: *Neither they nor he is going*. *Neither he nor they are going*.

(Positively) negative

Avoid encouraging the reader *not* to do something, as in: *It may be wise not to rush inside*. Instead, recast the sentence: *It may be wise to delay contact*.

Nominalizations



Nominalizations are nouns created from verbs or adjectives. For example, *consideration* is a nominalization of the verb *consider*. *Responsiveness* is a nominalization of the adjective *responsive*. Nominalizations are sometimes called “zombie nouns” because they substitute abstractions for people and their actions, sucking the life out of the sentence. Heavy use of nominalizations makes a text less readable, so use concrete nouns and verbs instead of nominalizations wherever possible.

Example:

- Don't write: *Reports should be sufficiently detailed before submission and approval.*
- Do write: *Reports should be sufficiently detailed before they are submitted and approved.*

Example:

Don't write:

This may include:

- (a) *Administration of additional on-site screening.*
- (b) *Verification of medical prescriptions . . .*
- (c) *Submission of an appropriate specimen . . .*

Do write:

This may include:

- (a) *Administering additional on-site screening.*
- (b) *Verifying medical prescriptions . . .*
- (c) *Submitting an appropriate specimen . . .*

Non

Generally, hyphenate when used in a compound noun that has special meaning. Use a hyphen before proper nouns or in awkward combinations. The following is a list of words that *Webster* styles as one word (the list on the left). The words in the adjacent (right-side) column are specific to our manuals and therefore have at least some level of special meaning. Use this as your guide.

Generally, if *Webster's Unabridged* does not list a word, hyphenate it.

| No hyphen | Hyphenated |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|
| nonadministrative | non-accidental (not accidental) |
| nonbusiness | non-apprehension |
| noncombatant | non-arrested |
| noncompliance | non-arrestee |
| nondisclosure | non-assaultive |
| nondiscrimination | non-authorized (unauthorized) |
| nondiscriminatory | non-campus |
| nonessential | non-confidential |
| nonexempt | non-confrontational |
| nonpublic | non-contact |
| nonpayment | non-criminal |
| nonporous | non-disposable |
| nonproductive | non-duty |
| nonprofit | non-emergency |
| nonrestrictive | non-field |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| nonrevenue nonuse | non-hazardous non-incident non-Indian non-injured (uninjured) non-intact non-managerial non-probationary non-pursuing non-qualification non-reportable (not reportable) non-retaliatory non-secure (unsecured) non-sentenced non-shooter non-subpoenaed non-tangible (not tangible) non-uniformed non-working |
|----------------------|--|

Non-lethal, less-lethal, non-deadly, less-deadly

Avoid the use of these terms; they are inaccurate and can be used against agencies. If you feel using them is unavoidable, check with the Legal Department (or, for agency users, Lexipol Customer Service) for further clarification.

Although these are commonly used terms in the law enforcement/corrections environment (e.g., less-lethal weapons), they can create confusion within the legal context of an officer’s use of force, which must also consider the officer’s intent and how a particular force option was used (anything can become lethal or deadly under the worst circumstances), along with multiple other factors. For example, if an officer intentionally shoots a subject in the head at close range with a kinetic energy projectile round, that should be considered deadly force, regardless of whether we called the weapon a less-lethal weapon.

Note: When referring to weapons that are commonly referred to as less lethal (e.g., chemical sprays, batons), use *control devices*, without identifying it as lethal or non-lethal. See also *control devices* and *use-of-force continuum*.

Numbers

- **General rules**

- Use words for cardinal numbers *one* through *nine*, and numerals for *10* or higher. *He walked four miles. Secure the perimeter for a minimum of 300 feet. A crowd of at least 150 demonstrators blocked the entrance.*
- Do not parenthetically insert figures, as in *Training will last eight (8) hours.*
- Do not allow a number to open your sentence. Rewrite the sentence.
Wrong: *168 recruits entered the academy last year.*
Right: *Last year 168 recruits entered the academy.*

- **Ordinals:** Spell out *first* through *ninth* when they refer to a sequence in time or location: *third base, the Fourth Amendment, she was first on the list.* As with cardinal numbers, use numerals when you get to *10th*. This includes Amendments to the Constitution. For courts identified by an ordinal, use numerals rather than spelling out the ordinal: *2nd District Court, 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals* or *U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit* (see also the separate entries for Courts and Amendments to the Constitution). Note that we don't use superscript for the *nd* and the *th*. Follow Lexipol's style on ordinals even when the source material has a different style.

- **24 hours a day** rather than *per day*

- **Seven days a week** rather than *per week*

- **9-1-1** Use hyphens. This style comes from the National Emergency Number Association.

- **Addresses (Avenue/Boulevard/Street)**

Abbreviate with a specific numbered address: *Deputy Alec Grossman was dispatched to 1486 Peeler Blvd., where a crowd of teenagers were fighting in the street.*

Spell it out otherwise: *Deputy Alec Grossman was dispatched to the 1400 block of Peeler Boulevard in response to a reported street fight. Jonathan G., one of the [youths] in the unit, approaches and just stands there for a second.*

- **Age**

- Always use numerals. *The girl is 15 years old. The law is 8 years old.*

- Generally, use hyphens when age is a modifier. *A 16-year-old juvenile.*
 - Do not use hyphens when age is not a modifier. *The juvenile is 16 years old.*
 - Do not write that a person is *[x] years of age.*
- **Amendments to the Constitution:** Use *First Amendment, 10th Amendment* (see also the Ordinals entry).
 - **Amount/Number:** *Amount* is typically used with mass nouns: *an increase in the amount of litigation.* *Number* is used with count (quantifiable) nouns: *an increase in the number of lawsuits.*

Note: Count nouns are items that can be counted and will form plurals: parties, minivans, cranes. Mass nouns are often abstract and generally cannot be counted: insurance, courage, mud.

- **Dates**
 - Spell out the name of a month when it is used alone or with a year alone (no day): *The bill became law in August 2016.*
 - Abbreviate month name when used with a day: *The bill became law on Aug. 1, 2016.*
 - March, April, May, June, and July are never abbreviated.
 - When used with a day, the year should always be set off with commas: *The article was published in the Jan. 1, 2017, issue of Law Officer Magazine.*
 - When indicating a range of dates, use a hyphen (-), not repeating the month: *March 2-15, 2017; Feb. 28-March 3, 2018.*
- **Dimensions/Measurements:** Use numerals and spell out *inches, feet,* and *yards* to indicate *depth, height, length,* and *width.* *He is 5 feet 6 inches tall. He is a 5-foot-6-inch man. The building has 6,000 square feet of floor space.*
- **Distance:** Use numerals for 10 and above. Spell out one through nine: *He walked four miles. The body was found 15 miles from the victim's home.*
- **Fewer/Less**
 - *Fewer* is used for countable items: *There were fewer people present than originally reported. (They could be counted.)*
 - Use *less* for more abstract quantities: *He finished in less than half the allotted time.*

- **Percent or %**
 - Use the % symbol when paired with a number, with no space: *15%*
 - For amounts less than 1%, precede the decimal with a zero: *The cost of living rose 0.6%.*
 - In general uses, use the word rather than figures and numbers: *What percent of the inmate population is in segregated housing?*

- **Period (of time):** *Period of time* and *time period* are redundant phrases. Avoid them. Use *period* or *time*: *Over an extended period, the time allotted to training was adequate.*

- **Series of events/levels of ability or rank:** Capitalize and use Roman numerals when referring to Phase I, Phase II, Phase III. This is also true for Level I, Level II, Level III.

- **Time:** Use *a.m.* or *p.m.* and do not capitalize: *11:00 a.m.* Use noon and/or midnight, not capitalized, as appropriate. Do not use a period if *a.m.* or *p.m.* ends the sentence. In other words, no double periods.

- **Time elements or increments**
 - Use numerals when the number is greater than nine; otherwise, spell out the word.
 - Use hyphens for numbers that modify: *Employees get 15-minute breaks. There is a three-day waiting period.* Otherwise, don't hyphenate: *The term should not exceed 18 months. The officer should call the on-duty supervisor within five minutes of arriving at the scene.*
 - When used to mean *worth of*, make possessive and do not hyphenate: *The member shall provide the [Department_Office] with no less than 30 days' notice of the impending absence. She forfeited a week's pay.*

- **Weights:** Use numbers. *Unless a doctor has expressly prescribed a greater amount, no qualified patient or primary caregiver may possess more than 8 ounces of dried marijuana per individual.*

- **Work shifts:** Use *3/12 shift*, *4/10 shift*, or *5/8 shift*, to mean three 12-hour shifts, four 10-hour shifts, and five eight-hour shifts, respectively.

O

Of, (Avoiding improper use of “of”)



“Of” is a preposition generally used to show the relationship of one word to another or of one thing to another. “Of” typically precedes a noun or pronoun: *She is a friend of mine*. But when “of” is used incorrectly, our writing becomes cluttered with clunky phrases and passive sentences.

Here are a few examples of the preposition used incorrectly, then correctly.

| Incorrect | Correct |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| The observance of the ritual | Observing the ritual |
| The development and filing of a report | Developing and filing a report |
| Confirmation of the identity of the person | Confirming the identity of the person |
| Release of any medication | Releasing medication |
| Obtainment of a signature | Obtaining a signature |
| Observance of procedures | Observing procedures |
| The wearing of the uniform | Wearing the uniform |
| 15 years of age | 15 years old |

See also, *nominalizations*.

[Officers_Deputies]

Use this capitalized TE when referring to more than one officer/deputy by name, e.g., in a DTB: *Based on a brief portion of the interaction between [Officers_Deputies] Skaffert and Pinyon ...*

[Officers_Deputies] Joe Warren and Jack Simmons used appropriate force ...

Officer-involved, police-involved

Although Lexipol policy uses this descriptor with the intent of broad scope, in other Lexipol content, where possible, avoid this vague jargon for shootings and other cases involving police. More specific descriptions are preferable.

Official acts immunity

This odd phrase is actually correct as written. It appears in the Foreign Diplomatic and Consular Representatives Policy (which also might be called Arrest or Detention of Foreign Nationals), and concerns immunity from prosecution for an official act: *Official acts immunity must be raised as an affirmative defense in the court of jurisdiction, and its validity determined by the court. Under this defense, the prohibited act itself must*

have been performed as an official function. The temptation here is to write “immunity for official acts.” This is not the terminology of the U.S. Department of State, though, so we will follow its lead.

OK

Use *OK* in all instances.

Older adult/older person

Preferred over *senior citizens*, *seniors*, or *elderly* as a general term when appropriate and relevant.

On-duty/off-duty

Hyphenate in all instances. Like *on-scene*, these are exceptions to the general rule to hyphenate only compound adjectives that appear before the noun they modify.

Ongoing

One word.

Online

One word.

On-scene

Two words, hyphenated, because it is typically used as two words that form a single idea: *When the officers arrived on-scene they were greeted by the complainant, John Smith.*

Orient, orientate

Orient is best used in the context of spatial positioning, especially in relation to the points of a compass. As a transitive verb, *orient* should be followed by a noun.

Do not use *orienting* as a synonym for *training*. An initial training experience or program may be called an *orientation*, but in general, people are *trained*, *not oriented*.

Examples:

Correct: *Digital natives sometimes struggle to orient paper maps.*

Correct: *Newly hired officers usually receive a facility orientation on their first shift.*

Correct: *The program is intended to orient trainees to the facility.*

Incorrect: *The new officer is orienting at a desk in the briefing room.*

Also, avoid using *orientate*. Although it is a synonym of *orient*, it is more commonly used in British English and may be perceived as an error by some readers.

P

Pandemic, epidemic

An *epidemic* is the rapid spread of disease in a certain population or region; a *pandemic* is an epidemic that has spread wider, usually to multiple countries or continents, affecting a large number of people.

Paramilitary

Be aware of the negative connotation.



According to Merriam-Webster's, *paramilitary* "can take in a wide range of organizations, but it is usually applied to forces formed by a government. Groups opposing a government, even when organized along military lines, are more often referred to as guerrillas or insurgents. *Paramilitary* often has a sinister sound today, since it's also applied to groups of off-duty military or police personnel who carry out illegal violence, often at night, with the quiet support of a government."

Avoid describing a Lexipol agency as *paramilitary*. If used, be sure the word has enough context to minimize its negative connotation.

Parentheses

Parentheses are appropriate if you can skip the information inside the parentheses and still make sense of the sentence. You can also use parentheses when adding incidental material to help the reader better understand the sentence. Do not start a sentence with parenthetical material. Whenever possible, enclose citations to statutes, regulations, and cases in parentheses at the end of the sentence.

Part time/part-time

Hyphenate when used as a compound modifier: *He has a part-time job.*

Pat down/pat-down

Hyphenate if using it to describe a search (compound modifier): *a pat-down search.*
Hyphenate when using it as a noun: *The officer did a pat-down.* Two words when used as a transitive verb: *He is going to pat down the prisoner.*

PCD/PDA

Personal Communication Device (PCD): This term and acronym is used in the manual and in DTBs. It refers to a host of electronic devices, including a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA).

Periods

Placing a period at the end of a sentence is like the speaker taking a breath and allowing the reader to do the same. Avoid run-on sentences that string together a jumble of thoughts.

Physician assistant

No apostrophe *s* after *physician*.

Plain view

Two words.

Pled/plead/pleaded

Pled is the colloquial past tense – do not use it. The appropriate use is *plead* or *pleaded*.
The defendants pleaded guilty to preferring ice cream over broccoli.

Plural form (vs. Singular form)

Suspect says or *suspects say*, *deputy is trained* or *deputies are trained*: Be sure your noun and verb match.

Policy-maker

Hyphenate in all instances.

Policy titles

Capitalize when using the whole name: *Refer to the Use of Force Policy*. Do not capitalize if the idea of the policy is being mentioned: *Refer to the policy on the use of force*. When referencing two or more policies, capitalize the title and the word *policy* in the title: *Refer to the Concealed Weapon Permit Policy and Use of Force Policy*.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Use the initialism PTSD on second and subsequent references. Do not capitalize the full term unless it starts a sentence.

Practicable or practical

These words are not interchangeable. *Practical* means acquired through practice, pragmatic, or level-headed, as in, *She is a practical person*. *Practicable* means capable of being done/feasible, workable, or achievable, as in, *As soon as practicable ...*

Prefixes

Except for *cooperate* and *coordinate*, use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel: *de-escalate*. Use a hyphen to join doubled prefixes: *sub-subparagraph*. See also entries for *non* and *multi*.

Press conference

News conference is preferred.

Preventive/preventative

Use *preventive*. Preventative is fairly common, but wrong.

Prior to/before

Avoid. *Prior to* is an acceptable idiom in U.S. English, but Lexipol prefers the plainer, simpler word *before*. Why? *Before*, with its Anglo-Saxon roots, is the most familiar opposite of *after*. Also, *prior to*, which has Latin roots, is using two words where one will do.

Note that *prior to* appears frequently in Lexipol’s original policy content. When a section is being updated, instances within that section can be changed.

Examples:

| | |
|--|--|
| I filled the tank prior to hitting the road. | I filled the tank before hitting the road. |
| Prior to entering the scene... | Before entering the scene... |
| Prior to being allowed to work ... | Before being allowed to work ... |
| Check for errors prior to filing the report. | Check for errors before filing the report. |

Prosecuting attorney

Do not capitalize. There is no TE for this term.

Q**Quotation marks**

Use quotation marks when quoting someone or a publication. Do not use quotation marks to add emphasis. This usage, sometimes called “air quotes,” makes the word or phrase seem sarcastic, or as if it is being said with a wink: *Officers should get “consent” before searching.*

Use single quotation marks around quoted material that is inside another quotation. Be sure to write quotations exactly as they were said or originally published. Do not correct for tense or voice or to comply with Lexipol style. If the quoted material is more than two to three sentences, create a separate indented paragraph and put the quoted material in italics, without the quotation marks. This works well for quoted material taken from court decisions.

Always put periods and commas inside quotation marks. A dash, semicolon, question mark, or exclamation mark goes inside the quotation when it applies to the quoted matter only. When a dash, semicolon, question mark or exclamation point applies to the whole sentence, place it outside the quotation mark: *Didn't Shakespeare have Mark Antony say, "I have come to bury Caesar, not to praise him"?* The question mark is outside the quotation mark because it applies to the whole sentence. *Gertrude Stein once asked, "What is the question?"* The question mark goes inside the quotation mark because it is part of the quote.

R

Race

Consider carefully when deciding whether to identify people by race. Often, it is an irrelevant factor and drawing unnecessary attention to someone's race or ethnicity can be interpreted as bigotry.



Do not write in a way that assumes *white* is the default. Not: *The officer is accused of choking Owens, who is Black.* Instead: *The white officer is accused of choking Owens, who is Black.*

If identification by race is pertinent, use the following guidelines:

- *White* – lowercase in all references.
- *Black* – capitalize in all references.
- *Hispanic/Latino/a/x* – These terms are often used interchangeably, and both are used to refer to a person from, or whose ancestors were from, a Spanish-speaking land or culture. *Latino*, *Latina*, or *Latinx* are often preferred. Follow the person's preference. *Latina* is the feminine form, and some prefer the gender-neutral term *Latinx*, which should be confined to quotations, names of organizations, and descriptions of individuals who request it. Use a more specific identification when possible, such as *Cuban*, *Puerto Rican* or *Mexican American*. *Note:* Hispanic does not define race; Hispanics can be of white, black, or of Asian descent.
- *Native American* and *American Indian* are both acceptable terms when referring to two or more people of different tribal affiliations. For individuals, use the name of the tribe. In Alaska, the Indigenous groups are collectively known as Alaska Natives. *First Nation* is the preferred term for native tribes in Canada.
- *Asian American* - A person of Asian birth or descent who lives in the U.S. If possible, use the person's country of origin: *Filipino American* or *Indian American*.

Capitalize the proper names of nationalities, peoples, races, tribes: *Arab, Arabic, African, American, Cherokee, Chinese* (both singular and plural), *Eskimo* (plural is *Eskimos*), *French Canadian, Japanese* (singular and plural), *Jewish*.

Note that dual-heritage terms are not hyphenated.

There are occasions when race is pertinent:

- In stories that involve significant, groundbreaking, or historic events, such as being elected U.S. president, being named to the U.S. Supreme Court or other notable occurrences. *Barack Obama was the first Black U.S. president. Sonia Sotomayor is the first Hispanic justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Jeremy Lin is the first American-born NBA player of Chinese or Taiwanese descent.*
- In cases where suspects or missing persons are being sought, and the descriptions provided are detailed and not solely racial. Any racial reference should be removed when the individual is apprehended or found.
- When reporting a demonstration, disturbance or other conflict involving race (including verbal conflicts), or issues like civil rights.

Racist, Racism

Racism is a doctrine asserting racial differences in character, intelligence, the idea of racial superiority, racial discrimination, or feelings of hatred or bigotry toward people of another race.

The terms *systemic racism, structural racism, and institutional racism* refer to social, political, and institutional systems and cultures that contribute to racial inequality in employment, health care, housing, the criminal justice system, education. Avoid shortening this to *racism* to avoid confusion.

In general, avoid using *racist* to describe a person. Instead, be specific in describing the person's words or actions.

Cases in which the term *racist* might be used include identifying as racist a person's support for avowed racist organizations, statements calling another race or ethnic group inferior, or employing negative stereotypes for different racial or ethnic groups. *The video shows the candidate wearing blackface and making racist statements including, "You're not white so you can't be right."*

If *racist* is not the appropriate term, give careful thought to how best to describe the situation. Depending on the specifics of what was said or done, alternatives may include *xenophobic, bigoted, biased, nativist, racially divisive*, or in some cases, simply *racial*.

Racially charged, racially motivated, racially tinged

Avoid using these vague phrases to describe situations in which race is or is alleged or perceived to be a central issue, but that do not meet the definition of *racist* or *racism*. As alternatives, terms including *xenophobic*, *bigoted*, *biased*, *nativist* or *racially divisive* may be clearer. In some cases, the term *racial* is appropriate: *racial arguments*, *racial tensions*, *racial injustice*. Always give specifics about what was done, said, or alleged.

Do not use euphemisms for *racist* or *racism* when the latter terms are truly applicable. *Mississippi has a history of racist lynchings*, not *a history of racially motivated lynchings*. *He is charged in the racist massacre of nine people at a Black church*, not *the racially motivated massacre of nine people at a Black church*.

Radar

Radar is a lowercase acronym for *radio detection and ranging* and is acceptable in all references.

Rank titles

Most of these are TEs and are automatically populated in the manuals. Capitalize high-ranking titles like Watch Commander, Commander, Chief and Sheriff in most instances. *Coordinator* is not capitalized because it is a job description, not a title: *canine coordinator*, *volunteer coordinator*, *reserve coordinator*.

Note: Spell out rank anywhere it appears in the sentence. *Sergeant John Smith responded to the call for service. What does Sergeant Walsh need before he can ask to have [Officer_Deputy] Kaminski tested for drugs?*

Records retention schedule

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence.

Recurrence or reoccurrence

Recurrence: A periodic or frequent returning; return of symptoms of disease after remission. *The training committee should review certain incidents to determine whether training would improve future outcomes or reduce or prevent the recurrence of the undesirable issues related to an incident.*

Reoccurrence: A second or other occurrence. *Our Anti-Retaliation Policy is designed to prevent retaliation and take reasonable steps to see that instances of it do not reoccur.*

Redundant language

Redundant language clutters our writing and, as Marie Kondo tells us, clutter brings us no joy. A redundancy occurs when two words that mean basically the same thing are used together. For example, *Provide a brief summary*. A summary is a brief statement so there's no need to describe it as such. Instead say, *Provide a summary*. A redundancy, or duplicated meaning, also occurs when a modifying word's meaning is contained in the

word it modifies. For example, *The two groups will merge together*. Since merge means to bring together, you can simply say, *The two groups will merge*.

Here are more examples of common redundant phrases (left) and their concise counterparts:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------|
| Past (<i>or prior</i>) experience | Experience |
| He shrugged his shoulders | He shrugged |
| She nodded her head | She nodded |
| Emergency event | Emergency |
| Whispers quietly | Whispers |
| Shouts loudly | Shouts |
| The reason why | The reason |
| Collaborated together | Collaborated |
| Close or near proximity | Proximity |
| Period of three weeks | Three weeks |
| Future planning | Planning |
| Add an additional | Add |
| Stand upright | Stand |
| Favorable approval | Approval |
| Climb up | Climb |
| Basic fundamentals | Fundamentals |

Regard

Not regards, unless you're referring to expressions of goodwill or if used in the present tense third-person. *Send the officer my regards. He regards himself as a patriot.*

Registry Identification Card (RIC)

An acronym, pronounced "rick." Use *a*: *The person has been issued a RIC.*

Ride-along

Best used as an adjective or a noun, in which case, hyphenate. If used as a verb, do not hyphenate. *Was a ride-along authorized? He wants to ride along on a shift.*

Riot, unrest, protest, demonstration, uprising, revolt

Use care in deciding which term best applies. A *riot* is a wild or violent disturbance of the peace involving a group of people, and it suggests uncontrolled chaos and pandemonium. Focusing on rioting and property destruction rather than underlying grievance has been used in the past to stigmatize broad swaths of people protesting against lynching, police brutality, or for racial justice, going back to the urban uprisings

of the 1960s. Inciting to riot is a longstanding criminal offense involving two or more people.

- *Unrest* is a vague, mild, and less emotional term for angry discontent and protest verging on revolt.
- *Protest* and *demonstration* refer to specific actions, such as marches, sit-ins, rallies, or other actions meant to register dissent.
- *Revolt* and *uprising* suggest a broader political dimension or civil upheaval.

S

Safekeeping

One word, no hyphen

Safety Data Sheet (SDS)

Not Material Safety Data Sheet. Capitalize and then use the initialism.

Seasons

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence: *spring, fall, summer, winter*.

Seat belt

Two words. Some states use safety belt.

Semicolons

Semicolons represent a greater separation of thought than a comma but less than a period. They can be used to link closely related but independent clauses, provided each clause could stand on its own as a separate sentence. Semicolons are also used to clarify a series when the list of items is long or when there are clauses that need to be set off by commas.

Example:

Separation of thought – *A hazardous material is a substance which, by its nature, containment, and reactivity, has the capability of inflicting harm during exposure; it is characterized as being toxic, corrosive, flammable, reactive, an irritant, or a strong sensitizer, and thereby poses a threat to health when improperly managed.*

Example:

Clarification of a series – *Officers should take the following steps at a scene involving hazardous materials: Attempt to identify the type of hazardous substance, which can be determined by a placard, a driver's manifest, or*

statements from the person transporting the material; notify the fire department; provide first aid if it can be done safely and without contamination; begin evacuation of the immediate and surrounding areas; consider voluntary evacuation unless, by the nature of the substance, mandatory evacuation is necessary.

Note: A better option might be to write this as a list instead of a paragraph.

Semimonthly

One word, no hyphen. Means twice a month.

Separate from

Use *from* with *separate*; *separate than* is never correct. (See, also, *different from*.)

Sexting

The sending or exchanging of sexually explicit text messages or images by email or social media

Shall vs. should

Using the words *shall* or *will* indicates a mandatory action. *Should* indicates a generally required or expected action and does not carry with it the legally imposed duty that the use of *shall* creates.

Sick leave

Two words, no hyphen, whether used as a noun or a modifier. *Abuse of sick leave may result in discipline, denial of sick leave benefits, or both.*

Singular form (vs. Plural form)

Suspect says or *suspects say*, *deputy is trained* or *deputies are trained*: Be sure your noun and verb match.

Smartphone

One word, not capitalized.

Social Security number

Capitalize *Social Security* (but not *number*) in all references. Numbers are hyphenated, *123-45-6789*. Although you may see *SSN*, try to avoid the acronym, and use the full title.

Spaces

Use a single space between sentences. Alignment problems can occur when double-spaces are included in text that is copied into the KMS software.

Standby/stand by

One word, not hyphenated, when used as a noun or adjective: *they're on standby, standby assistance*. Two words when used as a verb: *Officers will stand by with the victim until all property is removed*.

State Legislature/state legislature

When using the formal name, capitalize, as in *Minnesota State Legislature*. Retain capitalization when the reference is specific to the state's legislature: *In June 2016, the Legislature amended the statute to include requesting a blood sample*. Although the word *legislature* is not part of the formal, proper name for the lawmaking bodies in many states, it commonly is used in this context and should be treated as such when the formal name is not used.

State names

- Capitalization: Capitalize *State* if you are using the full name, as in *the State of California*. Otherwise, do not capitalize *state*.
- Abbreviation: Spell out state names when they stand alone. In text with a city, states do not take a postal abbreviation; use the abbreviations below. Place state names in parentheses when citing a department name. Example: *He works with the Fallbrook (Calif.) Fire Department. She's a Fallbrook, Calif., firefighter*. (Note: In the Release Note introduction for a state legislative update, use the two-letter postal abbreviation when naming the Act or Bill, as in "2018 CA HB 926.")

| | | | | |
|--------|--------|-------|-------|-------|
| Ala. | Ga. | Md. | N.J. | S.C. |
| Alaska | Hawaii | Mass. | N.M. | S.D. |
| Ariz. | Idaho | Mich. | N.Y. | Tenn. |
| Ark. | Ill. | Minn. | N.C. | Texas |
| Calif. | Ind. | Miss. | N.D. | Vt. |
| Colo. | Iowa | Mo. | Ohio | Utah |
| Conn. | Kan. | Mont. | Okla. | Wash. |
| Del. | Ky. | Neb. | Ore. | W.Va. |
| D.C. | La. | Nev. | Pa. | Wis. |
| Fla. | Maine | N.H. | R.I. | Wyo. |

State's Attorney

You may also see the possessive form: *For all agencies dealing with this process, there will be modifications required based on your agency practice and State's Attorney's policy*.

Subpoena duces tecum

Orders the recipient to appear in court to produce documents for use at a hearing or trial. Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence; no italics.

T

That, which/who



Use *that* for phrases that are essential to the meaning of the sentence: *The state charged that the lease deal sprang from a web of fraud and deceit.* Use *which* for sentences where the phrase is not essential to the meaning of the sentence: *The team, which finished last a year ago, is in first place.* Hint: A *which* clause is usually set apart by commas, whereas no commas are used with *that*.

When referring to people, use *who*. Animals and inanimate objects are *that* or *which*.

There/It

Avoid starting a sentence with “there” or “it.” Linguists call these words used as subjects “expletive” or “dummy” subjects because they are standing in for another word or noun phrase. Expletive sentence construction often adds unnecessary words. This construction also sets the writer up to make a subject-verb agreement error.

Examples:

- Expletive construction: *It is important to log all incidents in the order of occurrence.*
- Fix: Logging incidents in the order of occurrence is important.
- Expletive construction: *There are many factors to consider when selecting equipment, as follows:*
- Fix: Consider the following factors when selecting equipment.

They/them/their

Traditionally plural pronoun forms, but increasingly used and accepted to refer to singular antecedents, especially for non-binary individuals. See gender/inclusive language entry for guidance on singular reference.

Time frame

Two words.

Time sheet

Two words

Toward

Not *towards*.

Trademarked information

- Unregistered or pending trademarks bear the ™ notice.
- Trademarks registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office carry the ® symbol.
- The ® symbol or ™ symbol should always accompany the trademark's first and/or most prominent appearance in a document. For example, use the trademark notice in the policy/section title (if the trademark appears in the title) and also in the first appearance of the trademark in the text.
- The notice need not be repeated in every use, except in individual policies, which are treated as separate documents.
- Do not use a trademark in possessive form. Do not use a trademark in plural form.
- This is a non-comprehensive list of the trademarked and registered intellectual property in policy content:

➤ **AMBER Alert™**

AMBER Alert™ is an acronym and a trademarked title that means America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response Program. Always uppercase AMBER.

➤ **Blue Alert™**

Alert system activated to speed the apprehension of violent criminals who kill or seriously injure law enforcement officers. Not in every state. Capitalize.

➤ **Knox-Box® Rapid Entry System**

The Knox-Box is a locked data cabinet used to store information pertinent to operating a building, such as hazardous materials (HAZMAT) data and plant shut-down procedures. Keys to the facility can also be kept in the cabinet; fire departments maintain a master key that can access the boxes, allowing rapid entry to buildings during emergencies. Knox Company manufactures these systems. Capitalize and use the trademark notice in the policy/section title (if the trademark appears in the title) and also in the first appearance of the trademark in the text. Note: The Knox Company itself switches between Knox-Box and KNOX-BOX. We use the former.

➤ **Smith & Wesson** - The company uses the & symbol. It does not use *and* in its name.

➤ **TASER®**

TASER is an acronym for Thomas A. Swift’s Electric Rifle. TASER International asks that the ® mark be used on first reference only, so it need not be used twice (title and text). Always uppercase TASER.

Remember, TASER is an adjective, never a verb. We do not TASER or Tase people. We do not refer to “a TASER.” The word TASER correctly modifies a noun, as in *a TASER device*.

In our manuals, we now use two text entities (TEs) for references to such conducted energy devices – one with the trademark symbol, for the first reference in the policy, and one without the symbol, for subsequent references.

➤ **TASER® CAM™**

TASER® CAM™ refers to the TASER Camera. It is registered and trademarked. TASER International asks that the ® and ™ marks be used on first reference only, so it need not be used twice (title and text).

Our manuals do not currently have a TE for the TASER Camera.

➤ **Tactical Baton®** is trademarked and should carry the symbol (from ASP, Inc.).

U

Underway

One word.

Upon vs. on

To improve readability, avoid using *upon* when the simpler word *on* will work equally well. Also avoid the overly formal word *whereupon*. Replace it with simpler words such as *so that*.

Example:

- Don’t write: *The training program is designed to build upon the conceptual foundation taught in the basic academy, whereupon the theoretical knowledge gained can be molded into a practical skill set.*
- Do write: *The training program is designed to build on the conceptual foundation taught in the basic academy, so that the theoretical knowledge can be molded into a practical skill set.*

Upon vs. when/immediately after

Avoid using *upon* instead of *when* or other less formal words to express the timing of actions or events.

In a sentence expressing a time-ordered series, *when* is often the appropriate and preferred word. Writers can often replace *upon* with *immediately after* or *as soon as*. Less formal language is more readable.

Examples:

- Incorrect: Upon completing the investigation, the report is initiated by the supervisor.
- Incorrect: Upon delivering the item, the officer will record the delivery time.
- Correct: Immediately after the investigation is complete, the supervisor initiates a report.
- Correct: The officer will record the delivery time as soon as the item is delivered.
- Correct: Members can be admitted to the area immediately after arrival.

Up to date

Can you substitute *current*? If not, hyphenate when the phrase modifies or acts as an adjective: *We have an up-to-date manual.*

U.S./US

Use the full form, *United States*, for a noun usage: *The finest law enforcement officers come from the United States.* Exception: a noun reference to the United States within character dialogue in a Daily Training Bulletin may be more casual and use the abbreviation, *U.S.* The abbreviation, *U.S.* (with periods and without spaces), is preferred for most adjective uses. *U.S. laws at the federal level are intended to protect the rights of all citizens.* Do not add an extra period if *U.S.* ends a sentence.

Username

One word when it refers to an online identifying feature.

Use of force

No hyphens when used as a noun. Hyphenate when used as an adjective.

Use-of-force continuum

Lexipol strongly discourages the use of any sort of use-of-force continuum or escalation scale. Without going into great detail here, the U.S. Supreme Court has said that the only question to be asked is whether “the officers’ actions are ‘objectively reasonable’ in light of the facts and circumstances confronting them.” See also *control devices* and *non-lethal*.

V

Vaccine/vaccination

A vaccine is a product that stimulates the body's immune system to make antibodies and provide immunity against a specific virus or other germ. Vaccination is the act of giving a vaccine. The terms are often interchangeable, since a person is receiving the vaccine while getting a vaccination. Use the term vaccination if needed to be specific about the act of giving or receiving the shot: the city's vaccination schedule, for example.

The terms immunization and vaccination can generally be used interchangeably. Don't refer to a vaccine as a drug, medicine or serum. Except in DTB scenario dialogue, avoid the shorthand vax or vaxxed.

“Vaccine passports”

Digital or paper documents showing that a person has been vaccinated against COVID-19. Some workplaces, governments and private venues require such proof. The term is acceptable, enclosed in quotation marks. But proof of vaccination is better.

Versus

Spell out in ordinary speech and writing: *The discussion focused on the proposal to revamp Medicare versus proposals to reform Medicare and Medicaid at the same time.* In short expressions, however, the abbreviation is acceptable: *The issue of fire vs. police has long been with us.* Use *v.* in court cases: *Marbury v. Madison.* Don't confuse *versus* with *verses*, which refers to lines from poetry, songs, or the Bible.

Virus's

The singular possessive form of virus. Not virus'.

W

Wastewater

One word.

Web, website

Don't capitalize *web*, the short form of *World Wide Web*, or other web-related words such as *website*, *webcam*, *webcast*, and *webmaster*. The web is a service, or set of standards, that enables the publishing of multimedia documents on the internet. The web is not the same as the internet, but is a subset; other applications, such as email, exist on the internet.

Whether/ whether or not

When you can substitute *that* for a *whether* phrase, omit *or not*:

I don't know whether she meant it that way. ("I don't know *that*.")

Regardless of whether you wish to press charges, we still have to arrest your husband, Ma'am. ("regardless of *that*.")

When the sentence wouldn't make sense if you substituted *that* for a *whether* phrase, use *or not*:

Her comment is offensive, whether or not she intended it to be.

Whether or not you wish to press charges, we still have to arrest your husband, Ma'am.

Which/who (vs. that)

Use *that* for phrases that are essential to the meaning of the sentence: *The state charged that the lease deal sprang from a web of fraud and deceit.* Use *which* for sentences where the phrase is not essential to the meaning of the sentence: *The team, which finished last a year ago, is in first place.* Hint: A *which* clause is usually set apart by commas, whereas no commas are used with *that*.

When referring to people, use *who*. Animals and inanimate objects are *that* or *which*.

Whistleblower

One word, no hyphen.

Wi-Fi

Capitalized and hyphenated. Wi-Fi has a shorter range than cellular technology but is convenient for sharing one internet connection among multiple devices. A Wi-Fi connection is sometimes called a *hot spot* (two words).

Note that Websters allows for this term to be styled without the hyphen; AP's standard may evolve as the term becomes increasingly familiar.

Witness's/witnesses'

When the word is a singular possessive, use the apostrophe and "s": *The witness's statement was recorded.* When the word is a plural possessive, add the apostrophe. *The five witnesses' statements were recorded.*

Workers' compensation or worker's compensation

Workers' compensation in all references unless the state has a different format.

Workforce

One word.

Workplace

One word.

Work site

Two words. No hyphen unless it is used as a compound modifier: *a work-site accident*.

Workstation

One word.

Wrongdoing

One word.

X

X-ray

Use this format for the photographic process and the radiation particles. Capitalize the “X” in all uses.

Z

Ziploc, zip-close bag

One word. If referring to the branded product, spell with no “k” at end. Capitalize only if it starts the sentence. Lexipol prefers the term *zip-close bag* as a generic reference.

Zip tie

Do not hyphenate.

Zoom

Video conferencing platform owned by Zoom Video Communications Inc.

Usage includes: a Zoom meeting, a class conducted on (or via, or by) Zoom, we used Zoom. Sometimes used informally as a verb, but that usage is not preferred.

Vertical-Specific Terminology

CORDICO WELLNESS APP

Asymptomatic

Avoid this medical jargon; use no symptoms, without symptoms or the like.

Burnout

One word.

Citation format

Citations should follow this general format:

<"Title of article."> <Author(s) name(s).> < Name of publication.> <Publication date.>
<OPTIONAL: unlinked url for content if source material was accessed online>

In some guides, each section may end with a subsection called Sources or References that lists the sources appearing in that section. The numbers in the list of references will match superscripted numbers in the body content of the guide.

The following are examples of the citation format in use in the References or Sources section at the end of a guide.

1. "Historical Comparisons of Morbidity and Mortality for Vaccine-Preventable Diseases in the United States." Sandra W. Roush, MT, MPH; Trudy V. Murphy, MD; and the Vaccine-Preventable Disease Table Working Group, *JAMA*. Nov. 14, 2007.
2. "The tangled history of mRNA vaccines." Elie Dolgin. *Nature*. Oct.22, 2021.
3. "The Link Between J&J's COVID Vaccine and Blood Clots: What You Need to Know." Kathy Katella. *Yale Medicine*. Dec. 17, 2021.
<https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/coronavirus-vaccine-blood-clots>

Compassion fatigue

Lowercase. A condition experienced by some first responders as a response to repeated witnessing of suffering, characterized by increased irritability, problems with concentration, negative emotions, and a sense of hopelessness.

Critical incident/critical incident stress (or severity)

Lowercase. Defined as stressful and potentially traumatic events encountered or experienced on the job. Critical incidents include working at scenes of violent crimes

against children, motor vehicle accidents with severe injury or loss of life, line-of-duty deaths, and shootings. *Talk about mental health before a critical incident occurs.*

Critical incident stress management (CISM)/critical incident stress debriefing (CISD)

An intervention technique following an incident (e.g., death of a child, traumatic injury or death of a member, investigation involving a heinous act of violence) meant to aid participants in mentally and emotionally processing the incident. Often facilitated by one or more trained persons. Lowercase when spelled out unless referring to the name of a specific program. (References in policy manuals are often capitalized as the name of a program.)

Emotional intelligence

Lowercase.

Goal setting/goal-setting

Hyphenate as a noun and as a modifier. (This is an exception to AP Style, which hyphenates only as a modifier.) *Much research has been conducted on the topic of goal-setting. Think back before considering your goal-setting strategies.*

Hypervigilance

Lowercase. *The body can recover from an extended period of hypervigilance.*

Hypervigilance Biological Roller Coaster

Capitalized. A concept developed by Dr. Kevin Gilmartin, which identifies the biological basis for a first responder's experience of alternating between the rush of excitement while on duty and the apathy and disengagement associated with being off-duty.

Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC)

A task force created in 1998 that includes law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies. Capitalize references to the task force. Spell out full name on first reference within each major section.

Lowercase for general discussion of the topic. *Internet crimes against children include recording and posting pornographic material involving children, as well as using the internet to lure children for sexual exploitation.*

On-duty/off-duty

As an exception to style in other Lexipol content, these are not hyphenated in all instances. In Cordico content, follow the standard rule to hyphenate only compound adjectives that appear before the noun they modify. *Strokes can occur after on-duty, non-routine strenuous physical activity. Alcohol can cause impairment to your performance while on duty.*

Peer support

Lowercase general uses. *Trained peer support personnel within the department can be a good source of intervention.*

Capitalize when referring to a specific program or team. *Create a proactive, trained Peer Support Team*

Teletherapy

Lowercase. Teletherapy is a treatment approach in which therapy sessions are conducted via a digital platform such as telephone, videoconferencing, email, chat, or texts.

(Teletherapy is also a specific medical therapy that treats diseased tissue with high-intensity radiation as gamma rays from radioactive cobalt. This kind of teletherapy is not referenced in Cordico content.)

Weight lifting

Two words. This is an exception to AP Style (which is to write as one word.)

CORRECTIONS, *with differences from CA JDM noted*

Arrestees vs. inmates or [youths]

Custody: For adults, *arrestee*, or *detainee* prior to booking; *inmate* after booking. *Arrestee/Inmate first name last name* on first reference; *Arrestee/Inmate last name* on subsequent references.

(In Custody DTBs, refer to specific juveniles by *first name last initial* before and after booking.)

Juvenile Detention: *[youth]* before and after booking.

(In JDM DTBs, refer to specific youths by *[Youth] first name last initial* on first reference; *[Youth] first name* on subsequent references.)

California Juvenile Detention (CA JD) manual

See the CA JD playbook for additional and exceptional style standards specific to this product.

Care liaisons

Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence.

Cellmate

One word; used in Custody. The Juvenile Detention Manual uses *sleeping room* instead of *cell* and has no correlating single term for another [youth] in the same sleeping room.

Commissary or canteen

This can be particular to the state. Capitalize *Commissary Manager*.

Correctional Emergency Response Team (CERT)

Capitalize.

Dayroom

One word.

Direct order

A written order issued by a qualified health care professional specifically for the treatment of an inmate's particular condition. Note that this term can also be used in a more general sense, such as a supervisor giving a subordinate employee a direct order.

Doctor call/sick call

Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence. The evaluation and treatment of an ambulatory patient, either on- or off-site, with a qualified health care professional.

First-in, first-out

Refers to food storage and the requirement of using older supplies first.

Four/five-point restraints

Clinical restraints that restrict movement by restraining the limbs to points of contact on a specialized bed. Applied when an inmate's disruptive, assaultive, and/or self-injurious behavior is related to a medical or mental illness.

Health authority

The Responsible Physician, health services administrator, or health agency responsible for providing all health care services or coordinating the delivery of all health care services.

Health Care Adviser

We use adviser, not advisor. Capitalized. Note: As of 2015, the TE [Health Care Administrator] replaced this term.

Health care professional, health care worker

No hyphen.

Health-trained staff

An officer/deputy or other facility employee who has received training from the Responsible Physician or the authorized designee in limited aspects of health care coordination. Most uses of this term have been replaced with care liaison or otherwise refer generally to trained staff member in the context of a specific issue or topic.

Inmate classification

A formal classification process that starts at admission and manages and separates inmates. Uses information about the inmates to reduce the probability of assault and disruptive behavior. At a minimum, it evaluates mental and emotional stability; history of escape or assault; medical status; age; and need for separation from general population. Inmate classification is periodically reviewed and revised as appropriate.

Inmate down

When using this as a compound modifier (*You made an inmate-down call*), use *inmate-down* rather than *man-* or *woman-down*. This also differentiates it from *deputy-* or *officer-down*.

Inmate Welfare Fund/[Youth] Welfare Fund

Capitalize. Corrections facilities may establish an Inmate Welfare Fund (Custody Manual) or [Youth] Welfare Fund (Juvenile Manual) with proceeds derived from inmate/[youth] telephones, commissary profits, vending machines, and other income. The fund supports a variety of programs, services, and activities that benefit the general inmate/[youth] population. This includes capital construction and improvement projects that support these programs and services.

Inmate worker/[youth] worker

Used to refer to inmates/[youth]s who are allowed special privileges. Do not use *trusty/trustee*.

Jail/custody units

Capitalize particular corrections facility units when using the formal name, as in *Intake Center, Unit C, B Block*. However, if you're talking about a block unit or a dormitory style unit, do not capitalize, as in *housing unit*.

Juvenile liaison officer

Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence.

Key set

Two words.

Lockdown

One word.

Mental health emergency

An emergency situation that requires an immediate response to an individual in psychiatric crisis, for the preservation of life or the prevention of serious bodily harm to the inmate, staff, or others. It is not necessary for harm to take place or become unavoidable before involuntary treatment being imposed.

Non-sentenced

Those who have not been to trial yet and those who have been found guilty but have not yet been sentenced.

Out-date

An inmate's date of release. It may also be written as *release date*.

Pepper products and OC

Use oleoresin capsicum (OC) on first reference and OC after that. Be careful about referring to a specific manufacturer's products. Note that *pepper spray* is considered jargon or slang.

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)/PREA coordinator/PREA Rule

Do not capitalize *coordinator*. Capitalize *Rule*; it refers to the implementing regulation that establishes standards to prevent, detect, and respond to sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

Pro per/pro se/in propria persona

A Latin term, abbreviated as “pro per” (no italics and do not capitalize). It is a status granted by the court and means the inmate is representing him/herself, rather than being represented by an attorney. This may also be called pro pria or pro se in some states.

Qualified health care professional

Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence. A physician, physician assistant, nurse, nurse practitioner, dentist, mental health professional, or other person who, by virtue of the person’s education, credentials, and experience, is permitted by law to evaluate and care for patients within the parameters of a license or certification.

Receiving screening

Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence. A medical screening to identify health risks before they adversely affect the inmate/[youth] or the general population. It should be conducted as soon as practicable but before corrections officers complete the booking process and always before the inmate/[youth] is released from the intake area.

Responsible Physician

Capitalize. A qualified physician designated pursuant to an agreement or job description; may also be the Health Care Adviser. The Responsible Physician supervises all clinical aspects of inmate health care and makes all final clinical decisions. *Note: As of 2015, the TE [Responsible Physician] replaced this term.*

Sallyport

One word. Secure entryway that consists of a series of doors or gates. Note that *Webster’s* uses two words, but we use one.

Standing order

Written orders issued by a physician that specify the same course of treatment for each patient suspected of having a given condition, and the specific use and amount of prescription drugs (e.g., immunizations, insulin, seizure medications).

Suicidal ideation

Having thoughts of suicide or of taking action to end one’s own life. This includes all thoughts of suicide, whether or not the thoughts include a plan to commit suicide.

Training Officer (TO)

Capitalize.

Treatment plan

A series of written statements specifying a patient’s particular course of therapy and the roles of qualified health care professionals in delivering the care.

Triage

The sorting and classifying of health care requests to determine priority of need and the proper place for health care to be rendered.

Trustee/trusty

Sometimes used to refer to inmates who are allowed special privileges. In all instances, use *inmate worker* instead.

Ware washing

Washing the silverware.

Yard/Exercise yard

Jargon, but one that is particular to corrections. Although we try to stay away from jargon, writers may use this common term in DTBs: *You tell them that they get yard on Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday. You leave the unit and ask a coworker if he heard anything about the units not getting scheduled yard time.*

FIRE SERVICE

Active shooter/violent incident (AS/VI)

AS/VI on second reference. Don't capitalize when spelled out: *active shooter/violent incident plan*.

Advanced Life Support (ALS)

Capitalize. Spell it out on first use.

After Action Report (AAR)

Capitalize, no hyphen.

Apparatus

Use this form for both singular and plural. *It shall be the responsibility of the [trainingManager] to take reasonable steps to see that any member who is required to drive fire apparatus as a part of normal duties has received all training required for competent, safe operation of the apparatus.*

Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ)

Capitalize. Person responsible for enforcing a standard or requiring adherence to fire and life-safety building codes.

Base hospital

Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence.

Basic Life Support (BLS)

Capitalize. Spell it out on first use.

Best Management Practice (BMP)

Use *best practice* instead and do not capitalize.

Call back

Chief officers can *call back* personnel to fill vacancies or increase staffing during an emergency. Not hyphenated unless it's used as a noun: *If staffing falls below minimum guideline levels, the [Battalion Chief] shall have the authority to call back a sufficient number of personnel to fill vacancies. The chief issued a call-back of all off-duty personnel.*

Carbon monoxide (CO)

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence.

Company officer/fire officer

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence. *Company officer* is a general term used to describe captains, lieutenants, and sergeants. *Fire officer* is a general term used to describe any officer (including chief-level officers).

Department types

We can identify departments as staffed by career, volunteer, or a combination of both career and volunteer members. In addition to city and county fire departments, there are fire protection districts, or Joint Powers Agreements (JPAs), formed by several cities and/or counties or portions thereof. These have a Board of Directors instead of a City Council or Board of Supervisors and are funded by the member agencies or a taxation of some sort (usually property tax).

[Division]

This is a TE. Capitalize when used as a formal name and preceded by the name of the division, which should also be in brackets: *[Administration] [Division]*. *[Operations] [Division]*, *[Training] [Division]*.

Division Safety Coordinator

Capitalize.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

Do Not Resuscitate Order (DNR)

Check caps and how it's used, whether it varies by state.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

Engine

A fire suppression vehicle that has three components (hose, water, pump). There are five types based on those three components (Type I through Type VI). Types I and II are used mostly in urban settings for structure fires. Types III through VI are used mainly for wildland fire suppression. Capitalize when identifying a specific unit and use numerals – *Engine 1*.

Engine company

A group of firefighters assigned to an engine.

Facepiece

One word. The portion of the self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) that covers the firefighter's face and mouth.

Family Support Liaison

Capitalize.

U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

Fire District/Fire Protection District

Capitalize when used as part of a proper name: *the Windsor Fire Protection District*. Otherwise, do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence. Fire districts are independent of the towns in which they're located. Fire protection districts are administrative units of towns. A fire protection district may contract with a fire district to provide fire and rescue service, generally in rural or unincorporated areas.

Firefighter

One word. But we give clients an option in the Questionnaire to use one word or two as a TE.

Fireground

One word. Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence. The operational area at the scene of a fire; the area controlled by the Incident Commander (IC).

Fire hose

Two words.

Fire Marshal

Capitalize.

Fire Prevention Plan (FPP)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

Fire service/fire services

Most sources use *fire service*. It is also called *fire and emergency services*.

Firesetter

One word; used in the context of *juvenile firesetter*.

First-due company; first-in company

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence and hyphenate.

Federal Responsibility Area (FRA)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

Gallons per minute (GPM)

GPM is OK on all references.

Hazardous materials (HAZMAT)

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence, and spell out on first use. Acronym should be all capital letters.

Health and Safety Officer (HSO)

Capitalize. A member designated by the Fire Chief to develop and maintain special training and knowledge about occupational health and safety, physical fitness, safety hazards, and fireground safety. The HSO coordinates safety-related training for other members and responds to certain incidents in the role of Incident Safety Officer.

High-rise

Hyphenate even when using as a noun: *A high-rise is any building more than 75 feet tall.*

Honor Guard

Capitalize. *Honor Guard Commander, Officer in Charge of the Honor Guard.* But *pipe and drum band* is not capitalized.

Hoseline

Commonly one word. Use the term *stretch* for extending hose. California commonly uses *hoselay* to define a standard or non-standard configuration of hose that firefighters use to reach a fire.

Hot wash

A meeting of all involved personnel on-scene to debrief the incident, including the actions taken and problems encountered. See also *Post-Incident Analysis (PIA)*.

Immediately dangerous to life and health (IDLH)

Do not capitalize the full term unless it starts a sentence; use the initialism IDLH after first use. An atmospheric concentration of any toxic, corrosive, or asphyxiant substance that to an unprotected person poses an immediate threat to life, would cause irreversible adverse health effects, or would impair an individual's ability to escape from a hazardous area. Interior atmospheric conditions at structure fires beyond the incipient stage are considered IDLH, as are a variety of rescue types.

Incident Action Plan (IAP)

Capitalize.

Incident Command/Unified Incident Command/Unified Command

Capitalize.

Incident Commander (IC)

Capitalize; use the initialism IC after first use. All incidents of magnitude are given a name (e.g., Lexipol IC). Once the incident has a name, all radio traffic to the IC uses the incident name. *Lexipol IC, this is Engine 1 making entry through the front door.*

Incident Command System (ICS)

Capitalize; use the initialism ICS after first use. The Incident Command System:

- Is a standardized management tool for meeting the demands of small or large emergency or nonemergency situations.
- Represents best practices and has become the standard for emergency management across the country.
- May be used for planned events, natural disasters and acts of terrorism.
- Is a key feature of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Knockdown

One word when used as a noun or modifier.

Knox-Box® Rapid Entry System

Capitalize, hyphenate (*Knox-Box*), and use the ® symbol on first use. The Knox-Box is a locked data cabinet used for storing information pertinent to the operation of a building, such as hazardous materials (HAZMAT) data and plant shut-down procedures. Keys to the facility can also be located within the cabinet; fire departments maintain a master key that can access the boxes, allowing rapid entry to buildings during emergencies. Knox Company manufactures these systems. Do not use the ® mark in the policy title but use on first use in the policy. Note: The Knox Company itself switches between Knox-Box and KNOX-BOX. We use the former. Also: *Knox-Box, Knox Company, Knox cabinet, Knox master key, Knox tones.*

Also Note: Some states use *Knox-Box® and other access box systems*. Consult the state's playbook.

Life Safety Code®

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)101: Life Safety Code® addresses minimum building design, construction, operation, and maintenance requirements to protect building occupants from danger caused by fire, smoke, and toxic fumes. It is not a legal code, however.

Lines vs. hoses

You “lay a line” at a fire. You “charge a line” at a fire. You “dry a hose” after a fire. *Line* is associated with water flow activities. *Hose* is the tube itself.

Live-fire training

Hyphenate.

Lockout/tagout

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence; one word with no hyphen. Safety procedures designed to control machinery during maintenance or rescue operations. *Lockout/tagout* procedures protect first responders from the release of hazardous energy.

Local Responsibility Area (LRA)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

May not

Whether “may not” means “shall not” or “doesn’t necessarily” can be unclear from the context. Be alert to this when using *may not*. Do not change *may not* in policy content without approval from Legal.

Mayday

One word; capitalize.

Medical Control, Medical Director, Physician Supervisor

Capitalize.

Medical Examiner/Coroner

Varies by state. Capitalize.

Medivac

Short for medical evacuation, generally using some sort of aircraft. You’ll find this written with both an “i” (medivac) and an “e” (medevac), even on the same website. We use *medivac* for our purposes. Most urban agencies use *transport* and then describe the method of transport (e.g., ground, air, Personally Owned Vehicle (POV)).

Mobile Data Terminal/Mobile Data Computer (MDT/MDC)

Capitalize and spell out on first use. Note: Law Enforcement uses *Mobile Digital Terminal* as well as *Mobile Data Terminal*.

Multiple-alarm fire

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence; and hyphenate.

National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT or National Registry)

Capitalize and spell out on first use. The national certification agency that establishes uniform standards for certification and recertification of EMTs.

National Fire Protection Association (NFPA)

NFPA is a non-profit membership association and research group that sets standards, codes, and best practices for firefighting, equipment, and fire protection. These standards are not law but can be adopted for usage by local governments.

NFPA standards

More than 300 NFPA standards outline criteria for building codes, professional qualifications for firefighters and fire officers, fire service equipment and apparatus, and much more. NFPA standards each have a number and a title:

NFPA 1001: Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications

NFPA 1851: Standard on Selection, Care, and Maintenance of Protective Ensembles for Structural Fire Fighting and Proximity Fire Fighting

Each standard is also designated by an edition: 2014, 2009, etc. NFPA updates standards on a three- or five-year cycle. Note that the latest edition of the standard is not necessarily the one used by the agency or the local/state government. Many governing bodies adopt a particular edition of a standard (e.g., the 2009 edition of NFPA 1901) and do not adopt the new version when it comes out. Note: Most NFPA standards are viewable on the NFPA website for free, with registration.

Format NFPA standards as follows: Use NFPA followed by the standard number, a comma, and then the full title. If using the edition, include in parentheses directly after the title. If including the title makes the sentence too cumbersome, you can use the standard number without the title. Examples:

It is the policy of the [Anytown Fire Department] that all members who operate firefighting apparatus, including tiller operators, shall successfully complete driver training that meets or exceeds the requirements of NFPA 1002, Standard for Fire Apparatus Driver/Operator Professional Qualifications (2009 edition).

Fire pumps on apparatus shall be tested as specified in NFPA 1911, Standard for the Inspection, Maintenance, Testing, and Retirement of In-Service Automotive Fire Apparatus.

National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

Non-standard or defensive response

Fire crews make a *non-standard* or *defensive response* when they stage nearby and wait for law enforcement to make the scene safe before entering to provide medical aid.

Patient Care Report (PCR)/Patient Health Care Report (PHCR)/Pre-Hospital Care Report (PCR)

Check with your state to see which one to use. Always capitalized and abbreviated as indicated. Note: The term *patient medical records* refers to the aggregate records that may include the PCR but is different from it. Do not capitalize or abbreviate *patient medical records*.

Peer fitness trainer (PFT)

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence.

Personal **Alarm/Alert Safety System (PASS)/personal alarm device**

Note difference with capitalization. PASS alarms are integrated into the firefighter's SCBA and enable the firefighter to signal for help during a Mayday. PASS alarms are also configured to sound if they don't detect motion for a certain period of time (15-30 seconds).

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence; and spell out on first use. Equipment or clothing worn by firefighters to protect against flame, hazardous materials, bodily fluids, or other hazards. PPE includes everything from the SCBA to turnouts (bunker gear) to boots, gloves, and helmet.

Post-Incident Analysis (PIA)

Capitalize; abbreviate after first use. An informal or formal incident critique to identify areas of strength and weakness in operations, encourage continuous quality improvement, prevent issues associated with mental and emotional stress, and identify equipment, training, or staffing needs. Types of PIA include the *hot wash*, *informal PIA*, *company-level PIA*, and the *formal PIA*.

Public Alert

Capitalize.

Public Information Officer/Press Information Officer (PIO)

Capitalize. We use the TE [Press Information Officer], but *Public* is more often seen; agencies will customize.

Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP)

Capitalize and spell out on first use. A call center that handles emergency calls for fire, police, and EMS.

Rank structures

There is an array of rank structures across the fire service. Some agencies use a hybrid structure that includes military ranks, such as *Lieutenant Colonel* and *Major*.

- **9-1-1 dispatcher/telecommunicator**
- **Assistant or Division Chief** — Capitalize. Mid-level chief who often has a functional area of responsibility, such as training; usually answers directly to the fire chief. Also called *Deputy Chief* in some departments.
- **Battalion Chief or District Chief** – Capitalize. First-level chiefs who are often responsible for running calls and supervising multiple stations or districts within a jurisdiction. A *Battalion Chief* is usually the officer in charge for a single-alarm working fire.
- **Captain** – Capitalize if this is a title (it can also be a TE). Do not capitalize generic *captains* who are usually responsible for a fire company and for coordinating that company's activities with other shifts. Some departments use the term *lieutenant* instead of *captain* for the same function. West Coast typically uses *captain*; East Coast typically uses *lieutenant*. Both are in charge of personnel on an apparatus. See also *company officer*.
- **Company officer** – Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence. Usually a lieutenant or captain responsible for a team of firefighters on-scene and at the station. The company officer is generally responsible for firefighting strategy, personnel safety, and the overall activities of the team on their apparatus.
- **Division Chief** – Capitalize.
- **Driver/operator/engineer** – Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence. This person operates the fire apparatus. The driver/operator/engineer is responsible for getting the apparatus to the scene safely, setting up and operating the apparatus on scene.
- **Emergency Medical Technician (EMT)** – Capitalize. There are several variations for this one, including EMT-B (basic), EMT-I (intermediate), and EMT-Paramedic.
- **Engineer** – Do not capitalize unless it starts the sentence or is part of a title. *Engineer John Smith*.
- **Fire Chief** – Top position in the department, though there may be instances where the Fire Chief might report to the Police Chief and/or a Public Safety Director. Historically, the Fire Chief answers directly to the primary elected or appointed official (e.g., mayor, city manager).
- **Fire Marshal/fire inspector/fire investigator/arson investigator** – Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence, except for *Fire Marshal*. These people inspect buildings and enforce laws related to public safety, building, and fire codes. Check with your state to see whether these positions have arrest authority and/or are sworn personnel.

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- **Hazardous materials (HAZMAT) personnel** – Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence. Our style is all caps for the acronym. If an agency has a HAZMAT team, there are several variations on levels of training (e.g., operations, technician, specialist). The OSHA HAZMAT training section is the standard for these distinctions.
 - **Incident Commander (IC)** – Treat as a formal title. Capitalize both words followed by (IC). Use *IC* on all subsequent references.
 - **Shift Commander** – Capitalize.

Self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA)

Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence. An oxygen tank and mask that keeps the firefighter from breathing in smoke or hazardous gases. Part of the personal protective equipment (PPE). It is both plural and singular, so **never add an “s”** (SCBAs). *Note: Not to be confused with self-contained underwater breathing apparatus (SCUBA) for water rescues.*

Size-up

Initial evaluation of an incident, in particular a determination of immediate hazards to responders, other lives, and property, and what additional resources may be needed. Can also be called a *Report of Conditions*.

State Responsibility Area (SRA)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

State Emergency Management System (SEMS)

Capitalize and spell out on first use.

State Fire Marshal (SFM)

Capitalize and spell out on first use. Check with your state to see if this is what their fire marshals are called.

Standards of Cover

Capitalize. Policies and procedures that determine the distribution, concentration, and reliability of fixed and mobile response forces for fire, EMS, hazardous materials, and technical rescue. Don't use *standard of coverage*.

Station

Capitalize when identifying a specific station - *Station 16*. Otherwise, do not capitalize for general use: *We arrived at the station within 15 minutes.*

Stockinet

A soft, circular-knit fabric in stockinette stitch that has considerable natural elasticity, is often napped on the back, and is used especially for bandages. Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence. Do not use *stockinette*.

Strike Teams

Specified combinations of the same kind and type of resources, with common communications and a leader. Teams are categorized and typed by FIRESCOPE and NIMS. Types I, III, and VI are the most common for engines. Teams can be made up of engines, trucks, bulldozers, ambulances, etc.

Swiftwater

One word.

Target hazard

A building or occupancy that is unusually dangerous in terms of life loss, or that has a high potential for property damage. A target hazard is often the subject of a target hazard assessment by virtue of its potential to overload equipment and personnel resources; involve atypical hazards; require special technical advice; require a multi-agency response; involve complex firefighting operations; and have a significant impact on the community if the building or occupancy were destroyed.

Team vs. crew

Check with your state SME or User Group. *Crew* is used mostly to delineate members of the same unit or department (engine crew). *Team* connotes an interagency group, i.e., *incident management team*.

Threshold Limit Value (TLV)

Capitalize. Refers to the concentration of carbon monoxide in the air. Reference NIOSH.

Turnout gear or bunker gear

Protective clothing worn by firefighters. Common terminology is *turnouts*. No hyphen.

Two-in/two-out

Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence. An Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standard that says you cannot send two people into firefighting operations unless you have two people outside to rescue them. This standard became effective in 1998. There are a number of synonymous terms: Initial Rapid Intervention Group/Rapid Intervention Group (IRIG/RIG); Initial Rapid Intervention Crew/Rapid Intervention Crew (IRIC/RIC); Initial Rapid Intervention Team/Rapid Intervention Team (IRIT/RIT); Rapid Entry Team (RET); Firefighter Assist and Search Team (FAST). It is not uncommon for clients to change this in their manual, even though it is federal content.

United States Forest Service (USFS)

Federal agency that manages public lands in national forests and grasslands and is responsible for wildland fire response on these lands.

Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)

This is written by FEMA as US&R. FEMA adopted the ampersand to separate the shorthand from the already existing “U.S. Army Reserve” (USAR). Lexipol uses *USAR*, (for both). If context does not provide clarity, spell out full term even on subsequent references.

Vehicles

Called *apparatus*. Fire service vehicles are generally recognized by their function. The basic vehicle is called an *engine* or *pumper* and typically has triple-capacity, meaning it has three components (hose, water, pump). Some agencies have giant pumpers that can only pump water, albeit at tens of thousands of gallons per minute. A separate vehicle, called a *hose tender*, is dispatched with a pump vehicle. Some departments have apparatus that can do five jobs (called a *quint*), and have other types of support apparatus for special operations: HAZMAT, high angle rescue, etc. Some trucks have aerial ladders and heavy tools, such as extrication tools for cutting apart wrecked cars. *Squads* have medical supplies and small tools. Airport rigs (*ARFF*, for aircraft rescue and firefighting) carry *light water* or *foam*, as opposed to water. A *brush truck* carries water, can pump, is smaller than an engine, and is used off-road for wildland fires.

Wellness-Fitness Initiative

Joint program through the IAFF and the IAFC. Note the use of the hyphen rather than a slash.

Wildland fire

Wildland is one word. West Coast terminology also uses *brush fire*. Midwestern states tend to use *prairie fire*. Check with your SME or User Group to be sure you’re using the right term.

Wildland-urban interface (WUI)

Used to describe areas where people have built homes or structures near or among lands prone to wildland fire. No caps; use hyphen between the first two words and use *WUI* after first use.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Automated license plate reader (ALPR)

Capitalize the initials; do not capitalize the spelled-out term itself. You will also sometimes see reference to license plate recognition (LPR). Note that in older policy content, this full term may appear already capitalized. Lowercasing it when an update is made to that policy content is optional.

Blue Alert™

Alert system activated to speed the apprehension of violent criminals who kill or seriously injure law enforcement officers. Doesn't exist in every state. Capitalize and use the trademark notice in the policy/section title (if the trademark appears in the title) and also in the first appearance of the trademark in the text.

Body-worn cameras

Hyphenate.

Brady

Italicize (except in policy titles and section and subsection titles, where italicizing isn't an option) and capitalize *Brady* but not words that follow it (*Brady* information).

Brady information is exculpatory evidence that is material to the guilt or innocence of a defendant and must be disclosed by the prosecution. Law enforcement officers can come across *Brady* information that must be passed on to the prosecution. Officers can also have *Brady* information in their personnel files or backgrounds.

Briefing

Use without *the* in DTBs. *During briefing, you learn that the demonstration is expected to become violent.*

Caliber

The internal diameter of a firearm barrel, ordinarily measured in inches. May also be used when describing ammunition. Express as a decimal with *caliber* always written out (e.g., .40 caliber, .223 caliber). Hyphenate when preceding a specific firearm, such as .223-caliber rifle.

Concealed carry weapon (CCW)

Spell it out on first use. Do not capitalize unless it starts a sentence. (Note that terminology for this may vary in some states.)

Critical incident stress management (CISM)/critical incident stress debriefing (CISD)

An intervention technique following an incident (e.g., death of a child, traumatic injury or death of a member, investigation involving a heinous act of violence) meant to aid

participants in mentally and emotionally processing the incident. Often facilitated by one or more trained persons. Capitalize the spelled-out words when referring to a specific program, but lowercase is OK for general references.

Electric vehicle (EV)

Spell it out on first use. Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence.

Field interview (FI)

Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence.

Field sobriety test (FST)

Do not capitalize unless starting a sentence.

Field Training Officer (FTO)

Capitalize.

***Garrity* rights**

Italicize (except in policy titles and section and subsection titles, where italicizing isn't an option) and capitalize *Garrity* but not the words that come after it (*Garrity* rights).

This is an advisement from the employing agency to the employee who is the subject of an internal investigation. The employee is advised of the requirement to answer questions for purposes of an internal investigation; that failing to do so may subject the employee to discipline (potentially including termination); and that compelled answers may not be used against the employee in a criminal prosecution.

Long-range acoustic device (LRAD)

An emerging technology used for crowd control and mass notification. Lowercase.

Mine-resistant ambush protected (MRAP)

Agencies can acquire this American military armored vehicle through the Department of Defense's Defense Logistics Agency (sometimes known as the 1033 Program) for domestic law enforcement use. Lowercase.

Miranda

Italicize (except in policy titles and section and subsection titles, where italicizing isn't an option) and capitalize *Miranda* but not the words that come after it (*Miranda* warning).

Mobile Digital Terminal/Mobile Digital Computer [MDT/MDC]

Capitalize; use acronym/TE after first use. Can also be *Mobile Data Terminal* (not Digital) depending on the state. Note: Fire uses *Mobile Data Terminal*, and there is no corresponding TE in Fire.

Noise-flash diversionary device (NFDD)

A tactical tool that creates a loud report and bright flash. Sometimes called other names, such as “flashbang,” “distraction device,” or “flash-sound diversionary device,” but NFDD should be used consistently. Lowercase.

Partner references

In DTBs, avoid using scenarios where there are two patrol officers/deputies in one vehicle because not all departments put two patrol officers in one car. Exceptions: if the second officer/deputy is a trainee or in a corrections transport situation (e.g., transporting inmates or juvenile residents to hospitals or court appearances, transfers between jail or juvenile custody facilities).

Peace Officer’s Bill of Rights (POBR)

The federal Law Enforcement Officers’ Bill of Rights (LEOBR) details 10 core rights intended to protect officers from unreasonable investigation. Many states have different versions of the bill, which are usually referred to as POBR.

Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST)

A state-level organization that sets selection and training standards for law enforcement. Both the name and standards vary from state to state. Because the names for this organization can vary by state, fact-check for the correct name when doing policy updates.

Pepper products and OC

Use oleoresin capsicum (OC) on first reference and OC after that. This is a term that is common to the profession and does not need to be spelled out more than once in each policy or DTB. Be careful, however, about referring to a specific manufacturer’s products. Note that *pepper spray* is considered jargon or slang.

Plainclothes

One word.

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)

Hyphenate “post-traumatic.”

Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)/PREA coordinator/PREA Rule

Do not capitalize *coordinator*. Capitalize *Rule*; it refers to the implementing regulation that establishes standards to prevent, detect and respond to sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

Sexual Assault Forensic Examiner (SAFE)

Capitalize and make sure that the state uses these.

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)

Capitalize and make sure that the state uses these.

Sexual assault response team (SART)

Use the acronym on second reference. Be sure to confirm whether the state uses a SART and if so, whether it has a formal name (if it does, use that instead of SART). Use the *a* or *the* before SART: *Whenever possible, a member of the SART should be included in the initial victim interviews.*

Silver Alert

Public notification system activated to broadcast information about missing senior citizens. Not used in every state. Capitalize.

Special weapons and tactics (SWAT)

Specially trained law enforcement units that respond to hostage incidents, counter-terrorism incidents, and other high-risk operations. SWAT is OK in all instances; no need to spell it out on first use.

T visa

No hyphen. The T Non-immigrant Status (T visa) protects victims of human trafficking and allows them to remain in the United States to assist in an investigation or prosecution of human trafficking.

U visa

No hyphen. The U Non-immigrant Status (U visa) protects victims of crimes who have suffered substantial mental or physical abuse due to the crime and are willing to help law enforcement authorities in the investigation or prosecution of the criminal activity. Specifically for victims of criminal activity.

Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (ViCAP)

A unit of the FBI responsible for analysis of serial violent and sexual crimes.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

City Manager/County Administrator

An official appointed as the administrative manager of the city. While the elected council is chiefly responsible for the legislative function, the city manager or county administrator is the person who executes the legislation on behalf of the city or county. In some cities this position is referred to as the council manager, chief executive officer, or chief administrative officer.

Elected official

Any individual who serves in the [City_County] government based on selection by a public vote, as well as any individual who is appointed to fill a position that has been vacated before the end of the elected individual's term.

Memorial

A permanent monument, museum, building, garden, plaque, or sculpture that commemorates or preserves the memory of a person, group, action, or event.

Temporary file, permanent file, or file

Any electronic document, information, or data, e.g., spreadsheets, calendar entries, appointments, tasks, notes, letters, reports, messages, photographs, videos.

Physical assets

All tangible items of value, e.g., materials, machinery, tools and equipment, vehicles, office supplies, furniture.

Public facilities

Certain city/county facilities available for public use; the designation is based on a local government's application and permitting process.

