

**INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE**  
**EXECUTIVE CORRESPONDENCE**  
**GUIDELINES**

**How to Write and Package  
Letters and Memorandums**

**Department of Health and Human Services  
Indian Health Service  
March 1999**

***"It should never be forgotten that the function of writing is communication."***

*--Theodore M. Bernstein*

*The Careful Writer*

# INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE EXECUTIVE CORRESPONDENCE GUIDELINES

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# Organization of the IHS Executive Correspondence Guidelines

These guidelines are arranged in seven chapters, each relating to a specific area of interest to Indian Health Service (IHS) writers. Exhibits appear at the conclusion of the guidelines.

- Chapter 1

The first chapter, entitled "Purposes, Principles, and Policies for IHS Written Communications," defines IHS expectations regarding the quality and timeliness of documents prepared for signature by IHS managers and decisionmakers.

- Chapter 2

The chapter on "Craftsmanship" provides advice on producing short, simple, strong, and sincere letters and memorandums. Its content has been adapted from Plain Letters, published by the National Archives and Records Service of the General Services Administration. A reference copy of Plain Letters is available in the IHS Office of the Executive Secretariat.

- Chapter 3

The chapter on "Form and Style" addresses the subjects of abbreviation, capitalization, compound words, numbers, punctuation, related word units, and spelling. It treats, to a limited degree, many problems frequently encountered by IHS writers, and uses the Government Printing Office Style Manual as the authoritative text on such matters.

- Chapter 4

The chapter on "Grammar, Word Preference, and Usage" describes IHS Office of the Executive Secretariat expectations in these areas and provides examples of proper usage.

- Chapter 5

The chapter on "Letter and Memorandum Content" contains recommended wording for the opening, intermediate, and closing paragraphs of letters and memorandums to be signed by the Director, IHS, or by high level officials. Further, it identifies when to prepare "Special Memorandums" (ACTION, INFORMATION, and BRIEFING).

- Chapter 6

The chapter "Letter and Memorandum Format and Assembly" contains specific guidance on how to arrange text and prepare complete signature packages.

- Chapter 7

The chapter "Correspondence Packaging and Tracking" addresses the receipt, assignment, tracking, and packaging of controlled correspondence. It also addresses the generation of reports and a variety of services provided by the Office of the Executive Secretariat.

- Exhibits

The exhibits give examples of the formats explained in the preceding chapters.

- Bibliography

The bibliography lists helpful references to supplement these guidelines.

- Index

The detailed index helps the IHS writer quickly locate answers to specific questions.

These guidelines are bound in looseleaf fashion to facilitate revision and supplementation. Comments and suggestions for improvement are welcome. Please send them to the Director, Office of the Executive Secretariat, IHS.

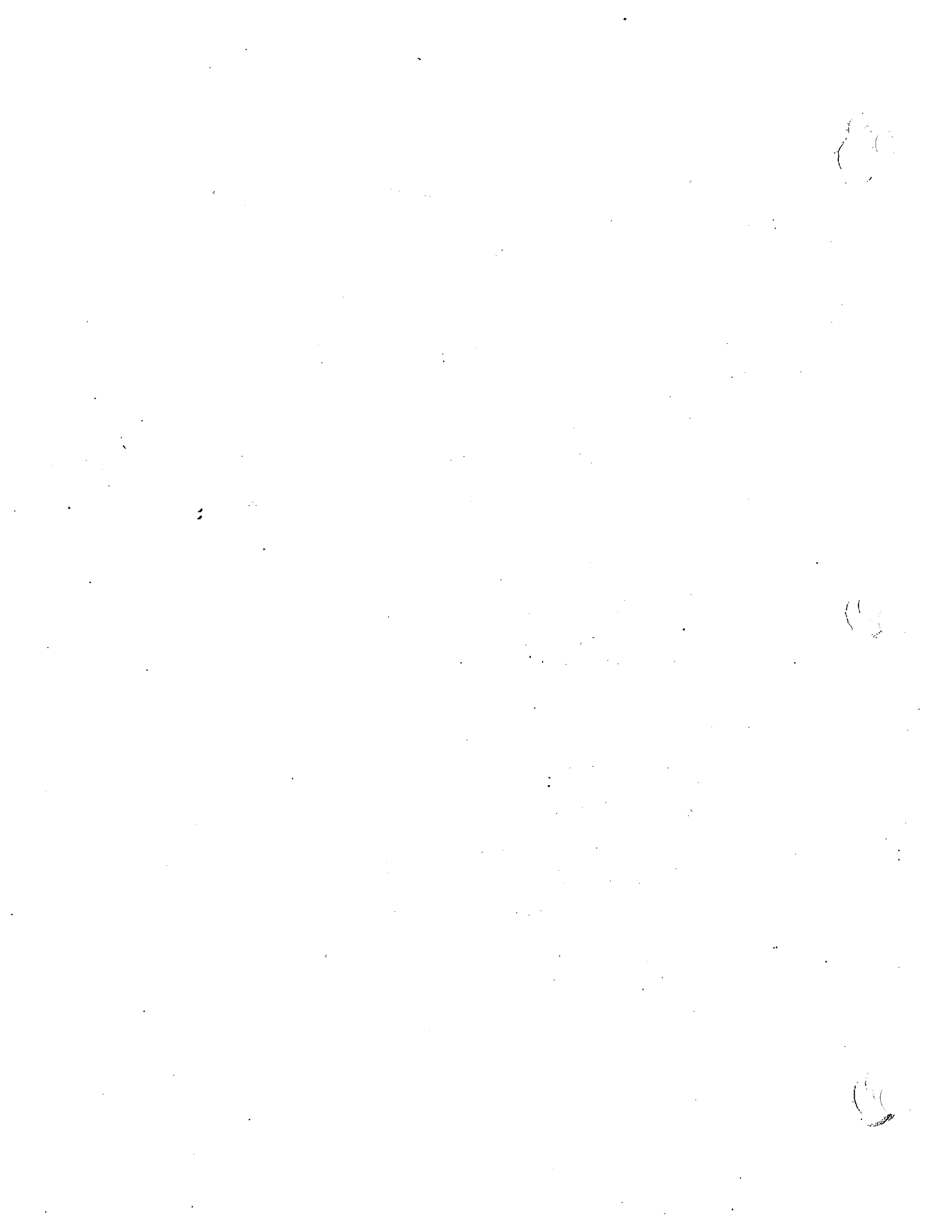
**Purposes, Principles, and Policies  
for IHS Written Communications**





# Chapter 1 — Purposes, Principles, and Policies for Indian Health Service Written Communications

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# Chapter 1 — Purposes, Principles, and Policies for Indian Health Service Written Communications

The purposes of this chapter are to explain the importance of the Indian Health Service's (IHS) written communications, establish the working context for using the material presented in subsequent chapters, and describe the desired effects of written communications. The chapter consists of three parts: (1) purposes for IHS written communications to external authorities and to internal managers and staff; (2) principles for producing effective letters and memorandums, and their packaging for management action; and (3) policies for certain written communication situations.

The information and guidance provided in this and subsequent chapters focus on written communications prepared at the Headquarters level and on Area written communications with Headquarters. Nevertheless, the basic material is equally appropriate for general Area office and Service Unit use.

## 1.1 Purposes

### 1.1.1 Purposes for Written Business Communications

"How does having to respond to all these letters contribute to the IHS Mission and improve the health status of American Indians and Alaska Natives?" This question is most often posed as a complaint by staff assigned to prepare responses to letters or memorandums from the Congress, tribal leaders, patients, employees, Federal agencies, and others.

The IHS serves over 500 tribes located in 33 States. This size requires accomplishing most administrative and management work, and considerable patient care related work, through letters and memorandums. The preparation of an effective, high-quality document is as important as providing high quality care to a patient. A single document could determine the availability of services or resources for the entire IHS service population.

Incoming letters often describe problems that patients, providers, tribal leaders, and others are experiencing with the IHS. Many of the problems are caused by the lack of information. These are regarded as opportunities to educate the letter writers and to make improvements in the IHS.

### 1.1.2 Purposes for Emphasis on Effective Written Communications

"I've read this memorandum (letter) three times and I still don't know what it says!" If the intended reader is unable to "decode" the message, it costs IHS in resources, services delivery, administrative action, and credibility with external authorities. The purposes for emphasis on effective written communications are to ensure that clear and concise information or instructions get to the intended reader; to demonstrate IHS program and administrative competence; and to assure IHS employees, tribal leaders, patients, clients, Members of the Congress, and the Administration that the IHS is operated and managed responsibly.

### 1.1.3 Purposes for the IHS Executive Correspondence Guidelines

"I've just received a controlled correspondence assignment to write a letter to Senator So-and-So for the Director. Where do I start?" "I have to prepare a memorandum to the Area Directors requesting them to survey an environmental problem and submit a report. Where do I start?" The IHS Executive Correspondence Guidelines (Guidelines) is designed to assist staff in approaching and completing a writing assignment.

The Guidelines cover writing style, mechanics, format, and packaging for writing situations experienced by Headquarters, Area office, and Service Unit managers and staff. The Guidelines are designed to assist writers in preparing documents that conform to standards for business communication and to Federal Government and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) standards. Furthermore, their use, with coaching and experience, will contribute to ensuring that all IHS documents are consistent in factual accuracy and completeness, style, tone, sensitivity, and respect.

Deciding on the content of a letter or memorandum is the essential first step. Writing to convey an appropriate and complete response to the reader in a clear and concise manner is the next step. Reviewing and editing by others is necessary also in producing high-quality documents AND in developing effective IHS writers and secretarial support staff. The Guidelines are the primary, but not exclusive, reference for reviewing and editing. They are designed to cover usual situations; therefore, flexibility and judgment are necessary for their effective use.

Formatting and packaging of documents are important in bringing a writing assignment to closure. The Guidelines are designed to assist secretaries and other clerical support staff in completing their responsibilities and coordinating their work with the Office of the Executive Secretariat (ES) staff. Writing for the IHS is a responsibility shared among program and administrative experts, secretaries, managers, and the Office of the Director.

## **1.2 Principles**

### **1.2.1 Writing Assignments Are Part of the Business of IHS**

For many IHS employees in Headquarters, and a growing number at Area offices and Service Units, writing letters and memorandums is a significant part of their job, and is necessary for the IHS to conduct its business. Furthermore, the ability to communicate, orally and in writing, is essential for supervisors and managers. Success in top management positions, in particular, is dependent on these skills.

Program experts must also have outstanding writing skills to accomplish critical Headquarters writing. This includes not only letters and memorandums, but also documents such as budget formulation and justification, Capability and Effect Statements, and reports to the Congress, Office of Inspector General, and other Administration authorities.

### **1.2.2 Letters and Memorandums Representing the IHS Will Be of High Quality and Timely**

Letters and memorandums represent the IHS, and for some readers that is the only measure they have of IHS's ability to deliver and manage services. The same enthusiasm and commitment IHS staff have for quality care are necessary for preparing quality and timely letters and memorandums. A well-crafted, responsive, neatly typed letter that is received promptly has a message of its own: "IHS cares."

## **1.3 Policies**

### **1.3.1 The IHS Correspondence Guidelines Will Be Used**

Letter and memorandum writing at all IHS levels should follow the IHS Guidelines. However, remember that language and grammar rules are not "set in stone"; every rule has an exception. For the sake of space and simplicity, however, not all exceptions are included in the Guidelines. Also, the Guidelines will change just as language changes; it will adapt to the needs of the IHS, and revised versions of the Guidelines will be issued in the future.

### **1.3.2 The IHS Will Respond to Letters and Memorandums**

Letters and memorandums addressed to line managers, administrative staff, and program staff will receive an appropriate and timely response. The kind of response will be determined by the incoming letter or memorandum; usually the response will be written.

### **1.3.3 Executive Secretariat Will Control, Coordinate, and Track All Correspondence Between Members of the Congress and IHS**

Members of the Congress usually write to the IHS Director; however, they will write also to Area and Office Directors and their staffs. Original congressional letters sent to anyone in Headquarters other than the IHS Director should be forwarded to the Director, ES. Copies of letters sent to Area offices or Service Units will be transmitted to the Office of the Director.

The ES will assign response preparation and coordination and signature level to the appropriate Area or Office Director, and will distribute copies of incoming and outgoing documents.

### **1.3.4 Director, IHS, Will Invite External Authorities to IHS Events**

The Office of the Director will process requests from IHS components interested in inviting the Assistant Secretary for Health and Surgeon General, the Secretary, other agency heads, members or staff of the Congress, and other prominent individuals to IHS-sponsored conferences, meetings, seminars, and programs.

Requests must be sent through the appropriate line authorities and will include an action memorandum for the IHS Director's decision, a draft memorandum or letter to the invitee prepared for the Director's signature, and a draft briefing package.

### **1.3.5 Letters and Memorandums Must Follow the Appropriate Lines of Delegated Authority**

The delegations of authority determine who has authority to take actions on behalf of the IHS and who is accountable for those actions. Supervisors and managers are also accountable for the actions of their staff in accordance with the delegations of authority.

Letters and memorandums must be prepared for the signature of the person with the delegated authority to take the action and must be cleared through the appropriate "chain-of-command."

Letters and memorandums prepared by IHS employees must not circumvent intermediate supervisors and managers to reach a higher authority, either within or external to the IHS.

Memorandums that direct line managers to expend resources, allocate resources, establish IHS policy, or take an official IHS position on a particular situation must be prepared for the signature of the Director, Deputy Director, or Director of Headquarters Operations as appropriate line manager in the Office of the Director. Memorandums with information or guidance may be sent through staff channels with concurrence by the appropriate line manager.

### 1.3.6 E-mail is for Sharing Information

The e-mail system enables IHS staff and managers to share information quickly and easily; however, it should not be used to obtain official approvals for actions or use of resources. E-mail messages that relate to controlled correspondence are to be printed and included in final packages sent to the ES.

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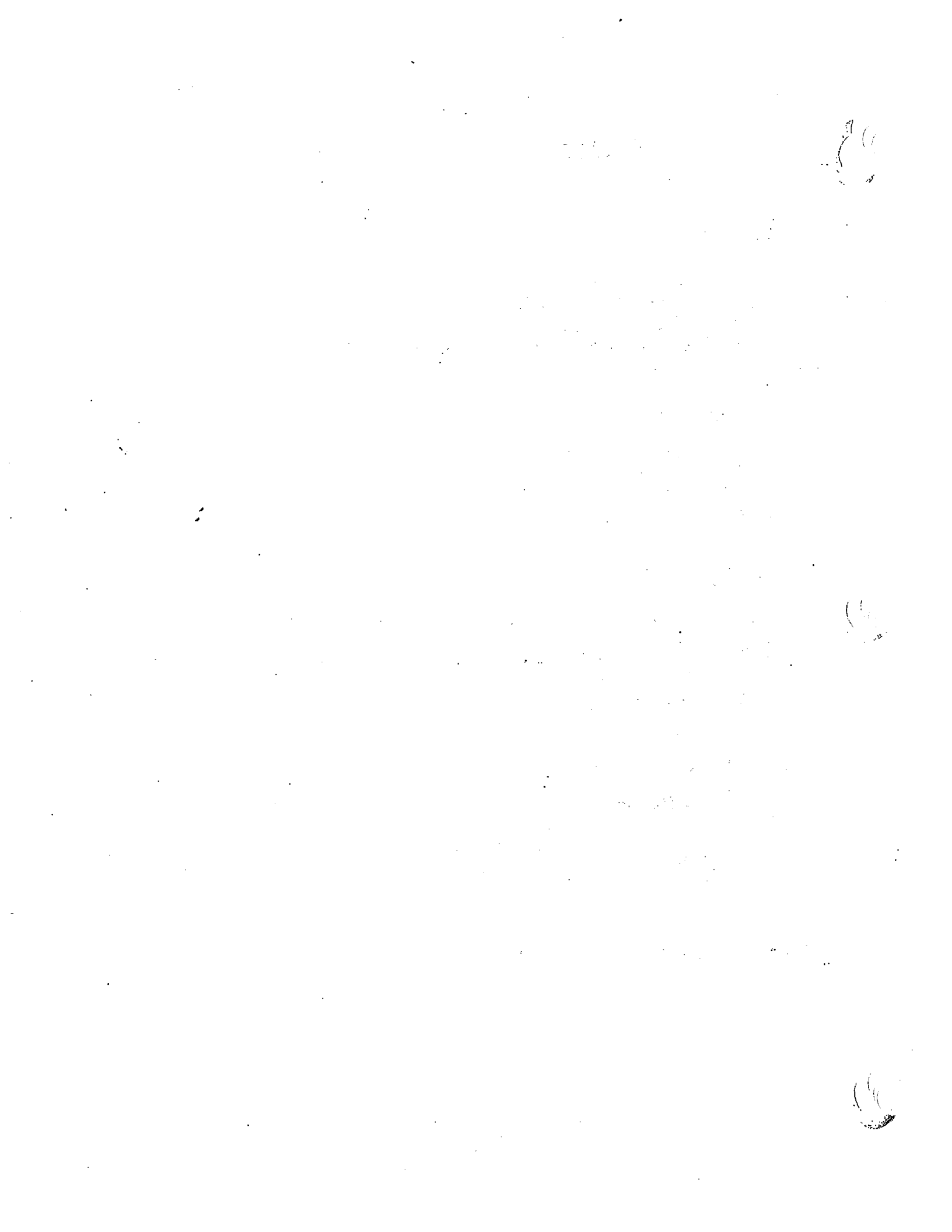
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# Chapter 2 — Craftsmanship

Good letters and memorandums are short, simple, strong, and sincere. This chapter is a ready reference to the principles of basic composition.

## 2.1 Shortness

### 2.1.1 Avoid Needless Words and Information

Use simple words and few of them.

- Wordiness

The following sentence was shortened and made more readable by substituting 4 words for the 11 in brackets.

[You need to furnish me with] information [to show whether or not] Winnebago County is part of the tribe's aboriginal hunting grounds.

Please provide information showing that Winnebago County is part of the tribe's aboriginal hunting grounds.

By removing the words in brackets and rearranging those remaining, the sentence below can be reduced from 27 to 12 words without losing any meaning.

If you want a refund, please complete the enclosed [application] form, [Request for Refund, over your signature, ] and return [it to this office at the above address].

If you want a refund, please complete and return the enclosed form.

Needless words are often incorrect.

The laboratory tested [out] the effect of acid on the fabric.

This is a [very] unique situation.

- Empty Beginnings

Another class of useless words is found in unnecessary phrases used to introduce sentences. These are called empty beginnings. Examples include: "We would like to point out," "For your information," and "Please be advised."

The phrase "As you know" and similar phrases insult the reader's intelligence. If the reader already knows what follows, why repeat it? If your purpose is to reinforce the importance of that information, merely state it without introduction.

- Double Words

Avoid doubling words with overlapping meanings like those below.

<u>Avoid</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Avoid</u>	<u>Use</u>
absolutely complete	complete	new initiatives	initiatives
advance planning	planning	now pending	pending
continue on	continue	personally reviewed	reviewed
cooperate together	cooperate	repeat again	repeat
enclosed herewith	enclosed	respond back	respond
end result	result	same identical	same
exactly identical	identical	serious crisis	crisis
future plans	plans	still remains	remains
join together	join	true facts	facts

### 2.1.2 Beware of Roundabout Prepositional Phrases

Roundabout prepositional phrases are easy to recognize and to replace with single prepositions or other parts of speech.

<u>Avoid</u>	<u>Use</u>	<u>Avoid</u>	<u>Use</u>
in regard to*	about, regarding, concerning	along the lines of	like
with regard to*	on, about, regarding, concerning	in relation to	toward, to
in connection with	of, in, on	on the part of	for, among
with reference to	on, about, concerning	in view of	because, since
in accordance with	with, by	in the event of	if
on a few occasions	occasionally	in order to	to
at the present time	now	inasmuch as	as
on the part of	by, among, for	in the case of	if, in
in a position to	can, may	on behalf of	for
in a number of cases	some	for the purpose of	for
in the near future	soon	in the amount of	for
		as of this date	today
		as to	on, about
		on the basis of	by

\* According to Webster's Dictionary of Usage and Style, "in regards to" and "with regards to" are illiterate variants of "in regard to" and "with regard to."

Sometimes a group preposition may be simply omitted.

Please tell us how many work-hours are spent [in connection with] auditing vouchers.

### 2.1.3 Use Short, Simple Verb Forms

Writing is clearer if we use the shortest, simplest verb form. Preferred use is shown in parentheses.

When we held the meeting (met), the division chief made the decision (decided) that Mr. Hatchett should take action (act) on the case at once.

He is negligent in (neglects) the details of his work.

The rapid growth of manufacturing had a tendency (tended) to draw workers from rural areas to cities.

The contract put an end to (ended) the confusion.

We reached an agreement (agreed) on the time schedule.

He made a talk. (He spoke.)

### 2.1.4 Avoid Qualifying Your Statements With Irrelevant "Ifs"

Some statements may need to be followed with "if" sentences either for the reader's understanding or for the Government's protection. But be sure they are necessary. The veteran who is told that his insurance account is in good order should know, without being told, that (s)he must pay premiums on time to keep it that way. On the other hand, a reader with only 30 days to file a claim has an interest in knowing what will happen if the claim is late, even if the question is not asked.

Omit explanations that begin by saying "the law provides" or "regulations provide." Department guidelines state that, unless you have a legal or technical reason, you should not quote laws, rules, manuals, or other specific instructions verbatim in letters. Limit the scope of your answer to relevant points, and state the information in clear, nontechnical language.

## 2.2 Simplicity

We don't write exactly the way we talk. A good letter uses plain speech that is well organized and grammatically accurate. It must be factually correct, with a mark of dignity suiting our Government. A good letter takes more planning and care than most of us use in everyday conversation.

## 2.2.1 Know Your Subject Well

Study all new laws, rules, guidelines, policies, etc., that you will be called upon to discuss. If the meaning is unclear, ask somebody who can explain, and do so before you receive an inquiry on the matter. Be ready.

Discuss new subjects with your colleagues. Think of questions you may be asked to answer and prepare answers in advance.

## 2.2.2 Use Short Words, Sentences, and Paragraphs

Everyday speech is full of little words. People tend to view those who use big words in their conversations as stuffy, and they form the same impressions about letters loaded with big words. Refer to Section 4.2.2, for big words to avoid and the simpler ones to use instead.

Some big word users find themselves in trouble for another reason--misuse.

This ominous task was accomplished with a minimum of disruption in general patient care. ("Ominous" means "sinister" or "threatening." The writer meant "onerous," which means "burdensome" or "laborious.")

He corroborated with a select committee appointed by the Chief Officer of the USPHS. ("Corroborated" means "made stronger." The writer meant "collaborated," which means "worked together.")

If you are unsure of the meaning of the word you plan to use, find a dictionary and look it up, or use a simpler and maybe shorter word that you know makes sense.

As short words make letters more readable, so do short sentences. Sometimes writers try to say too much in one sentence, and the reader may have to read the sentence several times to understand it. Your sentences will be shorter and more understandable if you will limit their scope to one idea apiece.

On the other hand, too many short sentences, especially in a series, may sound choppy unless the writer is skilled in transitions. Practical experience shows that sentences averaging 21 words in length are a fair goal for most writers. And short sentences intermixed with longer ones make the material easier to read.

Long paragraphs turn the reader off. The very sight of them is discouraging. When you start a new idea, start a new paragraph. That does not mean, however, that all sentences related to one idea must be kept in one paragraph. Try to keep most paragraphs between 7 and 10 lines long, and seldom, if ever, exceed 14 lines (lines, not sentences). If a paragraph or sentence must list three or more parallel items, consider numbering or putting them in bullet form. One-sentence paragraphs can be effective, if they are used sparingly.



Look over the page you have written. Do many sentences run longer than two lines and few shorter? Do the paragraphs look forbidding? Can you find shorter, plainer words than some of the big ones you have used?

We don't need to be rigid. A word that conveys a meaning better than any other should not be cast aside just because it is big; and a good, plain sentence that moves straight ahead need not be frowned on because it has more than 21 words.

### 2.2.3 Avoid Separating Closely Related Parts of Sentences

A verb is the key word of a sentence, with the subject (and object if there is one) closely related to it. Words that add meaning to a verb are called modifiers. Misplaced modifiers rank at or near the top of the list of typical problems seen in IHS writing.

For example, single-word modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) cause trouble when they are out of place in a sentence and change the meaning.

*Only he came to the office on Tuesday.*

*He came to the office only on Tuesday.*

In addition, prepositional phrases or relative clauses must be close to the word they modify, or the sentence doesn't make sense.

Confusing: *The official made an unfavorable comment at a neighborhood party about his agency's policies. (The party was not about his agency's policies; his comment was about his agency's policies.)*

Clear: *At a neighborhood party, the official made an unfavorable comment about his agency's policies.*

Confusing: *Problems are solved by researchers that are very complicated. (Written this way, the sentence says that researchers are very complicated.)*

Clear: *Problems that are very complicated are solved by researchers.*

Confusing: *The list of essential occupations does not include workers engaged in the extermination of rodents and predatory animals except those in Government service. (This sentence says that rodents and animals work for the Government.)*

Clear: *Except for Government workers, the list of essential occupations does not include workers engaged in the extermination of rodents and predatory animals.*

Wordy, misplaced, and overly complicated group-word modifiers appear often in material prepared by IHS writers. The following suggestions may be helpful when deciding how these troublesome modifiers should be treated.

1. Boil down relative clauses beginning with "who," "which," and "that."

a. Change clauses to phrases.

**Instead of:** *Mr. Harris, who is the attorney for the defendant, said he would appeal to the higher court at once.*

**Use:** *Mr. Harris, the defendant's attorney, said he would appeal to the higher court at once.*

**Instead of:** *The Committee that was established to study Federal records problems meets the first Tuesday in each month.*

**Use:** *The Committee on Federal records problems meets the first Tuesday in each month.*

b. Change clauses or phrases to single adjectives or adverbs.

**Instead of:** *The delay in answering your letter, which is to be regretted, was not because of our lack of interest.*

**Use:** *The regrettable delay in answering your letter was not caused by our lack of interest.*

**Instead of:** *He spoke in a manner that was courteous and appealing.*

**Use:** *He spoke courteously and appealingly.*

c. Change long phrases to shorter ones.

**Instead of:** *We were given 2 weeks for the completion of the report.*

**Use:** *We were given 2 weeks to complete the report.*

**Instead of:** *You will lose your right to an annuity by the withdrawal of your credits.*

**Use:** *You will lose your right to an annuity by withdrawing your credits.*

2. Keep the key verb near its subject and object or within easy reading distance.

**Instead of:** *Applications from handicapped persons in the nearby cities were also accepted.*

**Use:** *Applications were also accepted from handicapped persons in the nearby cities.*

**Instead of:** *The supervisor believed, as did members of his staff, during the rush season, that it was necessary to work overtime.*

**Use:** *Like members of his staff, the supervisor believed that it was necessary to work overtime during the rush season.*

3. Avoid saying too much in one sentence.

**Instead of:** *When disability annuitants recover, their annuity is continued for a period not exceeding 1 year, provided they are not reemployed by the Government during that period, in order to give them an opportunity to find a position.*

**Use:** *When disability annuitants recover, their annuity is continued temporarily (for not more than 1 year) to give them an opportunity to find a job. If they are reemployed by the Government within the year, the annuity stops.*

4. Keep an unmistakable kinship between the modifier and the modified. If the trouble comes from the position of the modifier, reorganize the sentence.

**Instead of:** *The enclosed booklet explains what the family should do if the worker dies to collect insurance.*

**Use:** *The enclosed booklet explains what the family should do to collect insurance, if the worker dies.*

## 2.2.4 Tie Thoughts Together

There are three good ways to connect thoughts: parallel construction, echo words, and guideposts.

- With parallel construction, the reader is prepared by one statement for whatever follows. Following sentences are then constructed in the same or a similar way.

*People are becoming more optimistic about the economy. Companies that laid off workers are rehiring them. Home sales are increasing. Fewer individuals and companies are declaring bankruptcy. The recession seems to be over.*

- Echo Words make transition easier for the average reader. An echo word may be one repeated from the last sentence, a word (most often a pronoun) that stands for a word or words in the last sentence, or words suggesting a relationship to the last sentence.

*The new regulation takes effect on July 1. It\* calls for a doctor's examination every 3 months if the patient is to continue getting free medication. This\* will ensure closer monitoring of the patient's medical situation.*

\* "It" serves as an echo word referring back to "regulation"; "this" serves as an echo word referring back to "examination."

When echo words appear at the end of a long sentence, the reader is kept suspended in midair:

**Unclear Echo Words:**

*Your employer should refund to you the excess amount withheld from your wages. If a statement fully explaining the reason for the credit is attached to the next quarterly tax return, Form 941, he may take credit for the amount refunded to you.*

**Clear Echo Words:**

*Your employer should refund the excess amount withheld from your wages. He may take credit on his next quarterly return, Form 941, for the amount refunded provided he attaches a statement explaining the credit.*

- **Guideposts** are adverbs and conjunctions that prepare the reader for the turn the new thought will take. The most common guideposts in letters and memorandums point to these turns: exceptions, cause or effect (conclusions), time or place, and additions.

Exceptions

*The question was easy; however, (still, yet, but, even so, nevertheless) no one knew the answer.*

Cause or Effect

*No Federal codes govern these cases; therefore, (consequently, thus, hence, accordingly) State laws alone must decide them.*

Time or Place

*The property was first appraised. Next, (then, afterwards, subsequently, secondly) the question of ownership was settled.*

Additions

*The letter is too long; besides, (moreover, what's more, and, too) look at the misspelled words!*

At times the adverbs "however" and "therefore" are used indiscriminately. Do not begin a new thought with "however" when there is no exception to make or use "therefore" when logic does not suggest cause, effect, or conclusion. Avoid this careless usage.

*The hospital has been open since April 1989; however, there is an out-patient clinic that sees 35-50 people a day.*

Without a guidepost, we may not see the connection.

Unrelated:

*Throughout the month we operated with a 10-percent reduction in personnel.  
There are only 25 unanswered letters in this office.*

Related:

*Throughout the month we operated with a 10-percent reduction in personnel.  
Even so, there are only 25 unanswered letters in this office.*

Transition between paragraphs is achieved in much the same way as connections between sentences. You can lead your reader straight ahead if you remember to do the following:

- Keep words that echo your last thought near the beginning of a new one.
- When guideposts are needed, select those that convey your exact meaning, being careful not to overwork "however" and "therefore." Modern writing lets us begin an occasional sentence with "and" or "but" in all but the most formal documents:  
*A child may start kindergarten at age 5. But not all 5-year-olds are ready for kindergarten.*

## 2.3 Strength

### 2.3.1 Use Concrete, Specific Words

Compare the examples below. Which gets the message across?

*Warning: The batteries in this unit could be a lethal source of electrical power under certain conditions.*

*Look out! These batteries could kill you.*

Try to avoid generalities. A letter should be specific. It is intended for one person and often deals with his/her problem alone. The reader who has waited impatiently for an appeal to be considered does not appreciate the general statement that "This office is making every effort to handle appeals expeditiously."

Do not tell someone that an appeal must be filed within 30 days of the date of an initial denial or within 90 days of the date of the original request for payment, whichever is later. Say that the time limit is June 15 or another specific date.

If you are unsure whether your reader is a household maid or household cook, "domestic workers" may be a handy term. If you do know, be specific. If you are writing about 20 people whose appeals were denied for 20 different reasons, "absence of satisfactory

justification," stuffy phrase as it is, may pass muster. But if you are writing about one person, be specific. Cite the exact reason the appeal was denied. If you are hard put to say something good about a "crackpot" suggestion, you may be forgiven for saying "your expression of opinion will receive consideration when the occasion arises." And if you file away such a suggestion, you may be forgiven for that, too.

### 2.3.2 Use More Active Verbs

Another way to strengthen your letters, and at the same time shorten your sentences, is to use fewer passive verbs and more active ones.

There are two voices in English: active and passive. In the active voice, the subject of the sentence performs the action expressed by the verb. In the passive voice, the subject is the recipient of the action. In most cases, the active voice is preferable to the passive voice. The active voice sentence more clearly emphasizes the actor. In addition, the active voice sentence is shorter and does not attract other problems of stiff, bureaucratic prose.

The passive voice consists of a form of the verb "to be" and the past participle of the main verb.

#### Form of "To Be"

am  
are  
is  
was  
were  
have/has been  
will be  
will have been  
is being  
was being  
are being  
am being

#### Past Participle

finished  
considered  
reviewed  
changed  
directed  
evaluated  
arranged  
discussed  
taken  
threatened  
reversed  
undermined

Contrast the vigor and conciseness of the active voice with the sluggishness and wordiness of the passive voice.

#### Active

*Mr. Jones attended the meeting.*

*In the X case, the Supreme Court upheld the lower court's decision that the defendant was negligent.*

#### Passive

*The meeting was attended by Mr. Jones.*

*In the X case, the decision of the lower court that the defendant was negligent was upheld by the Supreme Court.*

*We are considering these alternatives.*

*These alternatives are being considered by our staff.*

*The manager read with interest your constituent's letter.*

*Your constituent's letter was read with interest by the manager.*

On the other hand, passive verbs are sometimes useful:

1. When the doer is less important than the recipient.

*The patient was treated by several doctors.*

2. When needed emphasis is gained by putting the action or the doer at the end of the sentence.

*Divorce laws are enacted by the States. (Here the passive voice helps the writer emphasize that divorce laws are not Federal.)*

3. When the doer is not known or may not be identified.

*Much has been said for and against the Taft-Hartley Act.*

A sentence containing a double passive is always awkward and usually ungrammatical.

**Avoid:** *The old hospital is planned to be converted into tribal offices.*

**Use:** *They plan to convert the old hospital into tribal offices.*

### 2.3.3 Give Answers First; Then Explain, If Necessary

Don't tax your reader's patience. Consider the following:

*The IHS accepts applications annually for . . . (here you give the history of the application process).*

*Public Law XX provides . . . (then you quote or explain the law to show who is eligible for what and in what amount).*

*(And, at last you say) In accordance with the above, your application has been approved for payment in the amount of \$XXX, effective (date).*

Instead, give your answer before all the explanation:

*Your application for (describe the application's purpose) has been approved. You will receive (amount/kind of payment) beginning (date).*

Your reader will be far more patient with whatever else needs to be said.

## 2.3.4 Do Not Hedge

By hedging, a writer leaves a loophole to escape from statements that are slightly doubtful or not fully inclusive. Often, hedging is legitimate. Some writers, though, hedge out of habit rather than for legitimate reasons. They routinely use expressions like "apparently," "normally," and "ordinarily."

- Hedged statements lose forcefulness. Besides, the reader may conclude that the writer is unsure of the message.

*Apparently, you failed to enclose the money order for \$15 mentioned in your letter of September 8.*

Perhaps the writer had doubt as to whether or not the reader actually did enclose the money order. In that case, the statement might have been turned to a sure fact.

*We did not receive the money order mentioned in your letter of September 8. Did you forget to enclose it?*

At worst, needless hedging leads to needless correspondence by raising needless questions in the reader's mind.

The reader begins thinking of reasons why the report is not normal.

*Normally, a good work progress report shows both workloads and staff hours.*

The report does or doesn't include this figure. Why hedge?

*While your report shows the total number of vouchers audited during the quarter ended June 30, 1998, it does not appear to include the total number of personnel on duty during the same period.*

- Say it as if you mean it. Think twice before weakening your letters with:

Usually\*  
Commonly\*  
Normally\*  
Ordinarily\*

Apparently\*  
As a rule\*  
It seems\*  
It appears\*

In most cases\*  
In many instances\*  
As a usual case  
Seems to indicate

Alleged  
Seemingly  
Generally  
In general

- \* Office of the Secretary guidelines state that these words are to be avoided in correspondence to be signed by officials in that office.



### 2.3.5 Avoid Negative Words

If you want your reader to respond favorably, avoid negative words like:

blame	contend	fail	neglect
cannot	dispute	fraud	never
complaint	disagree	impossible	unable

Accent positive words like:

can	help	service	truth
credit	prompt	success	valuable
gain	recommend	thanks	vital

This does not mean that you should search for euphemisms, referring to an error as "an inadvertency," the poor as "the underprivileged," or death as "passing away." Strengthening your letters with positive words is not a matter of disguising your meaning. The idea is to approach your subject positively, accenting what is right, not what is wrong; what is good, not what is bad; what can be done, not what can't be done.

## 2.4 Sincerity

The keynote of sincerity is "be natural." If you want to write better, try expressing your ideas naturally. Forget pompous words and old-fashioned formal language ("please be advised," "the undersigned," "per your request," etc.). Often a letter or memorandum makes a poor impression because artificial writing practices have muffled the ring of sincerity.

### 2.4.1 Be Human

We lose sincerity by making letters and memorandums completely impersonal. We speak of "claimants, applicants, veterans, and suppliers," when we might say "you, he, she, or Mr. Jones." Instead of saying "you must apply by June 30," we are inclined to say "persons interested in the position must file an application by June 30." We remove ourselves from the scene by avoiding the pronouns "I" and "we" as if we ourselves were not people. We refer to ourselves as "this Board," "this Department," "or "this agency" and write with impersonal pronouns ("it will be appreciated," "it will be understood") as if we were machines. With both the reader and the writer out of the picture, it is hard to make any letter or memorandum sound human.

#### Impersonal

*It is with regret that this hospital must inform you that the above-named patient passed away on May 3, 1998.*

#### Human

*We are sorry to tell you that our patient, Mr. John Doe, Jr., died on May 3, 1998.*

*Please inform this Department of the present address of the claimant.*

*Please give us Mr. Carter's present address.*

Natural letters are written in human terms with:

Personal pronouns: you, he, she, we, I, our, my, your, his, and hers.

Proper names of persons: James Smith, Mr. Jones, Ms. Adams, Mrs. Clark.

Names that stand for human beings: child, father, mother, son, daughter, aunt, uncle, grandfather, grandmother.

Use such words whenever it is fitting to do so, remembering that the pronoun "you" is probably the most important word in any written communication.

## 2.4.2 Admit Mistakes

Some writers believe that mistakes can be ignored, glossed over, or rectified by meaningless words. Perhaps they think it would disillusion the reader to learn that the Government made a mistake. Or perhaps they believe admitting a mistake will open them up to legal action (a consideration that is occasionally sound, but usually an overreaction). Whatever the reason, the result is likely to be a communication that sounds more machine-like than human.

Suppose that John M. Smith was notified of a shortage on his account that was actually a shortage on John N. Smith's account. Discovering the error, the ignorer of mistakes writes to John M.:

*Please disregard the notice forwarded to you on April 1, 1998. The records of this office indicate that your account is in good order.*

The trader in meaningless words writes:

*It is the practice of this office to periodically review all accounts for the purpose of ascertaining their current status. From such a recent review, it was discovered that you were notified on April 1, 1998, of an outstanding shortage on your account of \$25, whereas the account is, in fact, in good order.*

*It will be appreciated that the large volume of work with which this office is confronted and the current personnel shortage render it virtually impossible to completely eliminate small errors of this nature, particularly those originating because of a similarity in names. This office wishes to assure you, however, that every effort is being made to give our clients the best possible service and to prevent recurrence of errors.*

*Any inconvenience which may have been occasioned by reason of the notice of April 1 from this office is sincerely regretted.*

Remember that the people to whom we write, and the bosses for whom we write, like ourselves, sometimes make mistakes. They are none the happier about mistakes that are ignored, glossed over, or bolstered by meaningless words. They are more interested in what we do about mistakes than in why we made them. As a matter of practical psychology, the writer who admits mistakes in plain language is surer of convincing others of his or her sincerity. Compare the following letter with the ones above:

*We made a mistake in notifying you, on April 1, that your account was overdue by \$25. Our notice must have been confusing to you because you have always been prompt with your payments. The fact is that your account is in good standing with no payment due until July 1, 1998.*

*Please accept our apology and our assurance that this office will be more careful in the future.*

### 2.4.3 Avoid the Overuse of Intensives and Emphatics

Words that intensify meaning are not so effective in letters and memorandums as you might think. Intensives include adjectives and adverbs like "highest," "deepest," "very much," "extremely," "undoubtedly," and so on. The reader may think you are putting it on pretty thick.

Emphatics--phrases that call special attention to a statement--are overworked in Government letters. "It is to be noted," "we would like to point out," "it has come to my attention" are empty phrases. Instead of using a trite emphatic, rephrase the sentence to place the emphasis on the important words.

#### Avoid

*We call your attention to the fact that you must have your report in this office by June 30 to meet the deadline.*

#### Use

*To meet the deadline, you must have your report in this office by June 30.*

### 2.4.4 Avoid Sounding Either Superior or Inferior

Express yourself in a friendly way and with dignity appropriate for the United States Government.

Tone-deaf writers turn out arrogant letters, with "we-are-smarter-than-you" overtones. Or, bending too far in the other direction, the writers sound too helpful, too anxious to please.

#### Avoid arrogance

*As we told you in our last letter, this Agency has no jurisdiction over tax matters.*

#### Use tact

*Unfortunately, our Agency has no jurisdiction over tax matters. We recommend that you contact Agency XXX.*

*We suggest that you acquaint yourself with all the facts in your case before writing this Agency again.*

*So that we can help you resolve your case, we need for you to provide the following information: (list the specific information needed).*

#### **Avoid an excessively helpful tone**

*It is a real pleasure to serve you. We do hope you will write to us whenever you have occasion to do so.*

#### **Sound sincere**

*We trust this information is helpful. If you have additional questions, please contact (name and number).*

### **2.4.5 Give Your Letter a Good Tone**

The sound of a letter is pleasing if it is simple, dignified, and friendly. Here are four suggestions for improving the tone of letters and memorandums:

- Don't appear to argue by point blank statements that the reader is wrong, misunderstands, or has not made his or her position clear. For example, don't say:

*You are under the misapprehension that the Federal Government makes old-age assistance payments directly to individuals.*

Such misunderstandings are best answered with enough information to explain how the program really works. Avoid implied criticism or condescension, with a reply that is simple and affirmative:

*You are right in thinking that the Federal Government is concerned with old-age assistance. But it does not make payments directly to individuals. That is the responsibility of State governments. The Federal Government helps the State by paying part of the cost. The State uses both the Federal contribution and its own money to provide old-age assistance payments for those entitled to aid under the State's assistance law.*

- Don't make statements that appear to tell the reader to "shut up." Don't say "this office has no jurisdiction over" whatever the reader is interested in. If you know who has, tell your reader. If you don't, say you are sorry you can't help.
- Don't think that every letter needs a finishing touch, such as:

*Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.*

Write a prompt, pleasant, efficient letter, and the sincerity of your purpose will be apparent.

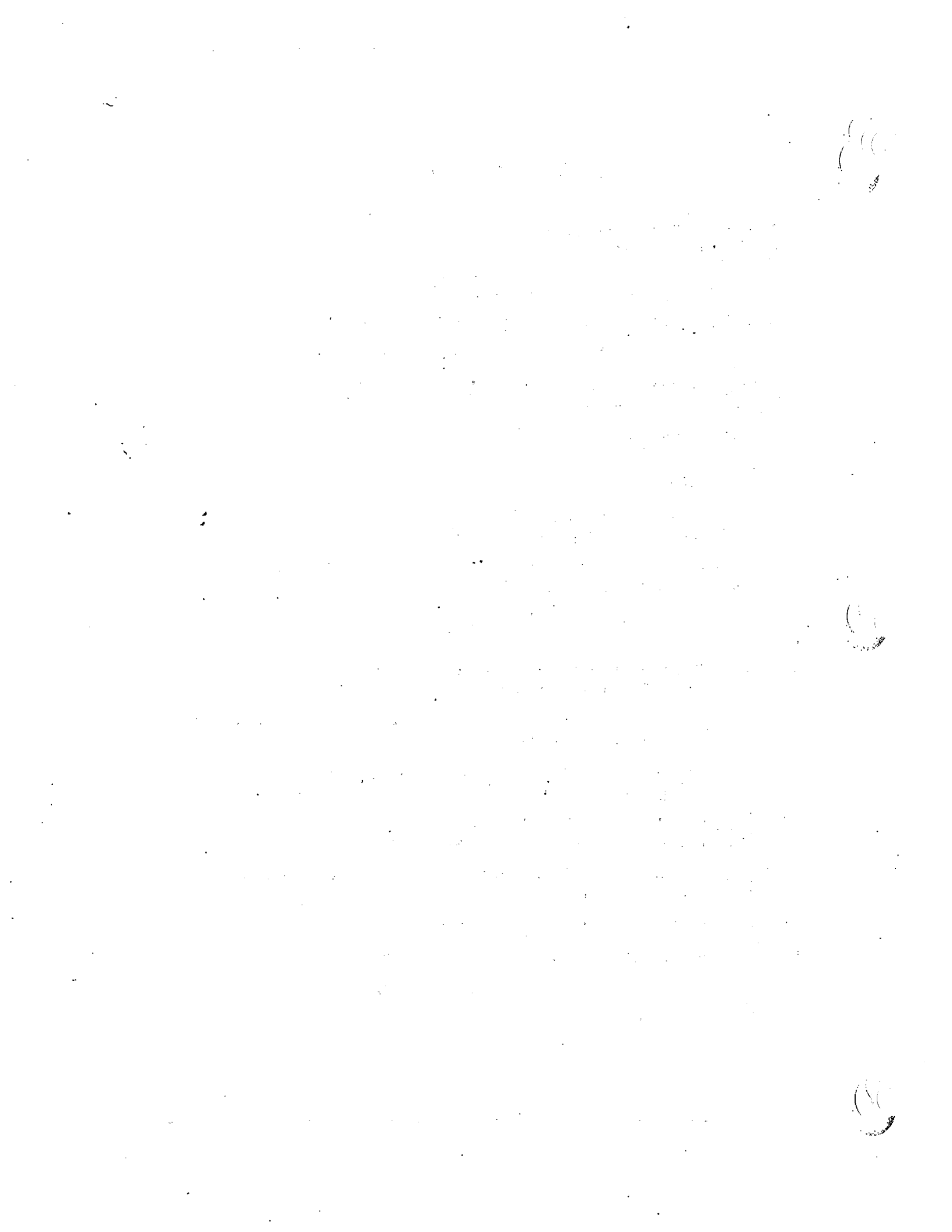
- Don't use superlatives, slang, or trick phrases. Tricks for attracting attention, useful enough in advertising and sales writing, strike a false note in Government letters. Key the tone of your letter to simple dignity.

## 2.5 The Letterwriter's Checklist

These questions are worded so that check marks in the "NO" column may indicate your correspondence trouble spots.

YES   NO

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Are most of your letters one or two pages?  | — | — |
| 2. Does your average sentence have fewer than 22 words?  | — | — |
| 3. Do you try to keep paragraphs short--fewer than 10 lines?   | — | — |
| 4. Do you begin your letters with the openings preferred in the ES guidelines (see Chapter 5)?   | — | — |
| 5. Can you think of four words that can take the place of "however"?   | — | — |
| 6. Do you paraphrase laws and regulations instead of playing safe and quoting them?  | — | — |
| 7. Do you know what's wrong with phrases like these: "makes provision for," "held a meeting," "gave consideration to"?                           | — | — |
| 8. Are your letters free of pat phrases like these: "the records of this agency indicate" and "this office has no jurisdiction over"?            | — | — |
| 9. Do you use personal pronouns freely, particularly the personal pronoun "you"?   | — | — |
| 10. Are your letters written in the first person ("we/I shall appreciate") rather than the third person ("this agency will appreciate")?         | — | — |
| 11. Do you prefer active verbs ("the manager read the letter") to passive ones ("the letter was read by the manager")?                           | — | — |
| 12. When you have a choice, do you use little words ("pay," "help," "mistake") and shun big ones ("remuneration," "assistance," "inadvertency")? | — | — |
| 13. Whenever possible, do you refer to people by name (Mr. Jones) instead of categorically (the claimant, veteran, applicant)?                   | — | — |
| 14. Compare your letters with the way you talk. Do they sound as you do when you speak carefully?  | — | — |
| 15. Do you answer a question before explaining the answer?   | — | — |
| 16. Do you encourage your secretary to correct obvious errors in your letters?   | — | — |
| 17. Do you avoid phrases like "attention is called to the fact," "it is to be noted," and "it will be apparent"?                                 | — | — |





(11)

(12)

(13)



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## Chapter 3 — Form and Style

The subjects of abbreviation, capitalization, compound words, numbers, punctuation, related word units, and spelling are discussed in this chapter. These guidelines discuss the elements that are most troublesome for IHS writers. The GPO Style Manual gives more detailed rules on these subjects and is the Federal Government's authoritative reference. It will be followed unless contrary direction appears in these guidelines.

### 3.1 Abbreviations

Abbreviations save space and make for faster reading. Use standard, easily understood forms, and be consistent throughout the document. The GPO Style Manual gives detailed guidance on abbreviation; e.g., using capitals, hyphens, periods, and spacing. Also see Exhibit 33 of these guidelines for a list of abbreviations.

Examples: *c.o.d.*  
*Dr.*  
*ft-lb*  
*U.S.*  
*U.N.*  
*NW*  
*e.g.*  
*e.s.t.*  
*B.S.*  
*CHS*  
*TWA*  
*J.R. Jones, M.D. (J.[no space]R.)*

When a term will be used several times in the text, spell out the entire phrase the first time it appears and place the abbreviation in parentheses immediately following. Thereafter, use just the abbreviation.

Examples: *fiscal year (FY) 1998 (later FY 1998)*  
*Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)*  
*Public Health Service (PHS)*  
*Indian Health Service (IHS)*  
*Office of Management Support (OMS)*  
*contract health services (CHS)*  
*Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)*  
*Public Law (P.L.)*

Spell out entire State names and the words "Street," "Avenue," "Place," "Road," "Court," "Square," "Boulevard," "Terrace," "Drive," and "Building" in the inside address of letters and in the text of letters and memorandums.

Use Postal Service two-letter State-name abbreviations on envelopes. However, use "Washington, D.C." in the inside address and in the text. Use "Washington DC" only on the envelope (no punctuation should be used in postal addresses). See Sections 6.2.3 and 6.2.13 for guidance on preparing address blocks and envelopes.

Never begin a sentence with an abbreviation; the entire expression must be used.

## 3.2 Capitalization

The basic rules of capitalization are well known to most writers. Capitalize the first word in a sentence, proper names, derivatives of proper names, and the first word and all principal words in addresses, salutations, and signatures. However, some situations are more complicated.

### 3.2.1 Common Nouns and Adjectives in Proper Names

- A common noun or adjective forming part of a proper name is capitalized; the common noun used alone as a general term for the name of a place or thing is not capitalized.

Examples: *Crow Reservation, Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, the Capitol in Washington, D.C.*

But: *the reservation, the commissioned corps (if PHS is not mentioned), commissioned officer, a State capitol*

- Capitalize "city" only when it is part of the name. Do not capitalize "city" when it stands alone or precedes the name.

Example: *Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; the city of Tulsa, Oklahoma*

- A common noun used with a date, number, or letter, merely to denote time or sequence or for the purpose of reference, record, or temporary convenience, does not form a proper name and therefore is not capitalized. As an organization, IHS deviates from the GPO Style Manual for certain terms related to publications and correspondence.

Examples: *Act of 1928, paragraph 4, fiscal year 1990 or fiscal year (FY) 1991 (if used again, FY 1991)*

But: *Exhibit D, Tab A, Chapter 6, Attachments (2), Section 1.1, Table 6.*

### 3.2.2 Organized Bodies

- The full names of organized bodies and their shortened names are capitalized; other substitutes, which are most often regarded as common nouns, are capitalized only in certain specific instances to indicate preeminence or distinction.

Examples: *Department of Health and Human Services, the Department; Denver Regional Office, Region VII; Indian Health Service Headquarters, IHS Headquarters East*

But: *legislative, executive, and judicial departments; departmental; the HHS regional offices*

### 3.2.3 Members of Organized Bodies

- Capitalize the common-noun names of members of organized bodies to communicate importance, distinction, or emphasis, and to distinguish them from the same words used merely in a descriptive sense.

Examples: *a Representative (in the Congress), a Member (of Congress), a Republican (member of a political party), a Boy Scout*

But: *a representative of a group, a member of the committee*

### 3.2.4 Countries, Domains, and Administrative Divisions

- The official designations of countries, national domains, and their principal administrative divisions are capitalized when used as proper names, part of proper names, or proper adjectives.

Examples: *United States, the Nation, the Government, Federal, Federal Government, the Congress, the Senate, the House*

But: *democratic form of government, a nation devoted to peace, committee of the Senate, federally approved, congressional*

Examples: *State of New Mexico, a State (definite political subdivision of first rank), State rights, Utah House of Delegates*

But: *statewide elections, the house of delegates in Utah*

- A term is capitalized if it is the short form of the official name.

Examples: *Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians (the "Band"); Cherokee Nation (the "Nation"); Tucson Area (the "Area"); Aberdeen Area (the "Area"); Rosebud Sioux Tribe (the "Tribe")*

But: *tribal, the bands/tribes (when referring to bands/tribes in general)*

### 3.2.5 Regions, Localities, and Geographic Features

- A descriptive term used to denote a definite region, locality, or geographic feature is a proper name and is therefore capitalized.

Examples: *the West, the Western States, the Western Hemisphere, the East Side (section of a city)*

But: *the lower 48 (States), located west of the reservation*

- A descriptive term used to denote direction or position is not a proper name and therefore is not capitalized.

Examples: *north, east, south, west, lower Michigan, western region, north-central region*

### 3.2.6 Calendar Divisions

- Capitalize the names of days, months, holidays, and religious days, but do not capitalize the names of seasons.

Examples: *Sunday, June, New Year's Day, Easter*

But: *spring, summer, autumn (fall), winter*

### 3.2.7 Titles of Publications, Papers, Documents, Acts, Laws

- Capitalize the first word and all important words in titles of periodicals, annual reports, historic documents, and in short or popular titles of Federal or State acts.

Examples: *Reader's Digest, Annual Report to the Congress on Sanitation Facilities Deficiencies, Revised Statutes, Senate Report, House Resolution 45, The Indian Sanitation Facilities Act, Public Law (P.L.) 86-121 (later P.L. 86-121)*

But: *Newsweek magazine, the statutes, seventh annual report, sunset law, Senate bill 701, House bill 1361, sanitation facilities construction authorities*

### 3.2.8 Titles of Persons

- Civil, religious, military, and professional titles, as well as those of nobility, are capitalized when used with a person's name.

Examples: *President (Last Name), Surgeon General (Last Name),  
Dr. (Last Name), Chairman (Last Name), Governor (Last Name)*

- Do not capitalize titles when they are used as general terms and are not referring to a specific person.

Examples: *the chairman of the committee, a lieutenant in the Navy,  
a doctor at the hospital.*

### 3.3 Numbers

Deciding if a number should be expressed in figures (numerals) or spelled out (words) can be a difficult task. General rules for the use of numbers are based on the principle that most readers comprehend figures more readily than words. However, for special reasons, numbers are spelled out in certain instances.

- Numbers less than 10 are spelled out. An important exception is for units of measurement and time.

Example: *The Aberdeen Area IHS serves American Indians living  
in four States.*

- When 2 or more numbers appear in a sentence and 1 of them is 10 or more, figures are used for all numbers.

Example: *We purchased 10 computers and 2 printers.*

Spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence. If possible, rephrase a sentence to avoid beginning with large numbers.

Example: *Twelve years ago . . .*

Not: *12 years ago . . .*

Example: *An acre measures 43,560 square feet.*

Not: *43,560 square feet makes an acre.*

- Related numbers appearing at the beginning of a sentence that are separated by no more than three words are treated alike.

Examples: *Fifty or sixty people will be attending the meeting.*

But: *Fifty people said they will attend the meeting, but we will prepare for 60.*

- Except in legal documents, a number that has been spelled out should not be repeated in numerals.

Example: *The office serves five reservations.*

Not: *The office serves five (5) reservations.*

- A unit of measurement or time is always expressed in figures (see below). This does not affect the use of figures for other numerical expressions within a sentence.

Examples: *The four-member team completed the procedure in 3 hours.*

*A crew chief and two chairmen staked the 1-mile line today.*

- Numbers of less than 100 preceding a compound modifier that contains a figure are spelled out.

Examples: *twelve 6-inch valves; 20 four-room houses*

But: *120 5-inch tongue depressors*

- Units of measurement and time are expressed in figures (age, clock time and calendar time, dates, decimals, degrees, mathematical expressions, measurements, money, percentages, proportions, and unit modifiers).

Examples: *6 years old, 3-year-old child, 52 years 10 months 6 days, 4:30 p.m., between 9 and 10 a.m., June 1997, March 6, in the year 2000, multiplied by 3, divided by 6, a factor of 2, 7 feet, 8 by 12 inches, 6 acres, 15 cubic yards, 1 gallon*

But: *tenfold, three-ply, six cases, two dozen eggs*

Examples: *\$3.65, \$0.75, 75 cents, \$3 (not \$3.00) per 200 pounds*

But: *two pennies, three quarters, one half dollar*



Examples: *12 percent, 25.5 percent, 8 minutes, 6 hours,  
5 days, 3 fiscal years, 2 to 4 hours*

But: *four centuries, three quarters (9 months), one-half hour*

Examples: *5-day week, 8-hour day, 10-foot pole, ½-inch pipe*

But: *two-story house, five-man board, \$20 million airfield*

- Fractions standing alone, or if followed by "of a" or "of an" or "by," are spelled out. The numerical form is used in a unit modifier or in a compound fraction.

Examples: *increased by one-half, two-thirds of a group*

But: *½ to 1¼ pages, 3 ½ cans, ½-inch pipe*

- Round numbers and indefinite expressions are spelled out. However, such words as "nearly," "about," "around," and "approximately" do not create indefinite expressions.

Examples: *the seventies, the early seventies, midthirties,  
a thousand and one meanings, hundredfold*

But: *the early 1870s, mid-1971, 40-plus people, the bass  
weighed about 6 pounds*

- For easy grasp, large numbers of a million or more that end with four or more zeros are expressed by combining figures and words.

Examples: *\$12 million, \$2.75 billion, 4 ½ million people*

But: *\$299,789,665; \$1,200,390,180*

- Ordinal numbers less than "10th" are spelled out, except days preceding months and military units. These are always expressed as figures unless beginning a sentence or used with "Corps."

Examples: *3rd of May (but May 3), First Congress, Second  
Congressional District, ninth birthday, first grade, 7th Fleet,  
XII Corps*

- When more than one ordinal appears in a sentence and at least one is greater than "10th," figures are used for all.

Examples: *He served in the 9th and 10th Congresses. Please read the 8th and 12th chapters.*

But: *The report was the fourth of 14.*

- With few exceptions, for ordinal numbers beginning with "10th," figures are used.

Examples: *82nd Congress, 23rd Congressional District, 66th birthday, 11th grade*

But: *Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit, Seventeenth Decennial Census (title)*

- Spell out numbers when they are used in (1) proper names, (2) serious subjects such as legal proclamations, and (3) formal writing such as formal printed invitations.

Examples: *Three Rivers, PA; the Thirteen Original States; Air Force One; ceremony to honor Dr. Jane Smith on the twelfth of August, nineteen hundred ninety-two*

### 3.4 Punctuation

Punctuation is a device used to clarify the meaning of written language. The GPO Style Manual and other references should be consulted for help with solutions not covered in the following paragraphs. (See the bibliography.)

#### 3.4.1 Apostrophe

- The possessive case of a singular or plural noun not ending in "s" is formed by adding an apostrophe and "s."

Examples: *man's, men's, child's, children's, woman's, women's*

- The possessive case of a singular or plural noun that ends in "s" or with an "s" sound is usually formed by adding an apostrophe only (in accordance with the GPO Style Manual).

Examples: *Ms. Lopez' letter, Mr. Phillips' pen, agencies' rules, physicians' offices*

- Joint possession (something belonging to two or more people) is shown by placing an apostrophe on the last element of a series, while individual or alternative possession requires the use of an apostrophe on each element of a series.

Examples: *soldiers and sailors' home, editor's or proofreader's opinion*

- An apostrophe should not be used after names of countries and other organized bodies ending in "s," or after words more descriptive than possessive (not indicating personal possession), except when the plural does not end in "s."

Examples: *Headquarters policy, United States control, editors handbook*

- In addition to showing possession, an apostrophe is used to indicate contractions and the omission of figures or letters.

Examples: *I've (I have), it's (it is), spirit of '76*

- Do not use an apostrophe with an acronym in parentheses.

Examples: *Indian Health Service's (IHS)*

### 3.4.2 Brackets

- Use brackets in pairs to enclose a correction, to supply something omitted, to explain or to identify, to instruct or to add comment, and to enclose "sic" when it is used to show that an error in a quotation has been recognized but not corrected.

Examples: *He arrived at 13 [12] o'clock.  
Mr. Adams [arrived] late.  
The president pro tem [Arnold] spoke briefly.  
The report is as follows [read first paragraph].  
"It's [sic] counterpart is here."*

- Many editors use brackets to indicate text that should be deleted. Other conventions used by editors for indicating corrections to text can be found in Chapter 1 of the GPO Style Manual.

Examples: *The IHS writer [almost] always proofreads every draft letter.*

### 3.4.3 Colon

- The colon is used after a salutation.

Examples: *Dear Senator Jackson: Dear Governor Smith:*

- The colon is used to separate hours and minutes in clock time.

Examples: *2:40 p.m., 8:15 a.m. to 11:15 p.m.*

But: *8 a.m. to 11 p.m.*

- The colon is used to separate two independent clauses when the second defines or amplifies the first and no coordinating conjunction or transitional expression joins the two. (See Section 3.4.13.)

Examples: *The position is ideal: the work is in your field of expertise and the location is 5 miles from your home.*

- When expressions like "such as the following," "as follows," "thus," and "these" precede a list of words, phrases, or clauses, place a colon between the expression and the series.

Example: *Workgroups are addressing concerns such as the following: responding to external authorities, managing contract health services, managing third-party resources, developing human resources, and restructuring materiel support.*

- A colon is not used if an explanatory series follows a preposition or a verb unless the items in the series are listed on separate lines.

Avoid: *This handbook consists of: policies, guidelines, and exhibits.*

Use: *This handbook consists of policies, guidelines, and exhibits.*

Avoid: *Our office staff includes: 10 physicians, 5 nurses, and 2 medical records clerks.*

Use: *Our office staff includes 10 physicians, 5 nurses, and 2 medical records clerks.*

Or: *Our office staff includes:*

*10 physicians  
5 nurses  
2 medical records clerks*

### 3.4.4 Comma

Use a comma in the following situations:

- To separate two words or figures that might otherwise be misunderstood.

Examples: *Instead of hundreds, thousands came.*

*For veterans, pensions can be their main source of income.*

*In 1981, 800 officers were separated.*

- After the year in complete dates within a sentence.

Example: *Due dates of April 9, 1989, and July 16, 1990, were established.*

- To separate city and State, and after the name of the State when both appear in a sentence, except where possession is indicated.

Examples: *Rockville, Maryland*

*The IHS Hospital in Albuquerque, New Mexico, is open.*

*Alexandria, Virginia's waterfront*

- Before a direct quotation following an introductory phrase.

Examples: He said, *"Now or never."*

- After each of a series of coordinate qualifying words.

Examples: *short, swift streams*

*He is a young, eager, and intelligent man.*

But: *short tributary streams*

*He is a clever young man. (No comma when the final modifier is considered part of the noun modified.)*

- Between an introductory modifying phrase and the subject modified.

Examples: *Beset by the enemy, they retreated.*

- Before and after Jr., Sr., Ph.D., Inc., etc., within a sentence.

Examples: *R. Smallwood, Jr., auctioneer*

*Brown, A.H., Jr. (not Brown, Jr., A.H.)*

*J.R. James, M.D., Director*

- To set off parenthetical words, phrases, or clauses.

Examples: *Our understanding, from previous meetings, was that  
The IHS would be notified of any proposed changes.*

*You should remember, however, that the Congress must concur.*

- After each member within a series of three or more words, phrases, letters, or figures joined by "and," "but," "or," or "nor."

Examples: *horses, mules, and cattle; by the bolt, by the yard,  
or in remnants; 2 days, 3 hours, and 4 minutes (series)*

But: *horses and mules and cattle; 2 days 3 hours 4 minutes (age)*

- Between two complete sentences joined by "and," "but," "or," or "nor."

Examples: *Physicians, nurses, and pharmacists were at the clinic  
during the emergency, and engineers and sanitarians worked  
in the community.*

- Brief and tightly connected clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction may be unpunctuated.

Examples: *We have tested the equipment and we are pleased.*

- Between a person's title and the name of the organization in the absence of the words "of" or "of the."

Examples: *Director, Indian Health Service; Chairman,  
Peer Review Committee*

- Inside a closing quotation mark.

Examples: *"The decade of the 1990s will see IHS moving to  
even greater professionalism," declared the speaker.*

*We are sending you the pamphlet "Alerting Your Community  
to AIDS," since it answers all the questions you raised.*

- Before abbreviations of compass directions.

Example: *6430 Princeton Drive, SW*

Do not use a comma in the following situations:

- Before a ZIP Code in an address.

Example: *Rockville, Maryland 20857*

- Between month (or holiday or season) and year in dates.

Examples: *June 1990, Labor Day 1991, spring 1992*

### 3.4.5 Dash

The dash and the hyphen are used quite differently in punctuation. But since there is no dash key on the keyboard, we strike the hyphen key twice. In print, the dash is a solid line.

Use a dash in the following situations:

- To mark a sudden break or abrupt change in thought.

Example: *We will distribute funds--and are counting on your help to obligate them quickly--for all approved projects.*

- Instead of commas or parentheses, if doing so clarifies the meaning.

Example: *These are some of the appurtenances--pipes, valves, and fittings--that can be found in any pumphouse.*

Do not use a dash in the following situations:

- At the beginning of any line of type. (For exceptions see GPO Style Manual.)
- Immediately after a comma, colon, or semicolon.

### 3.4.6 Ellipses Marks

- Three periods are used to show that something has been left out of material (usually printed material) you are quoting. If you omit words from the end of a sentence and are using periods to show ellipsis, use a fourth period for the end of the sentence.

Example: *"The exact cause of this medical condition has never been determined . . . and is a prime target for planned research."*

Example: *"Penalties will accrue from the 10th day after the due date . . . .  
There are no exceptions allowed."*

- An entire line of asterisks or periods indicates an omission of one or more entire paragraphs.

### 3.4.7 Exclamation Point

- The exclamation point should rarely be used in IHS correspondence. It is more appropriate in advertising and in informal writing.

### 3.4.8 Hyphen and Compound Words

Use a hyphen in the following situations:

- To divide a word at the end of a line. However, modern preference is to take the whole word to the next line if it won't fit without being divided. (Your computer is programmed that way.) A reader can more easily grasp a whole word than two pieces of a word divided on separate lines. If a word must be divided, do so between syllables. Consult the dictionary if in doubt. Never hyphenate the last word in the first line of a paragraph or the last word on a page.

For letters and memorandums to be signed by the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or Chief of Staff, do not divide any words at the right margin.

- In a combination of (1) figures, (2) capital letters, or (3) figures and capital letters.

Examples: *Public Law 86-121, AFL-CIO, Exhibit 6-A*

- In the absence of the word "to" when showing a period of time.

Examples: *1990-1991, January-June, Monday-Friday*

But do not use a hyphen when the word "from" precedes the first of two related figures.

Examples: *from June 3 to July 2 (not from June 3-July 2)*

- With some compound words.

A compound word is a joining of two or more words, with or without a hyphen, to form a new idea. The GPO Style Manual contains a chapter on "Compound Words" and a "Guide to Compounding" that lists 35 pages of compound words and shows their proper form (solid, hyphenated, or separate).



Most prefixes are written solid (biweekly, unnecessary). But do use a hyphen in the following situations:

- To add the prefixes "ex," "self," and "quasi" (ex-serviceman, self-educated, quasi-legal).
- To join a prefix to a capitalized word (un-American, non-Federal).
- To prevent misunderstanding (co-op, pre-position).

Unit modifiers are compound adjectives that appear before the noun they describe; they are hyphenated. If these same words come after the noun (and sometimes after the verb), they are not hyphenated. There are some exceptions to this general rule. Consult a good reference such as the GPO Style Manual.

Examples: *a high-level official, policies made at a high level*

### 3.4.9 Parentheses

Use parentheses in the following situations:

- To set off matter not intended to be part of the main statement or not a grammatical element of the sentence, yet important enough to be included.

Example: *My earlier letter (copy enclosed) addressed these issues.*

- To enclose a parenthetical clause or phrase where the interruption is too great to be indicated by commas.

Example: *During FY 1987, the IHS reallocated a small portion (less than 2 percent) of existing base budgets among the Areas.*

- To enclose an explanatory word not part of a written or printed statement.

Example: *Portland (Oregon) Area Office*

- To enclose letters or numbers designating items in a series within a sentence.

Example: *The following information is needed to complete the form: (1) date and place of birth, (2) date and place of marriage, and (3) dependents' names and ages.*

- To enclose an acronym following the first time a title, term, or phrase is used, if it will be used again in the document.

Examples: *Indian Health Service (IHS), contract health service delivery area (CHSDA), fiscal year (FY) 1997*

### 3.4.10 Period

Use a period in the following situations:

- After a declarative sentence (makes a statement) or an imperative sentence (gives a command or request).

Examples: *This handbook contains many examples of proper usage and style.*

*Please send a copy of your letter to my office.*

- After an indirect question or after a question intended as a suggestion and not requiring an answer.

Examples: *How to inform every IHS employee about QM is the problem.*

*Why not use voice mail as a way to keep everyone current.*

- After abbreviations unless otherwise specified.

Examples: *J.R. Ewing (J.[no space]R.)  
Ph.D.  
M.D.  
P.L.  
gal.*

But: *IHS, BIA, CHS, TWA, AFL-CIO, NE*

See Exhibit 26 for a list of standard abbreviations.

Do not use a period in the following situations:

- After a quotation mark that is preceded by a period. (See Section 3.4.12.)
- After a short name that is not an abbreviation of the longer form.

Examples: *John, Ed, Ben*

- After Roman numerals used as ordinals.

Examples: *King George V, Super Bowl XVII*

### 3.4.11 Question Mark

Use a question mark in the following situations:

- To indicate a direct question.

Examples: *Were you able to obtain a copy of his letter?*

*"Why did you deny payment?" she asked.*

- To express doubt.

Example: *He says he is 8(?) feet tall. (No space before opening parenthesis enclosing question mark.)*

### 3.4.12 Quotation Marks

Use quotation marks in the following situations:

- To enclose direct quotations. (Each part of an interrupted quotation begins and ends with quotation marks.)

Example: *"Why," she wrote, "didn't the Service Unit approve payment?"*

- To enclose any words following such terms as "entitled," "the word," "the term," "marked," "designated," "classified," "named," "endorsed," "cited as," "referred to as," or "signed." Quotation marks are not used to enclose expressions following the terms "known as," "called," "so-called," etc., unless such expressions are misnomers or slang.

Examples: *After the word "treaty," insert a comma.*

*The check was endorsed "John Anderson."*

But: *The so-called investigating body disbanded yesterday.*

- To enclose misnomers, slang expressions, nicknames, coined words, or ordinary words used in an arbitrary way.

Examples: *Her "baby brother" is 6 feet tall.*

*A "short across," to some natives on the northern plains, is the most direct off-road travel route between two points.*

- To enclose titles that represent only part of a complete published work--for example, titles of chapters, topics, and sections within a book; titles of articles in newspapers and magazines; titles of lectures, conference themes, and reports.

Examples: *The argument is well stated in Chapter 3, "Health Care Alternatives." A controversial article, "Who Should Have an Abortion?" appears in the current issue of the magazine.*

*The theme of the Dallas conference is "New Ways To Serve the American Indian Population."*

*A report entitled "Contract Health Services Expenditures by Area" is issued quarterly.*

But: *We received the annual report of the Nursing Branch.*

- Type quotations or addresses of three or more lines in block style, justified left only, indented five spaces from the left and right margins. (When quotations are indented, quotation marks are not required.)

Do not use quotation marks in the following situations:

- To enclose names of newspapers or magazines.
- In indirect quotations.

Examples: *Tell her yes.*

*The Surgeon General announced that three new programs were being funded.*

The comma and the final period will be placed inside the quotation marks in every case. Other punctuation marks should be placed inside the quotation marks only if they are a part of the matter quoted.

Examples: *"For further information," the letter said, "contact your Service Unit administrative officer."*

*The subject is covered in greater detail in the section entitled "Craftsmanship."*

*Joan asked, "Where is it?"*

*Why call it a "gentleman's agreement"?*

### 3.4.13 Semicolon

Use the semicolon in the following situations:

- To separate clauses containing internal commas.

Example: *Care was received from the Children's Medical Center, Tulsa, Oklahoma; from C.S. Mott Children's Hospital at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, Michigan; and from other providers.*

- To separate statements of contrast and statements that are too closely related in meaning to be written as separate sentences.

Examples: *There is no disagreement; we all agree.*

*We prepare purchase orders; they pay the invoices.*

- Between independent clauses (complete sentences) when a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, nor) is omitted. (See Section 3.4.3.)

Example: *The Quality Management effort is underway; management and employees are being informed about its purpose and goals.*

- When two independent clauses are linked by a transitional word ("however," "furthermore," "therefore," etc.), and the transitional word appears at the beginning of the second clause. Punctuate with a semicolon before and a comma after the transitional word.

Example: *No workers will be laid off; however, no new workers will be hired.*

### 3.4.14 Underlining and Emphasis

The following guidance applies only to letters and memorandums, not to attachments and reports.

- Do not underline for emphasis. In limited situations, you may use all capitals or boldface. Do not use italics or other typographic variations for emphasis.

Example: *There can be NO EXCEPTIONS to this requirement.*

*There can be no exceptions to this requirement.*

- Underline titles of complete works that are published as individual documents--books, magazines, newspapers, publications containing regulations.

Examples: *The regulations were published in the Federal Register on June 20.*

*The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 42, Section 36.23(a), copy enclosed, states that . . . .*

*The Washington Post provided a comprehensive review of this issue.*

- Do not underline a punctuation mark that comes directly after underlined material unless the mark is an integral part of that material.

Examples: *The regulations were published in the Federal Register.*

- Do not underline a possessive or plural ending added to an underlined word.

Example: *In Newsweek's opinion, there are too many "critics" of U.S. policy.*

### 3.5 Related Word Units

- Do not separate figures, letters, or symbols from their accompanying words when used as a group.

Examples:

<i>. . . Chapter III</i>	NOT	<i>. . . Chapter III</i>
<i>. . . \$125.35</i>	NOT	<i>. . . \$125. 35</i>
<i>. . . 1:30 p.m.</i>	NOT	<i>. . . 1:30 p.m.</i>

- Do not separate groups of initials and surnames, or abbreviated titles (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Ph.D., M.D., Dr., etc.) and the associated names.

Examples:

<i>. . . John X. Doe, M.D., Director, Billings Area</i>	NOT	<i>. . . John X. Doe, M.D., Director, Billings Area</i>
<i>. . . on behalf of Mr. Ben Stag of . . .</i>	NOT	<i>. . . on behalf of Mr. Ben Stag of . . .</i>

- Avoid separating words in close association, such as the elements of dates and proper names.

When it is necessary to divide a date, the year may be carried over to the next line, but the date stays with the month.

Example:

<i>... December 25, 1996</i>	NOT	<i>... December 25, 1996</i>
----------------------------------	-----	----------------------------------

When it is necessary to divide a proper name, the surname may be carried over to the next line; but a middle initial, if used, stays with the first name.

Example:

<i>... Martin R. James, M.D.,</i>	NOT	<i>... Martin R. James, M.D.,</i>
---------------------------------------	-----	---------------------------------------

When it is necessary to separate street addresses, break them between the name of the thoroughfare and the word "Street," "Avenue," "Road," etc.

Example:

<i>... 5600 Fishers Lane ...</i>	NOT	<i>... 5600 Fishers Lane ...</i>
--------------------------------------	-----	--------------------------------------

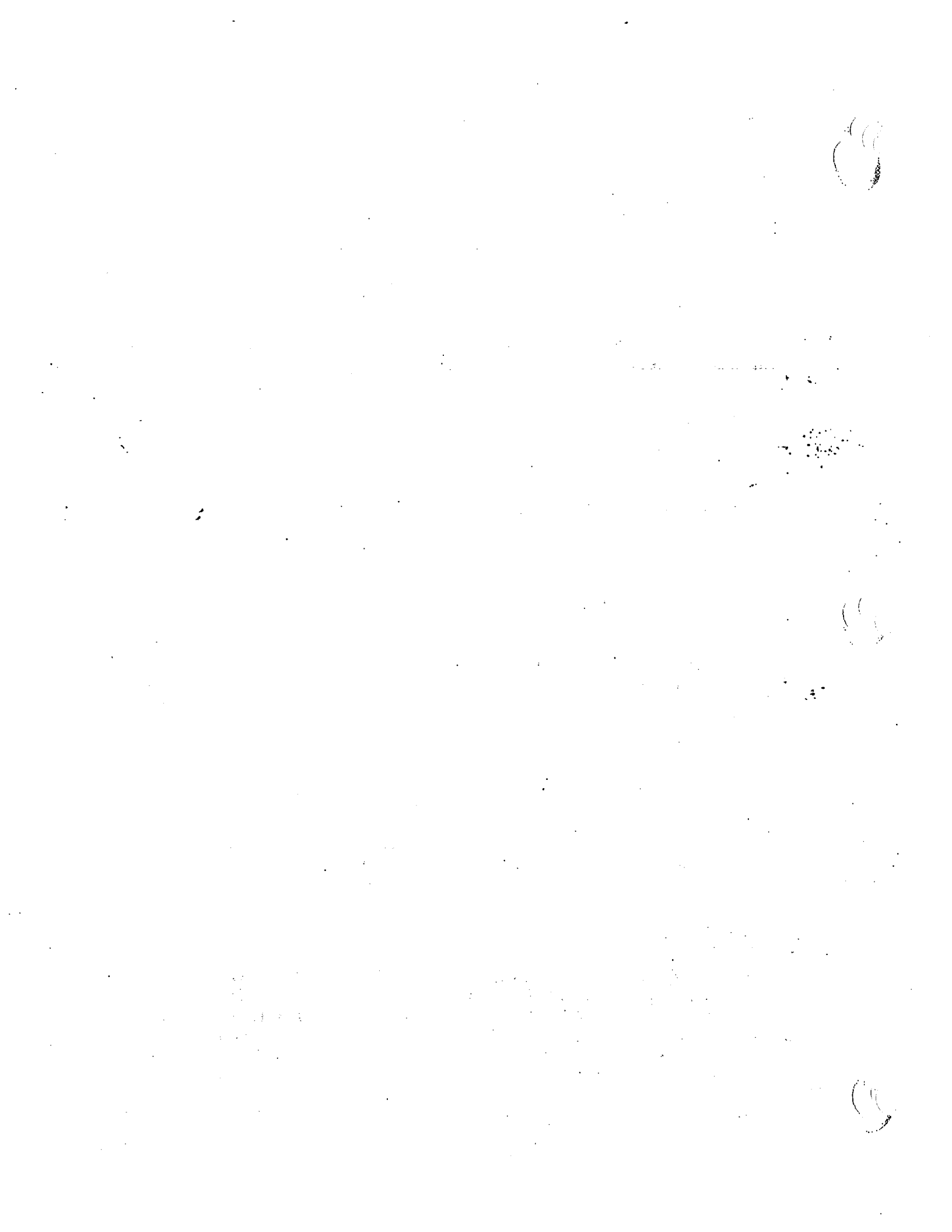
When it is necessary to separate names of places, break them between any element (e.g., between city and State, between State and ZIP Code, or between words in two-word city or State names).

Examples:

<i>... Tulsa, Oklahoma 83102</i>	<i>... Havre, Montana 61108</i>
<i>... Cedar City, North Carolina 23109</i>	<i>... Swordfish, South Dakota 46027</i>

### 3.6 Spelling

Unless indicated otherwise in these guidelines, the IHS will follow GPO policy and use Webster's Third New International Dictionary as the authority for spelling. The GPO Style Manual includes a chapter that provides general guidance on spelling. Writers and typists who produce first-generation products on word processing systems should run the "spell check" every time before releasing a draft version to reviewers. Similarly, final drafts should always be run through the "spell checker" before they are printed in final.







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# Chapter 4 — Grammar, Word Preference, and Usage

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# Chapter 4 — Grammar, Word Preference, and Usage

This chapter discusses common grammatical problems noted in IHS writing and lists word preferences that have been adopted by the IHS. In addition, it provides specific guidance on word usage and on terms unique to the IHS.

## 4.1 Grammar

By “grammar,” we mean the rules that tell how to put a sentence together.

Written and spoken words create impressions of ourselves and our organizations for the reader or listener. We hope those impressions will be positive ones. The ES is responsible for ensuring that correspondence written within the IHS for the Director's signature, or to be signed by other IHS executive staff, is grammatically perfect, suitably worded, properly formatted, and factually correct. In short, it should reflect positively on the signer and IHS.

Several good reference manuals are available for use by writers who need help in resolving grammar problems. The ES will provide personal assistance if desired or will refer writers to appropriate references. (See the bibliography at the end of these guidelines for recommended reference sources.)

### 4.1.1 Prepositions

A preposition is a connective that shows the relation of a noun or a pronoun to some other word in the sentence. The most common prepositions are:

of	at	between	after	under	on
in	from	through	beside	over	before
to	into	around	except	off	along
for	among	by	alongside	up	with

- Unneeded Prepositions

Some writers use prepositions where they shouldn't. In the following sentences, the prepositions in brackets are unnecessary:

Examples: *The doctor decided to take the patient off of beta blockers.  
(Was the patient sitting on them?)*

*The Health Promotion/Disease Prevention initiative deserves credit for increasing immunization levels, for improving fitness, and for reducing the clinic outpatient workload.  
(Unnecessary repetition)*

Examples: *The staff sees from between 200 and 250 patients weekly.  
Most patients receive medications priced at under \$10.  
The service population is estimated at about 10,000.  
(Words in bold are unnecessary.)*

You should avoid ending a sentence with a preposition. However, ending a sentence with a preposition is not always wrong and, in fact, may be preferable in some cases.

Example: *Tell me what you are thinking about.*

Not: *Tell me about what you are thinking.*

- "Of" phrases

Prepositional phrases starting with "of" can often be replaced with an adjective; this will clarify and streamline the sentence.

Avoid: *It is the policy of the IHS to provide necessary health care services to American Indians and Alaska Natives.*

Use: *The IHS policy is to provide necessary health care services to American Indians and Alaska Natives.*

Avoid: *The IHS payment policy requires reimbursement on the basis of rates of the Medicaid program.*

Use: *The IHS payment policy requires reimbursement on the basis of Medicaid program rates.*

- To - Too - Two

"To" is a preposition that describes the direction of an action. "Too" is an adverb that means "in addition," "more than enough," "to a regrettable extent," or "extremely." "Two" means the "number between one and three," or "a pair."

#### 4.1.2 Pronouns

A pronoun takes the place of a noun (its antecedent). It must agree with its antecedent in number (singular or plural).

The following sentence is wrong because it does not follow that rule.

*The Department of Health and Human Services has made a determination that they will provide a response to the questionnaire for all of its incumbent agencies.  
(The Department of Health and Human Services is one organization [singular], so "they" [plural] should be "it" [singular].)*

### 4.1.3 Subject and Verb Agreement

If the subject of a sentence is singular, the verb must be singular; if the subject of the sentence is plural, the verb must be plural.

Particular attention should be paid to subject and verb agreement when the following situations are encountered:

- Two or more subjects connected by "and" that refer to the same person or thing require a singular verb.

*The Deputy Area Director and Chief Medical Officer (one person with two titles) was present at the meeting.*

- At times, the subject or its modifier is an indefinite pronoun. The indefinite pronouns "each," "every," "either," "neither," "one," "another," and "much" always require singular verbs.

*Neither of the new employees is a hard worker.*

The indefinite pronouns "both," "few," "many," "others," and "several" always require plural verbs.

*Although Bob made many mistakes in his first draft, few were found in the final letter.*

The indefinite pronouns "all," "none," "any," "some," "more," and "most" may be either singular or plural, depending upon the sentence meaning.

*All the material is here. All letters are typed by Peggy.*

- If the subject is made up of both singular and plural words connected by "or," "either . . . or," "neither . . . nor," or "not only . . . but also," the verb agrees with the nearer part of the subject.

*Neither the Area nor any of its Service Units are in full compliance.*

*Either the assistants or the director is mistaken.*

- Although the noun "data" is plural in form (datum is singular), some references suggest that "data" may be used with a singular verb. But the IHS requires that "data" be treated as a plural in every case. Think of "data" as "facts."

*Data from five Areas are being merged.*

*The data supporting our position are conclusive.*

- A collective noun is several persons or things considered as a single unit (committee, board). It almost always takes a singular verb.

*The committee is meeting today to make its final decision.*

In the rare case when the group members are thought of as acting separately, the sentence can be improved by inserting a phrase like "members of" before the collective noun.

*Members of the Health Board disagree about which program to carry out.*

#### 4.1.4 Verb Tense and Mood

A verb shows action (write, prepare, drive) or state of being (is, was, have been).

Correct use of verb tense and mood is covered in standard references. References are available in the ES.

#### 4.1.5 Gerunds

A gerund is a verb form ending in "ing" and used as a noun. It may be the subject or an object in a sentence.

*Meeting Dr. Smith's expectations is important. (Subject)*

*Thank you for supporting our goals. (Object of preposition)*

If a pronoun is used right before a gerund, it should be in the possessive case. If this results in an awkward sentence, try rewording the sentence.

*They agreed with our [not us] hiring an outside consultant.*

*I don't mind his [not him] taking his work home. (Grammatically correct but awkward--try rewording the sentence to read: "I don't mind if he takes his work home.")*

#### 4.1.6 Infinitives

An infinitive is a verb form preceded by "to" (to achieve, to notify, to address). The most common problem with the use of infinitives is that many writers tend to split them by inserting an adverb between "to" and the verb (to finally achieve, to officially notify, to briefly address). Find a better place to put the adverb, if possible without sounding too awkward.

Avoid: *He always tries to carefully do his work.*

Use: *He always tries to do his work carefully.*



Even though placing an adverb between "to be" and a past participle of another verb is not considered splitting an infinitive, often the adverb would be better located elsewhere in the sentence and should be moved.

Avoid: *The goals need to be promptly achieved.*

Use: *The goals need to be achieved promptly.*

#### 4.1.7 Verb Phrases

Many times the verb in a sentence consists of more than one word (will be submitted). This is a verb phrase. Sometimes writers insert adverb modifiers between verb parts; often such modifiers should be located elsewhere in the sentence.

Avoid: *I should also inform you that the issue is rather sensitive.*

Use: *Also, I should inform you that the issue is rather sensitive.*

Avoid: *A construction project was recently approved for the village.*

Use: *Recently, a construction project was approved for the village.*

Or: *A construction project for the village was approved recently.*

Occasionally an adverb sounds better between words in verb phrases. In those cases the verb parts may be divided.

*The Director was seriously considering inviting proposals.*

#### 4.1.8 Troublesome Verbs

- Advise - Inform

"Advise" means to give advice or an opinion. "Inform" means to acquaint with the facts or impart knowledge. Often, "advise" is used when "inform" would be more appropriate.

Avoid: *I have asked Dr. Jones to keep you advised about the issue.*

Use: *I have asked Dr. Jones to keep you informed about the issue.*

- Affect - Effect

Usually "affect" is used as a verb meaning to influence, change, or assume. "Effect" can be either a noun meaning result or impression or (less frequently) a verb meaning to bring about.

*These guidelines are expected to affect the quality of written material produced by IHS writers.*

*This will have the effect of improving the IHS image.*

*They are a tool for effecting positive change.*

- Appraise - Apprise

"To appraise" is to place a value on something. "To apprise" is to inform.

*The Government will appraise the property before condemning it.*

*We will apprise you of any changes in the Department's guidelines.*

- Assure - Ensure - Insure

All three mean to make secure or certain. However, "assure" refers to persons, and it alone has the sense of setting a person's mind at rest. "Ensure" and "insure" also mean to make secure from harm. However, only "insure" is widely used in the sense of guaranteeing life or property against risk.

*We assured the Director that all deadlines will be met.*

*We must ensure that all writers have a copy of these guidelines.*

*I will insure these stocks for their full market value.*

- Comprise - Compose

"Comprise" means include or embrace and DOES NOT take "of." "Compose" means to make up. The parts compose (make up) the whole, while the whole comprises (includes) the parts. It is probably safer to avoid "comprise" entirely.

*The Area is composed [not comprised] of seven Service Units.*

- **Imply - Infer**

“Imply” means to suggest or hint. “Infer” means to assume or conclude. The speaker implies; the listener infers.

*The Director implied that he expected better staff work.*

*The Office Director inferred, from the Director's remarks, that more effort is needed.*

- **Include**

Occasionally writers need to list the parts of something they are writing about. For example, it may be necessary to describe the kinds of services available in an ambulatory care facility. One way to do that is to list a representative sample.

*The care available at Indian health centers includes diagnostic medical, prenatal, immunization, dental, and substance abuse counseling services.*

Use of the word “includes” in a sentence like the one above suggests that this is not the whole list of services. If all are being mentioned, avoid using “includes” and substitute “were,” “are,” or some other equally suitable word.

*The water treatment processes employed at White Earth are aeration, filtration, chlorination, and fluoridation.*

- **It is**

Many good writers avoid using “it is” to begin a sentence.

Avoid: *It is IHS policy to provide necessary health care services to American Indians and Alaska Natives.*

*It is believed that care was available and accessible in an IHS Hospital emergency room on that day.*

Use: *The IHS policy is to provide necessary care . . . .*

*We believe that care was available and accessible . . . .  
(Also see Section 2.3.2.)*

- Lie - Lay

	Present	Present Participle	Past	Past Participle
Rest	lie	lying	lay	lain
Place	lay	laying	laid	laid

“Lie” means to recline, rest, or stay. It cannot take an object.

*She is lying (not laying) on the couch.*

“Lay” means to put or to place. It requires an object; you lay (put) SOMETHING.

*Lay the box on the table.*

One way to determine whether to use “lay” or “lie” is to substitute the word “place,” “placed,” or “placing.” If the substitute makes sense, use the appropriate form of “lay.” If not, a form of “lie” should be used.

*I (laid or lay) awake most of last night. (To say “I placed awake” isn’t right, so use “I lay awake most of last night.”)*

*The apple is (laying or lying) on the table. (The apple would not be “placing” on the table, so the sentence must be written “The apple is lying on the table.”)*

- Think - Feel

“Think” is mental while “feel” is physical or emotional. Remember that people think thoughts and feel feelings.

*Avoid: We feel that the issue has been addressed appropriately.*

*Use: We think (or believe) the issue has been addressed appropriately.*

*Use: Your feelings of frustration and disappointment are understandable.*

## 4.1.9 Parallelism

- Elements in a series

Good writers make sure that elements in a series are equivalent.

*The clinic provides care to tribal members living on and near the reservation, tribal members living in nearby urban centers, and other federally recognized Indians who request care.*

Problems arise when a writer starts a series but turns to something nonequivalent.

Avoid: *The Indian Health Service is managed by a Headquarters staff, 12 Area staffs, and delivers health care to more than 1 million American Indians and Alaska Natives.*

If a writer must include nonequivalent matter in a sentence like the one above, the word "and" should be placed between the first and second items in the series and the commas should be deleted:

*The Indian Health Service is managed by a Headquarters staff and 12 Area staffs and delivers health care to more than 1 million American Indians and Alaska Natives.*

- Both . . . and

When we use "both . . . and," the same part of speech must follow each of the two words.

Avoid: *He seeks care both from private physicians (prepositional phrase) and IHS clinics (adjective and noun).*

Use: *He seeks care from both private physicians and IHS clinics.*

*He seeks care both from private physicians and from IHS clinics.*

- Ellipsis

It is permissible to omit a word in part of a sentence when that word can be understood from an earlier part of the same sentence. In grammar, that is called ellipsis.

*The IHS pays for emergency services that are requested and [that are] authorized by IHS staff. (The second "that are" is understood.)*

But the omitted words MUST be the same as the words used earlier.

Avoid: *One claim was paid and seven denied during the month.*  
(*"Were denied" rather than "was denied" must be used after "seven."*)

Frequently we need to define when, in the future, an action is expected to occur. Be careful that the wording is not misleading.

Avoid: *The IHS will review waiver requests in late July or August.*

This sounds like "in late July or late August," when probably the writer meant "during" or maybe even "the early part of" August. To be clear, repeat the preposition or insert another modifier to avoid ambiguity.

Use: *The IHS will review waiver requests in late July or in August.*

Or: *The IHS will review waiver requests in late July or early August.*

## 4.2 Word Usage

This section contains guidance on word usage mistakes or inaccuracies that careful writers should avoid.

### 4.2.1 Incorrect Usage

- Do not use "etc." at the end of a series introduced by "such as," "i.e., or "e.g."
- Do not use "irregardless." The correct word is "regardless."
- Do not use "per" in place of "according to" or "in accordance with" (per your request). "Per" can be used in place of "for each" (\$50 per day).
- Omit entirely "as you know," "as you are aware," "needless to say," "as I am sure you know," etc. If the reader already knows, why waste time repeating the information?
- Do not use "in regards to" or "with regards to." These are considered incorrect versions of "in regard to" and "with regard to." You can also substitute "regarding" or "about" for these terms.

### 4.2.2 Preferred Usage

The list that follows gives words and phrases (in the left column) that should be avoided. The right column supplies the preferred words. The preferred words are simpler, usually shorter, and more accurate. Sometimes it is a matter of spelling preference or grammar.

If you are not clear as to why a word in the "Use Instead" column is preferred, consult the references in the bibliography for a more complete discussion.

Some of the terms in the "Avoid" column may have specific meanings in specific contexts (for example, a contract modification). In such specific cases, their use would be correct.

## Avoid

above (a number)  
above mentioned, above named,  
    above referenced  
accomplished  
acknowledgement  
acquaint (with facts)  
affix signature  
alternatives  
amount (of copies)  
and etc.  
and/or  
anticipate  
approximately  
as of this date  
as to whether  
ascertain  
assistance  
at all times  
at an early date  
at this time  
attached please find

being that  
beneficiary, beneficiaries

between you and I  
both alike, both equal

can not  
commence  
communication  
complies with requirements  
comprised of

consensus of opinion  
contact

data is  
demonstrates  
desire  
different than

## Use Instead

more than  
proper names

done  
acknowledgment  
tell  
sign  
choices  
number of copies  
etc.  
either "and" or "or"  
expect  
about  
today  
whether  
learn  
help  
always  
soon  
now  
attached is

since, because  
client, health care recipient, patient,  
    service population, person's name  
between you and me  
alike, equal

cannot  
begin  
letter, memorandum  
meets requirements  
comprises, composed of (see Section  
    4.1.8)

consensus  
write, telephone

data are (see Section 4.1.3)  
shows  
want  
different from

## Avoid

employment  
enclosed please find  
encounter difficulty  
end result  
expedite  
expiration, expire

facilitate  
fewer in number  
finalize  
firstly, secondly, thirdly, etc.  
follow up (adjective)  
followup (verb)  
furnish

highest possible level  
hold in abeyance

I would hope  
impact  
impact on (verb)  
implement  
in a position to  
in addition to  
in compliance with your request  
in order to  
in the amount of  
in view of the fact that  
indicate  
initial  
intrastate

judgement

kindly reply

latter (of more than two items)  
lengthy  
locate

memoranda  
modification

named  
non-federal

## Use Instead

job, work  
enclosed is  
have trouble  
result  
hurry  
end

make easier, teach  
fewer  
complete  
first, second, third, etc.  
followup  
follow up  
give

highest level possible  
wait

I hope, I trust  
effect (noun)  
influence (verb), affect  
carry out  
can  
besides  
as requested  
to  
for  
since  
show  
first  
intra-State

judgment

please reply

last  
long  
find

memorandums  
change

appointed, assigned, designated  
non-Federal



## Avoid

on the part of  
one and the same  
over (when "more than" is meant in  
referring to a number)  
over the signature of

please accept my best regards  
predecease  
prior to, previous to  
procure  
promulgate  
provide me with

reason . . . is because  
recent date  
regarding, respecting  
render (a decision)  
requested that  
reside  
rest assured that

retroactive from  
rule making

smaller in size  
staff are  
submitted  
subsequent to  
sufficient

terminated  
the undersigned  
This is to acknowledge . . .  
and thank . . .  
time frame  
transmit

utilize, utilization . . .

with the exception of  
with the result that  
workforce  
work group

## Use Instead

by  
the same  
more than

signed by

please accept my best wishes  
die before  
before  
get, buy  
issue  
provide

reason . . . is that  
give the date  
about  
issue (a decision)  
asked that  
live  
you may be assured that,  
you may be sure that  
retroactive to  
rulemaking

smaller  
staff is (singular), or staff members are  
sent  
after  
enough

ended  
I  
Thank you

timeframe  
send

use

except, except for  
so  
work force  
workgroup

## 4.3 Terms Particularly Applicable to the IHS

### 4.3.1 American Indians and Alaska Natives

- To the extent possible, use "American Indians and Alaska (*not Alaskan*) Natives" to describe the IHS service population.
- If you are writing specifically to an American Indian individual or group, you may use the term "American Indians" when writing about only that population group. But do not use "American Indian" as a generic term to describe the entire American Indian and Alaska Native population.
- The abbreviation "AI/AN" may be used when the term "American Indian and Alaska Native" appears often in the text, particularly when used several times in one or more paragraphs. Place the abbreviation in parentheses immediately after fully spelling out the term the first time it appears in the text. Thereafter, use "AI/AN." However, if the term is used infrequently, spell it out fully each time instead of using the abbreviation.
- The terms "Indians," "Indian people," or "Native Americans" may be used occasionally in informal text instead of the somewhat impersonal "AI/AN," but only after the correct term, "American Indian and Alaska Native" has been used at least once to establish the correct composition of our service population.

### 4.3.2 Area Director

Some IHS writers seem to use the term "Director, XYZ Area *Office*," when, in fact, they are referring to the Director of an entire IHS Area. Our Area Directors have responsibilities that reach far beyond the Area office, and they should be identified accordingly.

Incorrect:     Director, Alaska Area Office  
                  Director, Portland Area Office

Correct:        Director, Alaska Area Indian Health Service  
                  Director, Portland Area Indian Health Service

### 4.3.3 Tribal Leaders, Chief, Governor, Chairman, President

For letters to tribal leaders, the inside address and salutation should be prepared as shown in Sections 6.2.3 and 6.2.4. The first line of the inside address should begin with a courtesy title (e.g., Mr., Mrs., Ms.) followed by the name of the addressee (unless the name is followed by M.D., Ph.D., etc). The second line includes the addressee's title (e.g., Chief, Governor) and the organization's name. An exception to using a courtesy title on line one would be made if the addressee uses a traditional Indian name.

*Mr. Xxxx Xxxxx*  
*Chairman, Reno-Sparks Tribal Colony*

*Xxxxx Xxxxxx, M.P.H.*  
*Governor, San Ildefonso Pueblo*

*Aspesanahkwat*  
*Chairperson, Menominee Tribal Legislature*

Use the tribal leader's title in the salutation:

Dear Chairman Astor:

Dear Governor Martinez:

### 4.3.4 Band, Nation, Tribe

According to the GPO Style Manual and other standard references, the names of national, State, and local government bodies are always capitalized when the full name is used. Because Indian tribes are addressed as sovereign nations, the full tribal name is capitalized.

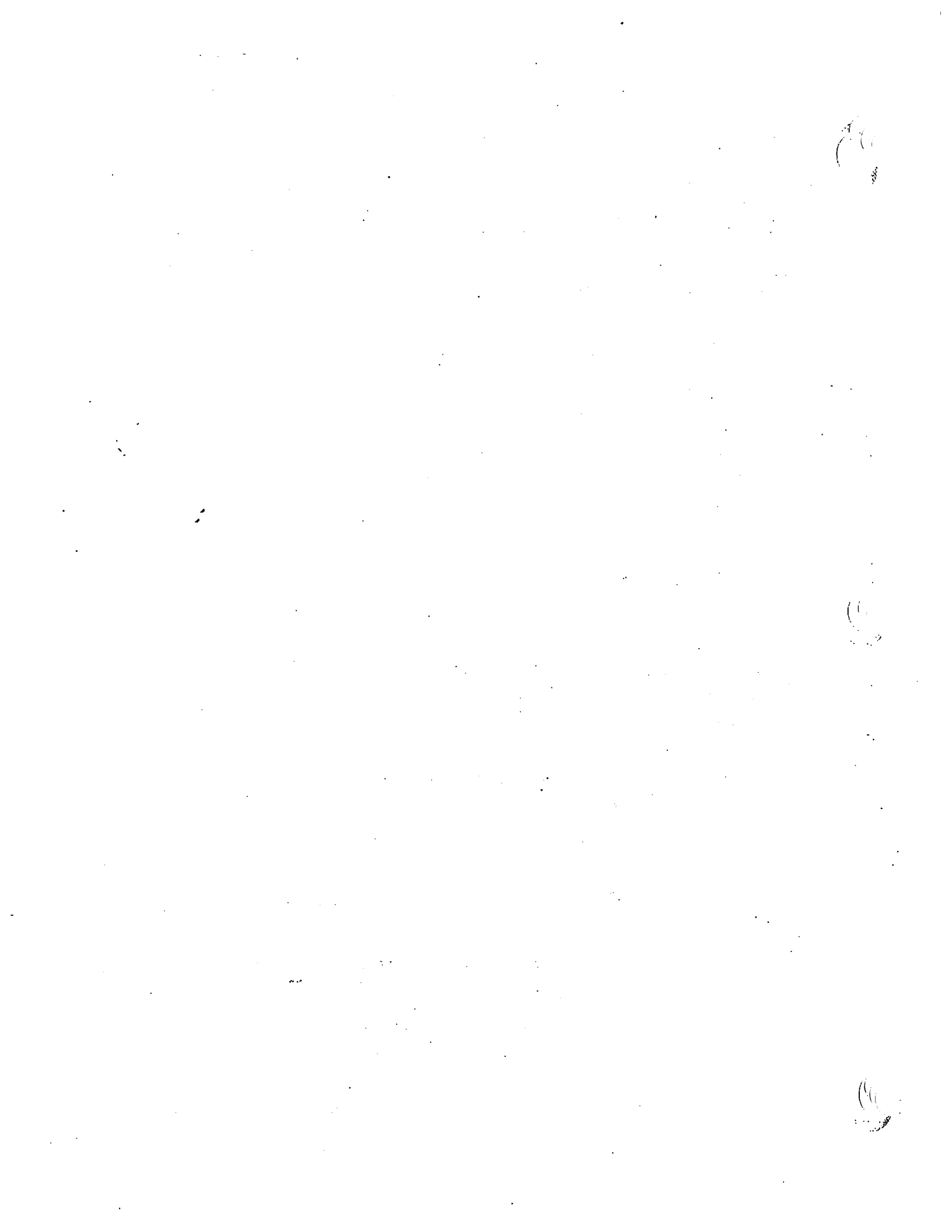
Whenever a short form of the name of a tribe or band is used, it should be capitalized. However, that rule applies only if the short form is used in place of the official name of a specific (previously named) tribe, band, or nation.

Examples: *The Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians will oversee the project.*  
*The Band will ensure that all deadlines are met.*

*The Navajo Nation is sponsoring a cultural exhibit at the meeting.*  
*The Nation will have the exhibit ready for display on April 2.*

*The Minnesota Chippewa Tribe has had a rapid membership growth,*  
*and the Tribe is need of additional CHS funds.*

But: *All tribes in the Aberdeen Area will receive a portion of the funding.*





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# Chapter 5 — Letter and Memorandum Content

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# Chapter 5 — Letter and Memorandum Content

The following guidelines describe the wording and arrangement of text in letters and memorandums to be signed by IHS and HHS executive staff and White House officials.

## 5.1 General Guidelines

### 5.1.1 Be Responsive

Responses to incoming communications should address the issues raised as accurately as possible. Refer to all pertinent points made in the communication to avoid unnecessary additional correspondence. In preparing a response, first read the communication carefully, listing or highlighting all issues and questions.

### 5.1.2 Organize

Organizing your material is critical because the reader will stop reading a badly organized letter. Use the notes you made as you read the incoming communication to help organize the text and deal with the issues logically. Prepare an outline for complex letters.

### 5.1.3 Take a Position

If the incoming communication asks a question about policy, state the policy clearly. If the inquiry concerns an issue where policy is being developed, state that the issue is under consideration and a final answer cannot be provided at this time. When appropriate, mention any steps being taken to resolve the issue.

### 5.1.4 Do Not Quote Laws, Regulations, Etc.

Unless you have a legal or technical reason, do not quote laws, rules, manuals, or other specific instructions verbatim in letters. Instead, paraphrase the information in nontechnical language. Enclose a copy of the law, regulation, etc., when appropriate.

### 5.1.5 If Necessary, Prepare a “Cover” Memorandum for Letters or Memorandums Forwarded to High-Level Signers

- Sometimes additional information is needed to explain documents to be approved/signed by the IHS Director or other executive staff, such as an Interagency Agreement, Request for Outside Activity, etc. In this case, you should transmit the document using a “cover” memorandum that explains the reason you are forwarding the document for approval/signature. The “ACTION” format is used for this cover memorandum (see exhibit 18).

- Items that are self-explanatory do not need a cover memorandum unless further information is required that is not contained in the memorandum. In this case, you may use an ACTION memorandum or a "NOTE TO" to give further information. (See exhibits 16 and 18.)
- A cover memorandum (in the ACTION format) is **REQUIRED** when sending any document up for signature by an official at the Department level. (If the document is for the Secretary's signature, you would also need to include an Executive Summary Statement.)
- Within the IHS, the explanatory (cover) memorandum should come from the person who is the next level down from the official signing the document. Therefore, items being sent up for Department-level signature should come from the IHS Director.

## 5.2 Letters

- Use letters to communicate with people outside the Department, such as tribal leaders, the general public, or Members of Congress. Also, use letters to write to individual IHS employees about personal matters such as appointment to a new position, commendation, or condolence.
- Letters should rarely be longer than two pages, preferably one and a half pages or less. At times, three or more pages may be necessary; however, when possible, place detailed explanatory and technical information in an enclosure such as a discussion paper, a fact sheet, or an issue-response document (see Exhibit 17).
- A letter is too long if it says more than needs to be said or takes too many words to say it. A letter is too short if it does not give the reader enough information, does not answer all the issues, or is abrupt or discourteous.

### 5.2.1 Opening Paragraph (General)

- Begin by referring to the date and subject of the incoming communication and citing the addressee whenever the letter was written to someone other than the person responding. This opening is preferred because every month the IHS receives letters on different subjects from the same people, and often the letters are forwarded to us by other governmental units, such as the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- For letters to be signed by IHS executive staff, begin a letter of response with "I am responding to . . ." (unless this opening clearly does not fit the situation).
- Whenever possible, start on a pleasant note. If you should thank your reader for something, begin by thanking him or her. If the reader is right about one thing and wrong about another, begin by discussing what is correct.

- When responding to someone who has sent a brochure, resume, or proposal, or who describes an activity, applicant, or program, be sure your response could not be interpreted as an endorsement. If it is necessary to refer specifically to such enclosures or letter contents, you may write:

*I appreciate having the material and look forward to reading it.*

### 5.2.2 Opening Paragraph for Congressional Responses

- Begin a response to a congressional inquiry as follows:

I am responding to your (*month/day/year-- cite year only if other than current year*) letter to (*name of addressee on incoming communication, if other than the signer*) on behalf of (*constituent's name and city/State, when appropriate*). (*Constituent's name*) expressed concern about (*cite problem*) and requested your help in addressing this issue.

#### Example:

I am responding to your October 20, 1996, letter to Mr. Xxxxxx Xxxxx, Secretary, Department of the Interior, on behalf of Mr. John Doe of Pine Ridge, South Dakota. Mr. Doe expressed concern about the lack of kidney dialysis services at the Indian Health Service Hospital in Pine Ridge and asked for your help in obtaining additional funds to support such services.

- When writing for the IHS Director or other executive staff, you should cite the date of the incoming communication unless the delay in responding is so long as to be an embarrassment. Avoid describing an incoming letter as recent, especially when the description does not fit.
- When responding to an incoming letter with multiple signers, write the opening sentence as if there were only one signer. (See Sections 5.2.6 and Exhibits 6 and 7.) A sentence should be added at the end of the letter stating a similar letter is being sent to other signers of the incoming communication.
- At times, an interim response may be appropriate. For example, the questions raised may require extensive research, Area consultation, or Office of the General Counsel opinion, which could significantly delay the final response. The final response to such letters should acknowledge the earlier interim response only if the signature block on the final is identical to that on the interim.

I am responding further to your (*month/day/year-- cite year only if other than current year*) letter to (*name of addressee on incoming communication, if other than the signer*) on behalf of (*constituent's name and city/State, when appropriate*).

- If the signature block on the final is not the same as the one on the interim, the opening sentence of the final should not indicate that an interim was written. Follow the guidelines at the beginning of Section 5.2.2.

### 5.2.3 Opening Paragraph for Letters Referred by the White House

- Avoid any implication that the President personally asked the Secretary, or anyone else in the Department, to respond to a letter addressed to the President.

Avoid: *The President has asked me to respond to your letter of March 25.*

*This office has been asked by the President to respond to your letter of March 25.*

Use: *I am responding to your March 25 letter to President John J. Jones regarding Indian Health Service contract health services payment denials.*

### 5.2.4 Opening Paragraph for Letters Signed at Levels Above the Director, IHS

- If the letter is to be signed by someone at an administrative level above the Director, IHS, modify the standard opening paragraph as follows:

1. The opening sentence should read:

*This is in response to your (month/day/year-- cite year only if other than current year) letter. . . .*

2. When preparing a response for the Secretary's signature, do not reference the date of the incoming communication.

*This is in response to your letter concerning payment for medical care you received on January 8, 1997.*

### 5.2.5 Intermediate Paragraphs

- The second paragraph is critical in writing a clear response. It should summarize the information that follows and the signer's conclusions or decisions. The reader should not need to read further to determine what the signer's position is on the issues being addressed.
- Later paragraphs should provide additional information to explain the basis for the signer's decision. To eliminate the need for additional correspondence, address all pertinent points raised in the incoming communication accurately and completely. Do not presume that the person receiving the letter will be fully knowledgeable about the issue being addressed. Provide enough detail to make the letter informative without making it lengthy.

## 5.2.6 Closing Paragraph

- Be brief and positive. Avoid closing the letter with any statement that invites further correspondence.
- Be sure the closing fits the reader and the content. Thanking the reader for "continued interest in and concern for the health and well-being of the American Indian and Alaska Native people" may be acceptable for Members of Congress. However, this closing is not appropriate in letters to Indian people or to people who have important involvements with IHS programs.
- Many letters can be closed with a simple sentence such as "I trust this information is helpful." However, when information in the letter is not what the recipient will want to hear, those words may be unsuitable. In that case, use a closing such as "I regret that this information could not be more encouraging."
- When incoming letters have multiple signers, the last sentence of the response should read as follows:

Two signers: A similar letter is being sent to (*name*).

Three signers: Similar letters are being sent to (*name*) and (*name*).

Four or more signers: Similar letters are being sent to the other signers.

(See Sections 5.2.2 and 6.1.8. and Exhibit 6.)

## 5.3 Memorandums

Use memorandums when writing to people within the Department such as the Secretary, Assistant Secretary for Health, the Surgeon General, other Agency Heads, Area and Office Directors, Service Unit Directors, and other employees. However, use letters when writing to individual employees about personal matters (for example, appointment to a position, commendation, or condolence).

All memorandums to the Office of the Secretary and some memorandums to IHS officials must be prepared in the ACTION, INFORMATION, or BRIEFING format (see Section 5.3.5). Most internal memorandums and some to HHS level officials will be prepared in the general memorandum format (see Section 5.3.1).

Try to avoid memorandums longer than two pages. At times, three or more pages may be needed; however, when possible, place detailed explanatory and technical information in an attachment such as a discussion paper, a fact sheet, or an issue-response document (see Exhibit 17).

When the Director, IHS, or other executive staff write to a specific employee in an Area or Headquarters office or in a Service Unit, the memorandum is routed through the employee's "chain of command" to ensure that all supervisors know the signer's position on the issue being addressed (see Sections 6.1.10 and 6.3.3).

### 5.3.1 General Memorandums

- Use general memorandums for communications between IHS employees. They may be used when responding to an incoming request for information from an HHS official or when communicating routine information to an HHS official.

### 5.3.2 Opening Paragraph

- Always cite the incoming correspondence date in the opening paragraph.
- Use action verbs more than passive verbs when writing memorandums to be signed by the Director, IHS, or other executive staff.
- The opening paragraph should read as follows:

I am responding to your (*month/day/year-- cite year only if other than current year*) letter to (*name of addressee on incoming communication, if other than the signer*) regarding (*cite issue being addressed*).

Example: I am responding to your October 20, 1989, note requesting an update on progress being made by my staff in implementing the Indian Health Service Quality Management activity.

### 5.3.3 Intermediate Paragraphs

- The second paragraph is critical in writing a clear response. It should summarize the information that follows and the signer's conclusions or decisions. The reader should not need to read further to determine what the signer's position is on the issues being addressed.
- Later paragraphs should provide additional information to explain the basis for earlier comments. To eliminate the need for additional memorandums, address all pertinent points raised in any incoming document accurately and completely. Do not presume that the addressee will be fully knowledgeable about the issue being discussed. Provide enough detail to make the letter informative without making it lengthy.

### 5.3.4 Closing Paragraph

- Be brief and positive. Many memorandums can be closed with a sentence such as "I trust this information is helpful." However, when the information provided might raise additional questions or require clarification, you may also want to invite the reader to write or telephone a knowledgeable staff member.

If you have further questions regarding this issue, please contact (*name, position title*). (*He/she*) can be reached by telephone at (*telephone number, including area code*). Correspondence may be addressed to (*him/her*) at:

1224 NW Street  
Federal Building, Room 34  
Washington, D.C. 20555

### 5.3.5 Special Memorandums (ACTION, INFORMATION, BRIEFING)

<u>TYPE/EXHIBIT</u>	<u>READERS</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>SPECIAL NOTES</u>
ACTION Memorandum (see Exhibits 18-24)	IHS officials, Office of the Secretary	To request action, decision, or approval of the addressee.	There are several types of ACTION memorandums with slight format differences.
Standard ACTION Memorandum (see Exhibits 18-19)	Same	To address a straightforward issue.	Do not exceed 2 pages.
Complex ACTION Memorandum (see Exhibits 20-22)	Same	To address several issues or options.	
Reports to Congress ACTION Memorandum	Office of the Secretary	To submit a <u>Report to Congress</u> to the Secretary for approval.	See IHS ES for assistance.
INFORMATION Memorandum (see Exhibits 25-26)	Any reader	To forward information material only.	Do not exceed 2 pages. Other headings may be used other than those shown in the exhibits if they improve clarity.

<u>TYPE/EXHIBIT</u>	<u>READERS</u>	<u>PURPOSE</u>	<u>SPECIAL NOTES</u>
BRIEFING Memorandum (see Exhibits 27-28)	Office of the Secretary	To provide information to reader about a future event (time/location of event, purpose of event, issues he/she may need to address, list of attending officials, etc.). Examples: meetings, speeches, hearings, and site visits.	Submit to the appropriate ES 10 working days before the event. This ensures time for review, clearance, and submission to the addressee.

#### **5.4 Note to Mr. John Doe (Special Informal Communication)**

Persons at different levels in the IHS may communicate directly and informally when the subject is routine or technical and the correspondence does not establish new policy or change current operating practices. One option available for direct communication is the "NOTE TO" format. Messages in this format avoid delays often associated with routing a formal memorandum through one or more higher level officials.

The "NOTE TO" should be prepared on letterhead. To ensure coordination and awareness when such notes are sent up or down the chain-of-command, send courtesy copies to any bypassed supervisors. Every "NOTE TO" addressed to the Director, IHS, or other executive staff in the immediate Office of the Director must be routed through the IHS ES (see Exhibit 16).

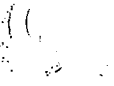






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# Chapter 6 — Letter and Memorandum Format and Assembly

This chapter contains specific guidance on the proper format, copy requirements, and assembly procedures for IHS letters and memorandums. Exhibits at the end of the manual illustrate applications of these guidelines.

## 6.1 General Guidelines for Letters and Memorandums

### 6.1.1 Margins and Page Length — Letterhead Stationery

- Maintain 1-inch margins, at minimum, at both sides and 1.25 inches at the bottom of the first page. A 1.25-inch bottom margin will ensure that no text will overprint the clearance box on the official (yellow-box) file copy.
- Justify the left margin only.
- Use the standard block typing format (see Exhibits 2 and 12). Do not indent first words of paragraphs.
- On the first page of a letter or memorandum, begin typing 2 inches from the top to allow room for the letterhead. If necessary in order to fit a letter/memorandum on one page, you may move the starting point up one or two lines (but no higher than 1.6"). For a short letter/memorandum, you may move the starting point down as far as 2.4" to help "center" it better on the page.
- On page 2 and later pages, begin the page notation 1 inch from the top. You should leave a 1-inch minimum margin at the bottom.

### 6.1.2 Paragraphs and Subparagraphs

- Single space the body of a letter or memorandum and double space between paragraphs.
- Begin paragraphs at the left margin.
- Do not begin a paragraph near the end of a page unless there is space for at least two lines. Do not continue a paragraph on a following page unless two or more lines can be carried over to that page.

- At times, it may be necessary to break a paragraph into subparagraphs. Do not subdivide a paragraph unless it will have at least two subdivisions. Bullets or numbers may be used for the subparagraphs (see Exhibit 12). The bullet or number should be flush with the left margin. The text of the subparagraph should begin five spaces from the left margin. Further subdivisions are indented an additional three or five spaces each.

### 6.1.3 Neatness

- Be neat. Do not use "whiteout." Do not make pen-and-ink changes.
- Keep the lines well balanced and left justified only.
- Do not use staples and paper clips on pages of the original.
- Use a clear plastic Executive Correspondence cover to protect the final.

### 6.1.4 Spelling/Grammar Verification

- Run the computer "spell check" and "grammar check" before releasing a draft version to reviewers and before printing a final version.
- However, computer spelling and grammar checkers are not comprehensive or infallible; in fact, they are rather simplistic. For instance, the spell checker cannot distinguish between homophones such as "see" and "sea" and will accept either one in a sentence, whether it makes sense or not. Therefore, using these checking features does not relieve the writer and clearance officials from the responsibility of reading each document carefully to check for all errors.

### 6.1.5 Corrections/Revisions Requested by the Executive Secretariat

- The ES expects to receive appropriately prepared drafts and final documents. Double space all drafts provided for ES review.
- See the GPO Style Manual for a key to proofreading symbols.
- If a final letter/memorandum is returned to its originating office for revision and reprinting, be sure to indicate in the prepared-by notations that it was retyped or revised (depending on the extent of change). (See Section 6.1.9.)

- If sentences or paragraphs on final documents are revised so significantly that their meaning may be altered, the entire clearance process must be repeated. You must also:
  1. Fold the marked-up original in half, lengthwise, and place it on the inside left in the correspondence folder, for ES reference.
  2. Throw away all the copies, including the official file copies.
- If the corrections are merely mechanical, such as spelling or grammar, you do not have to send it through the clearance process again. Instead you follow these steps:
  1. The new original document and the new copies should replace the old original document and the old copies (on the inside right of the folder).
  2. Keep the old, marked-up original that shows the requested corrections. Fold it in half, lengthwise, and place it on the inside left of the folder, for ES reference.
  3. Keep the old official (yellow-box) file copies, but mark through the text on each page with a black pen or marker (across diagonally). Then staple the new copies on top of the old ones, after folding the lower 1.25 inches of the new official file copies back and up, so that the old clearance notations are visible. Later clearance notations are still made on the old yellow-box copies.

### **6.1.6 Summary Statement**

- A one-page executive summary statement must accompany all items (letters, decision memorandums, briefing materials, etc.) submitted to the Secretary.
- A one-page executive summary statement may accompany document packages to be signed by IHS executive staff, if the signer should be alerted to additional information or background that is not included in the document to be signed.
- The purpose of the summary statement is to help reviewers understand the issues quickly and to enable prompt assignment of priorities for action.
- See Exhibit 10 for the required format. The summary statement should not exceed one page. Its tone may be more informal than the tone of the document it accompanies. Common acronyms/abbreviations (e.g., IHS, HHS) may be used without spelling them out first, if you are sure they are known to the reader.

## 6.1.7 Copy Requirements

This section identifies the number of copies and the color of paper to be used when assembling a correspondence package.

- Official File Copies

If the signer is . . .

A Department-level official

Then prepare . . .

Three yellow-box\*\* copies with enclosures

- Two for OS
- One for IHS ES

Five white copies of original letter/memorandum with enclosures

Director, IHS, or IHS executive staff

Two yellow-box copies with enclosures

- One for IHS ES
- One for program office

\*An official file copy consists of a yellow-box copy with enclosures.

\*\*A "yellow-box" copy is a copy printed on yellow paper that has a box at the bottom for clearance signatures/initials.

- Use yellow-box paper for the first page of each official file copy. Use plain yellow paper for the remaining official file copy pages. Yellow paper is used only for official file copies. Do not use yellow paper (with or without boxes) for other copies.

- See Section 6.1.11 for guidance on assembling copies.

- Other Copies

The originating office may be required to prepare additional copies as follows:

If the purpose is . . .

Reading, project, suspense, or file copies for the originating office

Then use . . .

White or colored paper (other than yellow) as determined by the office

Copies referenced in the letter

White paper

Formal copies (such as for the White House)

White paper



### 6.1.8 Copy Notations

- Do not put copy notations on original documents. They go only on copies, except for some copies sent outside the Department (for example, to the White House, a State agency, or a private citizen).
- Begin copy notations on the second line under the signature block (or the "Enclosure" or "Attachment" notation, if used). (See Exhibits 3 and 13.)
- Any appropriate abbreviations/acronyms or group names may be used in the copy notations.

Example:      cc: Area Directors  
                                Director, OMS  
                                Director, DAGM

- List the recipients of copies in descending order of authority.
- When similar letters are sent to two or more Members of Congress, prepare original letters to each signer. However, produce official file copy sets of the first letter only for each ES involved and for the originating office (if desired). On these copy sets, type "Similar letter to:" on the second line under the last copy notation and list the names of the other recipients (see Exhibits 6 and 7). See Section 5.2.6 regarding the last paragraph of these letters.
- When sending a copy to the ES in the Office of the Secretary, use "ES," not "OS/ES."
- Sometimes, the letter or memorandum just fits on the page, leaving no room for copy and prepared-by notations. In those cases, you can either place the notations on a separate page or type the notations in the margin on the last page of the letter or memorandum. The second approach is preferred because it takes less file space.
- Include copy and prepared-by notations on all drafts so that reviewers may obtain additional information directly from the writer and see who will receive copies.

### 6.1.9 "Prepared By" Notations

Include a "prepared by" notation on the official (yellow-box) file copy and draft documents submitted to IHS/ES. The "prepared by" line should include the following information (use appropriate abbreviations):

- ▶ Originating office
- ▶ Writer's first initial and entire last name, no spaces, use all capital letters
- ▶ Typist's initials, all lowercase letters
- ▶ Date of original preparation
- ▶ Writer's telephone number and room number
- ▶ Computer file name
- ▶ IHS action number
- ▶ OS number, if applicable
- ▶ Reference numbers of all closely related controlled correspondence

If the document has been revised, you should also prepare a "revised by" line that includes the following information:

- ▶ Originating office
- ▶ Revisor's first initial and entire last name, no spaces, use all capital letters
- ▶ Typist's initials, all lowercase letters
- ▶ Date of revision
- ▶ Revisor's telephone and room number

Example:

Prepared by: IHS/OPH:JSMITH;jls:2/25/90:448-1106:Rm.6A-30:Doc.(File Name):Action  
No: 528-1:OS 9511130026:Ref.528-2, 528-3

Revised by: IHS/ES:MSILVER:cws:2/28/90:448-1011:Rm.5A-03

See Exhibits 3 and 13.

### 6.1.10 Clearance/Routing

- All final letters and memorandums forwarded for signature must be cleared by the writer and all supervisory levels between the writer and the signer. All letters and memorandums to be signed by the IHS Director or executive staff in the immediate Office of the Director, or by Department or White House officials, must be forwarded through the ES. This requirement ensures that each document will be controlled and reviewed for compliance with current policies, guidelines, and procedures, and that a file copy will be retained centrally for future reference. (See Chapter 7.)

- When the subject of a letter, memorandum, or other document may affect a program outside the preparing office, send that program a draft of the material for review and comment. Then route the final document package through their office for clearance. Also provide an information copy of the final document for each affected office. For example, if the document involves sensitive legislative matters, prepare it in consultation with the Division of Regulatory and Legal Affairs (DRLA), OMS. Route the final document through DRLA for clearance, and provide them with an information copy of the final document.

### 6.1.11 Assembly

Use the following document assembly when a letter or memorandum is forwarded through the ES. Put documents in a letter-size file folder. Clip all documents to the folder using binder clips, not paper clips. The ES can provide sample document packages.

#### Outside Front

- Route Slip--If truly urgent, stamp or print "Time Sensitive - - Signature Required by   /  /  ," or use the words "Urgent," "Priority," or "Expedite."
- Control Slip. (See Chapter 7.)

#### Inside Left

- Any edited drafts, folded in half, lengthwise.
- If used, an ACTION "cover" memorandum or "Note To." (See Sections 5.1.5 and 5.3.5.)
- Copy of incoming correspondence.
- Background/informational material and copies of closely related correspondence on the same issue.

#### Inside Right

- Draft for review or final letter/memorandum. Final documents should be placed under an Executive Correspondence plastic cover. For letters or memorandums with two or more pages, place a signature tab on the page to be signed.
- Enclosures/attachments and preaddressed envelope for original letter or memorandum. (See Section 6.2.13.)

- Official yellow-box file copies (for final documents) -- staple each yellow-box copy to a sheet of paper, about 2 inches down from the top, so that the yellow-box is visible below the final document (the yellow-box copy is placed directly behind the final document). Attach a copy of the incoming communication and a set of enclosures or attachments to each official file copy included in the folder. When letters or memorandums are sent forward for the Secretary's signature (or other Department-level official), ensure that any yellow-box copies for the OS/ES are folded up (just above the clearance box) or otherwise concealed so that no notations are made on them before they reach the Director. (Only the Director, IHS, and Department-level officials sign off on the yellow-box copies for documents to be signed by the Secretary.)
- Other unofficial copies. Attach copies of the incoming communication and enclosures or attachments, and include preaddressed envelopes for copies to be mailed. Be sure there is a copy for each "cc" listed. Place copies in the order that recipients appear on the "cc" list, with the exception of all official yellow-box file copies.
- Summary Statement, if required.  
(See Section 6.1.6.)

#### 6.1.12 Distribution

For letters and memorandums signed at the IHS level by the IHS Director and executive staff in the immediate Office of the Director:

- After the original is signed, the folder should be returned to the IHS ES for further processing.
- All copies are date and signature stamped by the IHS ES.
- The IHS ES keeps one set of official file copies.
- The IHS ES returns the folder to the originating office, which mails the original and any cc: copies.

For letters and memorandums signed at the Department level:

- The IHS ES sends 2 official file copies and 5 white copies to the OS ES; they return one official file copy to IHS ES when signed.
- The OS mails the original and any cc: copies.

## 6.2 Guidelines for Letters (In Addition to General Guidelines)

### 6.2.1 Stationery

- Type the first page of each final version of a letter on bond stationery having a letterhead appropriate for the signing official as shown below (see Exhibit 1). Type other pages on matching plain bond paper.

#### Stationery Use

##### If the signer is . . .

Secretary

Deputy Secretary

Chief of Staff

Others at the Department level

Assistant Secretary for Health and Surgeon General

##### Then use . . .

Personal letterhead stationery for the Secretary

Personal letterhead stationery for the Deputy Secretary

Personal letterhead stationery for the Chief of Staff

Office of the Secretary letterhead stationery

Office of Public Health and Science letterhead stationery

- Each office is to maintain its own supply of IHS letterhead stationery. The IHS ES will maintain a supply of OS stationery and matching envelopes. Reasonable quantities will be provided on request.

#### Margins and Page Length

See Section 6.1.1.

### 6.2.2 Date

Do not type the word "Date" or type a date on any letter to be signed by the IHS Director, executive staff in the immediate office of the Director, or a Department official. After the letter is signed, the appropriate ES will stamp the date, centered at the top of the first page, on the original and all copies.

### 6.2.3 Address Block

- Limit inside addresses on letters to seven lines. Single space the address in block style. If needed, break long titles into two lines and indent the second line two spaces. Spell out Street, Avenue, etc., and the State name. Type the city, State, and ZIP Code on the last line. Double space between the State name and ZIP Code.
- Letters to Presidential appointees at the Cabinet level, and to Federal and State elected officials are addressed to "The Honorable" (given and surname). Except for mayors, "The Honorable" is not used for county and city officials. Forms of address may vary under certain circumstances. For example, "The Honorable" may be replaced by a special title such as "Dr.," "General," or "His Excellency."
- For letters to male addressees, use "Mr." if no special title is appropriate. For female addressees, when no special title is appropriate and no preference for "Miss" or "Mrs." is indicated in the incoming document, use the courtesy title "Ms." If you cannot tell whether the addressee is a man or a woman, use no courtesy title. For more guidance on forms of address, consult the ES.
- Use the following format for the inside address when writing to Members of Congress at their Washington, D.C., offices:

The Honorable John Doe  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jane Doe  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

- When a Member of Congress asks that a reply be sent to a home (district) office, use the following format for the inside address block:

The Honorable John Doe  
United States Senator  
621 North Robinson, Suite 14  
Tulsa, Oklahoma 73103

The Honorable Jane Doe  
Member, United States House  
of Representatives  
P.O. Box 13089  
Salem, Oregon 97309

- Even if the incoming correspondence asks that the response be directed to a specific individual on the Member's staff, do not include the name of that person in the inside address block. The only place the staff member's name should appear is on the envelope (see Exhibits 4-7 and Exhibit 11).
- When a letter is sent to a home office, the preparing office should send an information copy to the Member's Washington, D.C., office with a copy of the incoming correspondence. Also, the office should make a copy of the original letter after it is signed and type a "cc:" notation at the bottom indicating "Washington, D.C., Office." The preparing office should include the above notation on all other copies of the letter.

- Do not use titles such as "Mr.," "Mrs.," "Ms.," or "Dr." with other special or courtesy titles or with abbreviations indicating scholastic degrees. However, if the name of the addressee is followed by that person's position, such as "Chairman" or "Director," place a courtesy title before the name.
- Only the addressee's name should go on the first line of the inside address. The addressee's title and organization name go on the second line. If the organization name is very long, you can place it separately on the third line (with no indentation) or carry part of it over to the third line (the part that carries over would be indented two spaces). Do not put a comma after the title if it's on a line by itself.

**Examples:**

**Correct:** Martin R. James, M.D.  
Director, MED Corporation

**Incorrect:** Dr. Martin R. James, M.D.  
Director, MED Corporation

**Correct:** Mr. John C. Lewis  
Chairman, XYZ Tribe

**Incorrect:** John C. Lewis,  
Chairman, XYZ Tribe

**Correct:** Mr. Mike Concha  
Governor, Taos Pueblo

**Incorrect:** Mr. Mike Concha, Governor  
Taos Pueblo

**Correct:** Ms. Thelma Blanding  
Executive Director  
Stallingsworth and Ryanelle  
Associates, Inc.

**Incorrect:** Ms. Thelma Blanding  
Executive Director,  
Stallingsworth and Ryanelle  
Associates, Inc.

## 6.2.4 Salutation

- Type the salutation, followed by a colon, at the left margin on the second line below the last address line. (See Exhibit 2.)
- For a Senator write "Dear Senator (surname):" for the salutation.
- For a Member of the House of Representatives write "Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms./Miss (surname):" for the salutation.
- Address a Member of Congress as "Dear Mr. Chairman:" or "Dear Madam Chairwoman:" when that title is typed in the signature block of the incoming correspondence or when correspondence initiated within the IHS is written to a Member in his/her capacity as a committee chairperson.

- The salutation to tribal leaders should incorporate the title of the addressee's position; for example, "Dear Chairman Astor:" or "Dear Governor Martinez:" (see Section 4.3.3). For other tribal officials, such as vice-chairpersons, committee chairpersons, or tribal program directors, just use a courtesy title (Mr., Ms., Dr., etc.).
- Consult ES for additional guidance on appropriate salutations.

### 6.2.5 Subject Line

Do not use a subject line in letters. Also, do not use "In re," "Re," etc.

### 6.2.6 Body of Letter

- Begin the opening paragraph at the left margin on the second line below the salutation. See the preferred wording in Sections 5.2.1- 5.2.4.
- See Section 6.1.2 for general paragraph information.

### 6.2.7 Succeeding Pages

- Type the second and succeeding pages of a letter on bond paper that matches page one. (See Exhibit 3.)
- Type the following 1 inch from the top of the page at the left margin:

Page (page number) - (addressee's full name as it appears on the inside address)

Examples: *Page 2 - The Honorable John Doe*      *Page 2 - Mr. Mike Black*

- Continue the body of the letter on the third line below the page designation.

### 6.2.8 Complimentary Close

Type the complimentary close followed by a comma on the second line under the last paragraph, beginning at the center of the page.

#### Preferred Complimentary Close

If the signer is . . .

Then Use . . .

Secretary  
Chief of Staff

Sincerely,

Other HHS Officials  
Director, IHS  
IHS executive staff

Sincerely yours,



### 6.2.9 Signature Block

- Type the signature block on the fourth or fifth line directly under the complimentary close. Use the following order:

Signer's full name  
Signer's rank (if a commissioned officer)  
Signer's title

#### Examples:

Michael H. Trujillo, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.  
Assistant Surgeon General  
Director

Robert G. McSwain  
Director  
Office of Management Support

The signer's rank is required only for officials in the Office of the Director and above; the use of rank is optional for other commissioned corps personnel.

See Exhibit 9 for signature blocks for other signers.

- The signature block for letters differs from the signature block for memorandums.

### 6.2.10 Enclosures

- Use the word "Enclosure(s)" with letters. Be sure that all enclosures are identified in the body of the letter.
- Type the word "Enclosure" at the left margin on the second line under the signature block. Do not list enclosures by name under the word "Enclosure."
- An incoming congressional letter that is being returned with an interim or final response is not considered an enclosure.

### 6.2.11 Separate Cover

- When material must be sent separately from the letter, state in the body of the letter that it is being sent "under separate cover." Do not type "separate cover" at the bottom of the letter. Include a courtesy copy of the letter with any material sent under separate cover.

## 6.2.12 Copies

Do not show copy notations on the original of any letter. If a copy is being sent to someone else and the addressee should know that, say so in the text. See Section 5.2.6 and 6.1.8 when responding to letters with multiple signers.

### Copy Requirements

See Section 6.1.7.

### Copy Notations

See Section 6.1.8.

### Prepared-By Notations

See Section 6.1.9.

### Spelling/Grammar Verification

See Section 6.1.4.

### Clearance/Routing

See Section 6.1.10.

### Corrections/Revisions

See Section 6.1.5.

### Summary Statements (Cover Notes)

See Section 6.1.6.

## 6.2.13 Envelopes

- For letters to be signed by the IHS Director or executive staff in the immediate Office of the Director, include a preaddressed matching envelope in the folder (that is, one with a return address matching the letterhead) when the final document is forwarded for signature. Be sure to include the name (abbreviation) and room number of the originating office in the upper left corner of the envelope, below the preprinted or typed return address block (see Exhibit 11).
- For letters to be signed by an official at the Department level, include a preaddressed matching envelope in the folder when the final document is forwarded for signature. However, do not place originating office information on those envelopes.

- Do not use window envelopes or place address labels on letter-size envelopes. Also, be sure the envelope can hold all material to be mailed. If sending more than six pages or any bound or stapled material (brochure, report, etc.), use a kraft or padded envelope.

#### Assembly and Distribution

See Sections 6.1.11 and 6.1.12.

### **6.3 Guidelines for Memorandums (In Addition to General Guidelines)**

#### **6.3.1 Stationery**

- Type the first page of each memorandum on the appropriate stationery (see Section 6.2.1 and Exhibit 1). Type other pages on matching plain bond paper.
- Each office is to maintain its own supply of IHS letterhead stationery. The IHS ES will maintain a supply of OS stationery and matching envelopes. Reasonable quantities will be provided on request.

#### Margins and Page Length

See Section 6.1.1.

#### **6.3.2 Date**

- Do not type the date on any memorandum.
- After the memorandum is signed, the appropriate ES will stamp the date, centered at the top of the first page, on the original and all copies.

#### **6.3.3 "TO:" Caption**

- Type "TO:" at the left margin, 2 inches below the top of the first page. See Section 6.1.1 for alternative beginning points depending on the length of the page. Tab twice (seven spaces) from the colon and type only the title (not the name) of the addressee. (See Exhibit 12.)
- For memorandums to Department-level officials, if the addressee's organizational affiliation is not obvious, type an organizational identifier on the next line. Do not indent additional lines.
- For memorandums to readers within the IHS, type the addressee's organizational name unless the addressee is the IHS Director or an executive staff member in the immediate Office of the Director.

Routing Instructions

- For memorandums addressed to officials at the Department level, it is required that you ensure that all appropriate officials are made aware of the content of the memorandum by routing it with the use of a "Through line" as follows:

If the addressee is . . .

Route the memorandum through . . .

The Secretary

Deputy Secretary (DS), Chief of Staff (COS), and Office of the Secretary (OS) Executive Secretariat (ES).

Deputy Secretary

COS, ES ("ES" used alone refers to the OS ES; to indicate the Indian Health Service ES, you would use "IHS/ES")

Chief of Staff

ES.

- For IHS memorandums that are not accompanied by a yellow-box clearance sheet, you should ensure that all appropriate officials are aware of the content of the memorandum by routing it with the use of a "Through line" as follows:

If the addressee is . . .

Route the memorandum through . . .

IHS Director or executive staff in the immediate Office of the Director

IHS ES and all other supervisory levels between the sender and the addressee.

Persons at lower organizational levels in the IHS

Supervisory levels between the sender and the addressee.

- To route the memorandum, immediately below the addressee's title (and organizational affiliation if used), type the word "Through" followed by a colon, two spaces, an appropriate acronym, one space, and a seven-space-long line (for initials).

Examples:

TO: The Secretary  
Through: DS \_\_\_\_\_  
          COS \_\_\_\_\_  
          ES \_\_\_\_\_

REQUIRED for all memorandums addressed to the Secretary

TO: Director  
Through: IHS/ES \_\_\_\_\_

Required only if memorandum is not accompanied by a yellow-box clearance sheet

- Except for "Through" designations, do not use abbreviations or acronyms in the "TO" line.
- Memorandums to persons at higher or lower organizational levels within an agency, or to persons in different organizations/agencies, are sent through all supervisory levels between sender and addressee for clearance. See also Section 6.1.10 and Exhibit 14.

#### Multiple Addressees

- If the memorandum is being addressed to more than two individuals or groups of individuals, type "See Below" on the "TO" line. Then type the word "Addressees:" on the second line below the signature block or the word "Attachment" (if used). On the following lines, flush with the left margin, list each addressee's title and an acronym for his/her organizational affiliation. (See Exhibit 15.)
- If the memorandum is addressed to a recognized group of individuals (such as Area and Associate Directors), don't list each individual member of the group on the "Addressee:" line; just list the group name(s). (See Exhibit 23.)

#### 6.3.4 "FROM:" Caption

- Double space after the last line in the "TO:" caption and type "FROM:" at the left margin. Tab once (five spaces) from the colon and type only the title (not the name) of the signer and his/her organizational affiliation if not shown in the letterhead. (See Exhibit 12.)
- If the memorandum is to be signed by the IHS Director or executive staff in the immediate Office of the Director, do not type any organizational identifier under the signer's title on the "FROM:" line. "Indian Health Service" is already in the letterhead, and "Office of the Director" is implied when no office identifier is used.

#### Examples:

FROM: Director of Headquarters Operations

FROM: Director

FROM: Director  
Office of Management Support

- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms in the "FROM" line.

### 6.3.5 "SUBJECT:" Caption

- Double space after the last line of the "FROM:" caption and type "SUBJECT:" at the left margin. Tab once (two spaces) from the colon and type the subject. If more than one line is needed, do not indent additional lines. (See Exhibit 15.)
- Capitalize the first letter of each word, except articles, prepositions, and conjunctions. When appropriate (see Section 5.3.5), type two hyphens after the subject and then type one of the following:
  - ACTION
  - ACTION (REGULATION)
  - ACTION (REPORT TO CONGRESS)
  - INFORMATION
  - BRIEFING

Examples:

SUBJECT: Quality Management Initiative--BRIEFING

SUBJECT: Request to Reprogram Indian Health  
Facilities Construction Funds--ACTION

- Do not use abbreviations or acronyms in the "SUBJECT" line.

### 6.3.6 Body of Memorandum

- There are two categories of memorandums prepared by IHS staff: general and special. Special memorandums include ACTION, INFORMATION, and BRIEFING memorandums. Section 5.3.5 explains when to prepare these special memorandums, and Exhibits 18-29 show their format. In addition, the following guidance applies to all memorandums prepared by IHS staff, including those to (or from) officials at the Department level and those from one IHS employee to another.
- Start the opening paragraph or the initial heading at the left margin three lines below the last line of the "Subject" line.
- See the preferred wording for opening paragraphs in Sections 5.2.1- 5.2.4.
- Use the standard block typing format (see Exhibits 12-13).
- See Section 6.1.2 for more information on paragraphs, subparagraphs, and spacing.

### 6.3.7 Succeeding Pages

- Type the second and succeeding pages of a memorandum on bond paper that matches page one. One inch from the top of the page at the left margin, type the following:

Page x - (Addressee's full title exactly as it appears on the "TO:" line.)

Example:

Page 2 - Director  
Office of Management Support

- Continue the body of the memorandum on the third line below the page designation (see Exhibit 13).

### 6.3.8 Signature Block

- Type the signature block four lines below the last line of text, beginning at the center of the page.

Use the following order:

Signer's full name  
Signer's rank (if a commissioned officer)

- The signer's rank is required only for officials in the Office of the Director or above; the use of rank is optional for other commissioned corps personnel.
- In memorandums, the signer's title appears on the "FROM:" line; therefore, it is not repeated in the signature block. The signature block for memorandums differs from the signature block for letters.

Example:

Michael H. Trujillo, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.  
Assistant Surgeon General

*NOTE: You would not include his title, "Director," in the signature block because it's on the "FROM:" line.*

### 6.3.9 Attachments

- Use the word "Attachment" with memorandums. Reference all attachments in the body of the memorandum. Type the word "Attachment" at the left margin on the second line below the signature block. If there will be more than one attachment, use the plural form and indicate the number of attachments.

Example:

Attachments (3)

- For memorandums addressed to Department officials (optional for other memorandums), list each attachment by title or by a brief descriptive phrase immediately below the "Attachment" notation. Type the tab identification letters on tab separator sheet(s) and place them before the appropriate attachment. Also, attach a signature tab to the page requiring a signature. Signature documents should be placed before background information.

Example:

3 Attachments:

Tab A - Transmittal Letters

Tab B - Report to Congress

Tab C - Executive Summary

*- Required format for memorandums to a Department official. Optional for others.*

### 6.3.10 Separate Cover

- When material must be sent apart from the memorandum, state in the text that it is being sent "under separate cover." Do not type "separate cover" at the bottom of the memorandum. Send a courtesy copy of the memorandum with any material sent under separate cover.

### 6.3.11 Copies

- Do not show copy notations on the original of any memorandum. If a copy is being sent to someone else and the addressee should know that, say so in the text.

#### Copy Requirements

See Section 6.1.7.

#### Copy Notations

See Section 6.1.8.



### Prepared-By Notations

See Section 6.1.9.

### Spelling/Grammar Verification

See Section 6.1.4.

### Clearance/Routing

See Section 6.1.10.

### Corrections/Revisions

See Section 6.1.5.

### Summary Statements (Cover Notes)

See Section 6.1.6.

## **6.3.12 Envelopes**

- For memorandums that are addressed to persons outside the IHS who are not served by the building mail system or by mail shuttle service, include a preaddressed matching envelope (that is, one with a return address matching the letterhead) when the final document is sent forward for signature. Be sure to include the name (abbreviation) and room number of the originating office in the upper left corner of the envelope, below the preprinted or typed return address block (see Exhibit 11).
- For memorandums to be signed by an official at the Department level, include a preaddressed matching envelope when the final document is sent forward for signature. However, do not place originating office information below the return address block on those envelopes.
- Avoid use of address labels on letter-size envelopes. Also, be sure the envelope can hold all material to be sent. If sending more than six pages or any bound or stapled material (brochure, report, etc.), use a kraft or padded envelope.

### Assembly

See Section 6.1.11.

### Distribution

See Section 6.1.12.



**Correspondence Packaging  
and Tracking**

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# Chapter 7 — Correspondence Packaging and Tracking

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# Chapter 7 — Correspondence Packaging and Tracking

This chapter describes the handling of correspondence and internal documents. It includes the initial processing of items by ES, activities associated with the development of appropriate responses, proper completion of the response process, periodic reports and their use, and the availability of technical assistance and training.

## 7.1 Correspondence Analysis and Assignment

### 7.1.1 Receipt and Assignment to ES Correspondence Specialists

The ES processes incoming mail (letters, fax transmissions, memorandums, and other forms of communications) addressed to the IHS Director and executive staff in the immediate Office of the Director. Mail for other addressees and informal mail (e.g., magazines, leaflets) is rerouted to proper recipients immediately.

Mail that must be controlled and tracked is carefully opened and date/time stamped (except personal or confidential items, which are only date/time stamped on the envelope).

A correspondence specialist determines the required action and accountable office. Usually the action is to prepare a response. The ES maintains the Listing of Subject Responsibilities, which is the primary guide used to assign accountability for Actions.

The ES consults other IHS offices in the maintenance of the Listing of Subject Responsibilities. This list is updated periodically to accommodate new subjects and to reflect changes in policies, practices, and assignments.

### 7.1.2 Detailed Analysis and Handling Determinations

The correspondence specialist reads the material, performs a detailed analysis of its content, and queries the Action Tracking System (ATS) for prior and current related actions. Where related actions are identified, the new action may be associated with them in a related set called a "case."

The correspondence specialist determines the main topics, points at issue, and the position of the correspondent. This information is then used to compose the "subject" line for the Action, using standardized syntax and terminology. The keywords used in the subject line are later used to query the ATS when performing subject searches.

The relative urgency of the Action is primarily determined by the source of the communication and the signer of the response. The IHS ES allows 10 work days for completed final response on routine correspondence and 30 work days on contract health services appeals. The IHS ES due dates on OS assignments are based on their due date. The ES maintains guidelines on "Due Dates." (Allowable response time is based on OS-supplied guidance and internally developed standards [see Exhibit 31].) The ES applies these guidelines, adapting them as necessary for specific actions.

### **7.1.3 Action Record Preparation/Control Slip Printing**

As a service to the accountable office, the ES prepares an Action Record in the ATS. The information placed in the record describes the Action, and includes the identity of the accountable component, the initial assignee, and the due date (if for response). When the information in the Action Record is complete and accurate, a control slip is printed for the Action (two copies); most ATS code values are translated for ease of use. (See an example and a detailed explanation of the control slip on pages 112 and 113.) The information on the control slip is retained in the Action Record in the ATS so that it does not have to be reentered by successive assignees.

### **7.1.4 Folder Preparation and Copy Retention**

When evaluation and Action Record preparation are completed, the Action is prepared for routing. Copies of the complete set of materials are made; the number of copies depends primarily on the number of information copies required. Until the Action is closed, the correspondence specialist retains in a tickler file the original incoming communication, the internal routing slip, and one copy of the IHS Action control slip (see Section 7.3). The copied materials are packaged in assignment folders by ES as follows:

- A copy of the original correspondence, including any attachments or enclosures, is placed in a folder, and the second copy of the IHS Action control slip is stapled to the front of the folder. Copies of related prior correspondence are included as a convenience to the accountable office.
- A special red IHS Executive Secretariat Controlled Correspondence folder is used for any action controlled from the OS ES and for congressional correspondence that requires a response.
- A brown folder is used for all other correspondence.
- Information copies are not distributed in folders. They are easily distinguishable from the "official" sets because the originals of the IHS Action control slips are prepared on yellow paper, while the information copy versions are reproduced on plain white paper.



## 7.1.5 Forwarding Action to Initial Assignee

Prepared folders and information copies are placed in the appropriate mail slots in the IHS ES for pickup by the office correspondence coordinators. Sensitive items are placed in envelopes and marked "Confidential." Assignments routed to Area offices for response are faxed and an original is mailed; information copies are faxed.

## 7.2 Response Preparation Activities

The initial Assignee should acknowledge receipt of the Action (the brown or red folder) through the ATS. Then the response preparation process begins. Each successive component that contributes to preparing the response should apply the instructions set forth in chapters 1-6.

### 7.2.1 Role of the Accountable Component

Regardless of which components contribute to preparing the response, one IHS component has ultimate responsibility for the completeness, accuracy, and timeliness of the response. This component is called the "accountable" component; accountability for an Action is always specifically designated.

Usually, the accountable component is also the initial assignee and the next-to-last assignee (immediately before the final assignment to ES). This enables the accountable component to perform its duties, which include:

- Evaluating and determining appropriate internal routing and response preparation assignments (includes determining accuracy of accountable component assignment).
- Assigning to subordinate component (or self-assignment), with clarification of expectations, as appropriate.
- Monitoring the preparation of the response to ensure that adequate and appropriate resources are being devoted and that the response will be completed on time.
- Reviewing the draft or final response to ensure completeness, accuracy, appropriateness, and proper assembly (see Section 6.1.11), before forwarding to ES.
- Correcting ES-identified problems

Occasionally, Actions require the involvement of two or more offices. In such cases, one "lead" office will be assigned accountability for the response. The accountable office coordinates all response-preparing activities and is responsible for the final product. The ES provides copies of the Action folder to each coordinating office. Coordinating offices forward their portions of the response to the accountable office, which completes the final response. When Actions are signed and closed, ES distributes copies of the final response to all involved components.

## **7.2.2 Role of Assignee Components**

As response preparation proceeds, the Action is successively reassigned to each contributing component. Each assignee participates as appropriate; this may include:

- Evaluating and determining what to do and how to do it. This includes planning the research, development, writing, coordination, and review.
- Writing the response.
- Reassigning the action to the next response preparer or to the accountable component for pre-ES review of the draft or final response.

These processes are repeated through draft and final response preparations (including interim response, if applicable). Note that for some of the less formally controlled responses (e.g., for the Office Director's signature), completion of the response may be performed by components other than the ES. When this occurs, a copy of the signed response must be sent to the ES to properly close the Action.

## **7.3 Completion of an Action**

The ES reviews and edits final responses for format, accuracy, completeness, and adherence to policy. Approved responses are forwarded for signature, signed (or revised) by the signatory, and returned to ES for further processing.

### **7.3.1 Stamping, Copying, and Distribution**

The ES staff date stamps the original and all copies, stamps each copy with a signature stamp, and copies the original. The originating office or the ES then mails the original and distributes copies (see Section 6.1.12). Occasionally, the ES provides additional special handling, such as handcarrying or faxing advanced copies to an addressee.

### **7.3.2 Closeout and Filing**

To complete the response process, the ES closes the Action in the ATS and prints a new control slip. Materials retained by ES are filed in consecutively numbered file folders in the ES master files. The file contains a newly printed version of the control slip, the original incoming correspondence with attachments/enclosures, a copy of the signed responses, the official yellow-box copy of the response with attachments/enclosures (except for very bulky items), and pertinent notes and annotations.

## 7.4 Report Generation, Distribution, and Use

Any authorized ATS user may query the contents of the database applicable to their activities and print standardized reports. Authorized users may also query the database as necessary to determine the status of any controlled correspondence.

### 7.4.1 Overdue/Due Reports

The Overdue/Due Report generated by the ATS is an important tool available to correspondence control staff and managers for assessing workloads and ensuring timeliness of responses (see the example on page 114). Each office should generate its own report weekly (see section 7.4 above). For components with high volumes or especially short and critical deadlines, daily printing is often useful. Although the Overdue/Due Report is customarily oriented to the current week's work-in-progress, it is possible to request a broader reporting period, such as a month or a quarter, to provide a broader perspective on work volume.

### 7.4.2 Availability of Other Reports

In addition to the Overdue/Due Report, other standard reports can provide the user with detailed and statistical information on correspondence data in various sequences and formats.

## 7.5 Technical Assistance, Consultation, and Training

The ES provides technical assistance, consultation, and training to writers, correspondence control staff, and other participants in the response preparation and tracking. Two kinds of ES-furnished services are Guidelines-related support and ATS-related support.

### 7.5.1 Guidelines-Related Support

The ES provides assistance and consultation in interpreting and applying the IHS Executive Correspondence Guidelines. The ES also sponsors training on IHS memorandum and letter writing, and correspondence control and response preparation. The IHS Executive Correspondence Guidelines is used as a resource and reference in these training courses.

### 7.5.2 ATS-Related Support

The ES provides assistance and training in the proper use of the ATS, including maintenance of action and assignment data, query and report functions, and administrative support functions. The ES also coordinates the resolution of technical problems and evaluates any necessary corrections, requested enhancements, or design changes.

# Indian Health Service Executive Secretariat



08/07/1998 10:29:35 AM

## IHS ACTION CONTROL

PAGE: 1

ACTION NO: 20513 - 1  
 PHS NO: 00000  
 OS NO: 0507980015  
 SOURCE: CONGRESS  
 TYPE: LETTER

DUE DATE: 05/21/1998  
 DATE OF INCOMING: 04/28/1998  
 RECEIVED DATE: 05/11/1998  
 FIRST ASSIGNED: 05/11/1998  
 REC. CREATED BY: MTB

FROM: STENHOLM, CHARLES

TO: SHALALA, DONNA

SUBJECT: JOANNA SHIRLEY, ISSUE RE: SCHOLARSHIP PAYBACK

ACCOUNTABLE: GAA (OFC OF MANAGEMENT SUPPORT)

ACTION: RESP FOR DIR SIG

SPECIAL INST:

INFO COPIES: TRUJILLO, MAHSETKY

INTERIM SIGNED:

FINAL SIGNED: 07/31/1998

CLOSED DATE: 08/03/1998

ASGN	ASSIGNEE	EXPECT	DATE ASSIGNED	ACKNOWLEDGED	STATUS CODE & DESCRIPTION
1	GAA	PR LT D1	05/11/1998 00:00	05/12/1998 08:57	OUT COOKE
2	GAA7	PR LT D1	05/12/1998 00:00	07/16/1998 13:22	OUT LOFGREN
3	GAA	PR LT D1	07/16/1998 13:22	07/16/1998 13:23	OUT MARY
4	GAA-1	CL LT D1	07/16/1998 13:23	07/21/1998 10:21	OUT REASSIGNED TO NEXT
5	GAA	CT LT F1	07/21/1998 10:22	07/22/1998 10:59	OUT TRACE
6	GAA7	CT LT F1	07/22/1998 11:00	07/24/1998 15:25	OUT REASSIGNED TO NEXT
7	GAA	RF LT F1	07/24/1998 15:26	07/27/1998 08:05	OUT TRACE
8	GAA7	CT LT F2	07/27/1998 08:05	07/28/1998 14:55	OUT TRACE FOR DHPS
9	GAA	RF LT F2	07/28/1998 14:56	07/29/1998 10:40	OUT TRACE/PHYLLIS
10	GAA7	CT LT F3	07/29/1998 10:40	07/30/1998 15:13	OUT TM FOR LOFGREN
11	GAA	RF LT F3	07/30/1998 15:13	07/30/1998 15:32	OUT TRACE/PHYLLIS
12	GAA-1	RF LT F3	07/30/1998 15:33	07/31/1998 12:34	OUT REASSIGNED TO NEXT
13	GA	SG	07/31/1998 12:34	08/03/1998 10:27	OUT REASSIGNED TO NEXT
14	GAA-1	CA	08/03/1998 10:27	08/03/1998 10:27	CLO CLOSEOUT



FTS 443-1011

HEADQUARTERS

Rockville, Maryland

Date/Time: the exact date and time the control slip was printed.

IHS ACTION CONTROL

PAGE: 1

**ACTION NO:** Unique identifier assigned to each incoming item to be tracked using the ATS.

**DUE DATE:** Date by which response is to be signed and mailed, or other Action completed.

**PHS NO.:** Identifier assigned by the PHS/ES to items tracked by the PHS system.

**DATE OF INCOMING:** Date on incoming item of correspondence (or equivalent).

**OS NO.:** Identifier assigned by the OS/ES to items tracked by the OS system.

**RECEIVED DATE:** Date incoming item is received in the IHS/ES.

**SOURCE:** Incoming originator category.

**FIRST ASSIGNED:** Date the Action is first assigned.

**TYPE:** Communication form used by originator, such as letter, memorandum, etc.

**REC. CREATED BY:** Identifier of the authorized person who created the record and entered the action into the ATS system.

**FROM:** Originator, the person or organization who sent the incoming item.

**TO:** The person or organization to whom the incoming item was sent/addressed.

**SUBJECT:** A brief "abstract" of the incoming item's content.

**ACCOUNTABLE:** The Office/person responsible for completing the Action, accurately and promptly.

**ACTION:** This is the action that will be taken in responding to the incoming item (e.g., Director's signature, information, etc.)

**SPECIAL INST:** Special Instructions for the "Assigned To" person(s)/organization(s) concerning the incoming item (e.g., "coordinate with other offices").

**INFO COPIES:** Indicate to whom information copies of the incoming item were sent.

**INTERIM SIGNED:** Date of interim response (i.e., the "date of signature," if applicable).

**FINAL SIGNED:** Date of the final response (i.e., the "date of signature").

**CLOSED DATE:** Date action record is closed in the ATS system.

SENT TO	DATE	TIME	RECEIVED BY	DATE	TIME
_____	__/__/__	::	_____	__/__/__	::
_____	__/__/__	::	_____	__/__/__	::

The component (or person) to whom the package has been forwarded, and the date and time when it was sent.

The identity of the person who received the package, and the date and time when receipt was acknowledged.

RUN DATE: 1/29/1999  
 RUN TIME: 3:48:44 PM  
 SELECT DATE: 01/25/1998

INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE - ACTION TRACKING SYSTEM  
 OVERDUE/DUE REPORT - GROUPED BY ACCOUNTABLE COMPONENT  
 SELECTION: ACCOUNT: GAA(+)  
 ACCOUNTABLE COMPONENT: OFC OF MANAGEMENT SUPPORT (GAA)

\*\*\* DUE DATES \*\*\*  
 OVERDUE DUE  
 ACTION STATUS

ACTION NUMBER	AUTHOR SUBJECT	ASSIGNEE	OVERDUE	DUE	STATUS
12874 - 2	MCCAIN, JOHN COMPLAINT CONCERNING ADMINISTRATION AT WINSLOW SERVICE UNIT, NAVAJO AREA	GAA-E	07/11/1995	OVERDUE	
12874 - 3	MANLEY, AUDREY J.D. HAYWORTH: COMPLAINT CONCERNING ADMINISTRATION AT WINSLOW SERVICE UNIT, NAVAJO AREA	GAA-E	07/11/1995	OVERDUE	
12874 - 4	HAYWORTH, J.D. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR COMPLAINT CONCERNING ADMINISTRATION AT WINSLOW SERVICE UNIT, NAVAJO AREA	GAA-E	07/11/1995	OVERDUE	
12874 - 6	MASON, BILL STATUS OF LABOR-MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIP AT WINSLOW SERVICE UNIT, NAVAJO AREA	GAA-E	08/11/1995	OVERDUE	
12874 - 8	LAVOIE, ANNE COMPLAINT CONCERNING ADMINISTRATION AT WINSLOW SERVICE UNIT, NAVAJO AREA	GAA-E	10/23/1995	OVERDUE	
12874 - 11	LAVOIE/BEGAYEY/AZZIE/MCLEAN PRIVACY ACT VIOLATIONS, WINSLOW SERVICE UNIT, NAVAJO AREA	GAA-E	07/31/1996	OVERDUE	
12874 - 13	ENOCH, NICHOLAS PRIVACY ACT VIOLATIONS, OSC FILE NO. D1-96-1850	GAA-E	01/08/1997	OVERDUE	
12874 - 17	KYL, JON COMPLAINT CONCERNING ADMINISTRATION AT WINSLOW SERVICE UNIT, MARIA MILLER & ANN LAVOIE - NAVAJO AREA	GAA-E	03/21/1997	OVERDUE	
12874 - 21	KNOLLENBERG, JOE MARCIA HARRIS - HARASSMENT & MISMANAGEMENT AT THE IES WINSLOW SERVICE UNIT - NAVAJO	GAA-E	10/03/1997	OVERDUE	
12874 - 22	KYL, JON HARASSMENT AND POOR MANAGEMENT AT WINSLOW SERVICE UNIT MARCIA HARRIS	GAA-E	01/05/1998	OVERDUE	
14812 - 7	OIG/ES TRANSFER OF LTR FROM JOHN THUNE CONCERNING ALLEGATIONS OF RETALIATION AGAINST EMPLOYEE FOR REPORTING ILLEGAL ACTIVITY	GAA-E	06/30/1997	OVERDUE	
16731 - 1	MONTGOMERY (CULLY), RHONDA ALLEGES ABUSE OF PERSONAL SERVICE CONTRACTING SYSTEM, OKLAHOMA CITY AREA	GAA-E	11/14/1996	OVERDUE	



(1)

(1)

(1)



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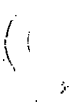


Exhibit 1 — Letterhead Stationery for Letters  
and Memorandums

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THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20201

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

---

Washington, D.C. 20201

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

---

Assistant Secretary for Health  
Office of Public Health and Science  
Washington D.C. 20201

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

---

Indian Health Service  
Rockville MD 20857

# Exhibit 2 — Basic Letter Format

Top margin 2 inches.  
See Section 6.2.3.

Double space.

Double space.

Single space the body.

1-inch margin  
Left justify only.

→ Ms. Xxxxx Xxxxxx  
17559 Quay Street, NW  
(City), (State) (ZIP)

→ Dear Ms. Xxxxxx:

I am responding to your February 26 letter describing your interest in Indian Health Service (IHS) employment. It is gratifying to learn of your desire to work among and for the benefit of American Indians and Alaska Natives. Since you have indicated a preference for placement in (State), I have referred your letter to Xxxxxx Xxxxx, M.D., Director, Xxxxxxxx Area IHS.

You may wish to inform the Xxxxxxxx Area personnel office directly about your availability, background, and interests. For this purpose, correspondence may be addressed to:

Personnel Management Program  
Xxxxxxxx Area IHS  
Federal Building  
115 (Street/Avenue), SE  
(City), (State) (ZIP)

The Personnel Management Office may be reached by telephone at (444) 444-4444.

I appreciate your interest in improving the health of American Indian and Alaska Native people.

Sincerely yours,

Xxxxx X. Xxxxx, X.X.  
Rank (If Applicable)  
Director

→ cc: IHS/ES  
Director, Xxxxxxxx Area IHS w/copy of incoming correspondence

→ Prepared by: IHS/XXX/XXX:XXXXX:xxxx:4-12-95:443-1011:Rm.6A-XX:  
Doc. (File Name:Action NO:22528-1

Revised by: IHS/ES:XXXXXXX:xx:4/19/95:443-1011:Rm.5A-03:  
Doc. (File Name), P. 52

1-inch margin.

Double space.  
Use signer's preferred complimentary close.

Start on fourth or fifth line from complimentary close.

# Exhibit 3 — Second Page of Letters

↑	Top margin 1 inch.
↑	Name as it appears on inside address.
↑	Triple space.
↑	Double space.
↑	Page 2 - Ms. Xxxxx Xxxxxxxx
←	This issue has been brought to the attention of the local health officials, and they will contact you shortly to discuss the situation and possible remedies.
←	Thank you for your continued interest in and concern for the health and well-being of the American Indian and Alaska Native people.
←	Sincerely yours,
←	Xxxxx X. Xxxxx, X.X. Rank (If Applicable) Director
↑	Enclosure
↑	cc: IHS/ES IHS/Originating Office
↑	Prepared by: IHS/XXX/XXXX:XXXXX:xxxx:4/12/95:443-1011:Em.6A-XX: Doc.(File Name):Action No: 528-1 Revised by: IHS/ES:XXXXXX:xx:4/19/95:443-1011:Em.5A-03: Doc.(File Name),p.52

Must have at least 2 lines of text.

Double space.  
Use signer's preferred complimentary close.

Start on fourth or fifth line from complimentary close



1-inch bottom margin minimum on second and succeeding pages.

Exhibit 4 — Letter to a Senator's Washington, D.C., Office

A different form is used for the local office. See Exhibit 7.

The Honorable Brock Adams  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Adams:

I am responding to your October 4 letter on behalf of Ms. Xxxxx X. Xxxxx of (city), (State). Ms. Xxxxx is concerned that funding for mental health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives is inadequate; i.e., her Indian Health Service (IHS) clinic is not staffed to provide mental health services directly and has no money to purchase such services from private sector providers.

Unfortunately, Ms. Xxxxx is correct in her basic assessment of IHS's ability to deliver mental health services. We estimate that less than half the staff needed to provide adequate mental health services to Indian people are available. However, the fiscal year 1990 budget provides \$6 million for new mental health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives, and in addition, we are working on a departmental initiative targeted at improving mental health care services.

The IHS recognizes the need to provide additional mental health services. In the meantime, however, the level of funding made available to address these needs must be balanced against the need to provide other equally important health care services.

Your continued interest in the health and well-being of the American Indian and Alaska Native people is appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Xxxxx X. Xxxxx, X.X.  
Rank (if Applicable)  
Director

Do not show on the original.

cc: IHS/ES  
Director, Xxxxxxxx Area, Attn: Chief, Mental Health Branch  
IHS/XX/XXXX, Rm. 8A-XX  
Reading File

Do not show on the original.

Prepared by: IHS/XX/XX/XXXX:XX:10/30/95:443-1011:Rm. 6A-XX:  
Doc. (File Name): Action No: 528-1  
Revised by: IHS/ES:XXXX:xx:12/5/95:443-1011:Rm. 5A-03:  
Doc. (File Name), p. 18: Action No: 528-1

Use signer's preferred complimentary close.

1.25-inch bolt: begin minimum on first page.

# Exhibit 5 — Letter to a Representative's Washington, D.C., Office

A different form is used for the local office. See Exhibit 7.

Use Mr. or Ms. for a member of the House.

<p>→ The Honorable Craig James House of Representatives Washington, D.C. 20515</p>	<p>←</p>
<p>→ Dear Mr. James:</p>	<p>←</p>
<p>I am responding to your October 24, 1997, correspondence to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, on behalf of Mr. Xxxxxx Xxxxxx of (City), (State). Mr. Xxxxxx requested information on "health trends and budget for the Indians."</p>	
<p>I have enclosed tables displaying the information that Mr. Xxxxxx requested. These tables show annual health expenditures, hospital and clinic locations, and selected workloads. Also enclosed is an Indian Health Service publication entitled Trends in Indian Health, which contains a significant amount of health status information.</p>	
<p>I trust this information is helpful.</p>	
<p>Sincerely yours,</p>	
<p>Xxxxx X. Xxxxx, X.X. Rank (If Applicable) Director</p>	
<p>→ Enclosures</p>	
<p>→ cc: IHS/ES Director, Xxxxxxx Area, Attn: Chief, Mental Health Branch IHS/XXX/XXXX, Rm. 8A-XX Reading File</p>	
<p>→ Prepared by: IHS/XXX/XXX/XXXX:xxx:10/30/95:444-4444:Rm. 6A-XX: Doc. (File Name): Action No: 528-1 Revised by: IHS/ES:XXXXXXX:xx:12/5/95:443-1011:Rm. 5A-03: Doc. (File Name), P.18: Action No: 528-1</p>	

Use if appropriate.

Do not show on the original.

Do not show on the original.

The year is included in the date reference on line one because this response was prepared and signed in the following year (1998).

Use signer's preferred complimentary close.



1.25-inch bottom margin minimum on first page.

# Exhibit 6 — Letter in Response to Incoming from the Congress (Two Signers)

Prepare a separate original for each signer.

Note that a similar letter is being sent to other signers. See Exhibit 7 for three or more signers.

Do not show ccs on the original.

Note the other signer in cc.

Do not show on the original.

Only one official (yellow-box) file copy is needed for each office.

→ The Honorable Constance A. Morella  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Ms. Morella:

I am responding to your July 20 letter asking the Indian Health Service, as an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services, to answer a survey questionnaire regarding drug-free workplace programs. The Department decided that it will respond to the questionnaire on behalf of all of its agencies.

→ A similar letter is being sent to Representative Gerry Sikorski.

Sincerely yours,

XXXXX X. XXXXXX, X.X.  
Rank (If Applicable)  
Director

→ cc: IHS/ES  
IHS/XXX

→ Similar letter to: Representative Sikorski

→ Prepared by: IHS/XXX/XXX:X XXXX:xx:8/17/95:444-4444:Rm.13-XX:  
Doc. (File Name):Action No: 528-1

Revised by: IHS/ES:XXXX XXXX:xx:8/21/95:443-1011:Rm.5A-03:  
Doc. (File Name),P.80:Action No: 528-1





## Exhibit 7 — Letters to the Congress, Special Situations

### Letter to a Senator's Local Office

**Inside Address**

The Honorable David L. Boren  
United States Senator  
440 South Houston, Suite 602  
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74127

**Copy Notation (Below the cc's)**

Include a cc to the Senator's Washington, D.C., office.

### Letter to a Representative's Local Office

**Inside Address**

The Honorable Constance A. Morella  
Member, United States House  
of Representatives  
P.O. Box 1111  
Bethesda, Maryland 20000

**Copy Notation (Below the cc's)**

Include a cc to the Representative's Washington, D.C., office.

### Succeeding Pages - Letter to a Senator or a Representative

Page 2 - The Honorable John Doe

### Letter in Response to More Than Two Signers in the Senate or Congress

**Last sentence**

Similar letters are being sent to Senators Smith and Jones, and Representatives Johnson and Williams.

**Copy notation (Below the cc's)**

Similar letters to: Senators Smith and Jones, and Representatives Johnson and Williams

## Exhibit 8 — Other Variations of the Basic Letter Format

### Letter for the Secretary's Signature

Complimentary Close

Sincerely,

Signature Block

Donna E. Shalala

### Letter to an Official in Another Department/Agency

Inside Address

The Honorable James Buffey  
Director, Federal Aviation Administration  
800 Independence Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20591

Salutation

Dear Mr. Buffey:

### Letter to a Tribal Official

Inside Address

Mr. Xxxx Xxxxx  
Chairman, (name of tribe)  
305 Old Blyn Highway  
City, State ZIP

Salutation

Dear Chairman Xxxx:

Omit the courtesy title if the addressee uses a traditional Indian name such as Aspesanahkwat.

## Exhibit 9 — Signature Format for Letters

<b>Secretary of Health and Human Services</b>	Donna E. Shalala
<b>Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Services</b>	Kevin Thurm
<b>Chief of Staff</b>	Mary Beth Donahue
<b>*Assistant Secretary for Health</b>	David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D.
<b>Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health</b>	Nicole Lurie, M.D., M.P.H.
<b>*Surgeon General</b>	David Satcher, M.D., Ph.D.
<b>Director, Indian Health Service</b>	Michael H. Trujillo, M.D., M.P.H., M.S. Assistant Surgeon General Director
<b>Deputy Director, Indian Health Service</b>	Michel E. Lincoln Deputy Director
<b>Director of Headquarters Operations</b>	Luana L. Reyes Director of Headquarters Operations

Revised versions of this page will be issued as personnel changes occur.

\*Note: When doing correspondence for the Assistant Secretary for Health and Surgeon General, both titles are to be used.

# Exhibit 10 — Summary Statement--(Cover Notes)

OPDIV: Indian Health Service DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## SUMMARY STATEMENT

SUBJECT: Senator John McCain requests the Department's position on Indian child abuse.

PURPOSE: To respond to Senator McCain's concerns.

SUMMARY: Senator McCain's concerns are as follows:

1. The Indian Health Service (IHS) has not requested any funds to implement Public Law 101-630, which specifically authorizes Indian Child abuse treatment grants to tribes.

2. Some IHS physicians are not trained to detect child sexual abuse and some problems exist in obtaining physicians' court testimonies.

The IHS has hired a pediatrician to train physicians in performing child abuse examinations and giving court testimonies. The IHS has opened a residential treatment facility at Fort Peck, Montana, for adolescent child sexual abuse perpetrators, and has added a child abuse treatment and prevention center at Gardnerville, Nevada, to serve the Washoe community. However, the fiscal year 1994 budget does not contain sufficient funds for new initiatives. Also, the Secretary is asking the IHS to provide low or no-cost options to expand current efforts to combat child abuse in Indian country.

CONCERNS: Senator McCain will continue to express concerns about the need for departmental action on this problem.

RECOMMENDATION: The IHS recommends that the Secretary sign the attached letter to Senator McCain.

CONTACT PERSON: Xxxxxx X: Xxxxxx, M.D., Chief, Mental Health/Social Service Programs, IHS, (505)766-2873, 2401 12th Street, NW, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102



Underline as shown. →

Quadruple space. →

Triple space. →

Double space between each →  
of the main elements.

Use standardized headings for the →  
main elements as shown.

1-Inch margin minimum on all pages (Summary Statements rarely exceed 1 page).

## Exhibit 11 — Preparation of Envelopes

### General

- When using a preprinted envelope, be sure it matches the letterhead on the document to be enclosed. Do not use window envelopes for any correspondence.

### Return Address Block

- Use envelopes with preprinted return address blocks whenever possible. Unless the signer is a Department Official, be sure to type or write the originating office's name (abbreviation) and room number below the preprinted or typed return address block.

DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service  
Indian Health Service  
Rockville MD 20857

---

Official Business  
Penalty for Private Use  
OPH - Room 6A-55

### Address

- Single space the address on an envelope.
- To assist Postal Service processing with automated equipment, make sure that the lines in the address are parallel to the bottom edge of the envelope. Be sure that the line containing the city, State, and ZIP Code starts no higher than 2 1/4 inches from the bottom edge, falls no lower than 5/8 inch from the bottom edge, and maintains a 1-inch right margin.
- Use six or fewer lines in the address.
- Begin on line 13, five spaces before the center of the line.
- If any line is longer than 45 characters, continue it on the next line, indented two spaces.
- Type the ZIP Code on the last line of the address two spaces after the last letter of the State abbreviation. On envelopes use the unpunctuated two-letter State abbreviation; for example, "AZ," "CA," "OK." See listing of State abbreviations at the end of this exhibit.
- Do not use script or italic typeface for envelope addresses.
- Avoid address labels on letter-size envelopes.
- Do not use commas or periods on the address line.

## Attention Line

- When non-congressional correspondence must be sent to a particular person's attention, include an attention line on the envelope.
- Place the attention line immediately above the street address or post office box number.

### Example: Envelope Addressed to Non-Congressional Recipient

Central Midwestern Medical and Surgical  
Supply Company  
Attention: Mr John A Doe  
1355 Commerce Road  
Rapid City SD 57702

- When correspondence must be sent to the attention of a congressional staff member, include the attention line in the address, on the envelope only, as shown in the following examples.

### Example: Envelope Addressed to Staffer in a Representative's Washington, D.C., Office

The Honorable Jon Kyle  
Attention: Mr Tim Glazewski, Senior  
Legislative Assistant  
House of Representatives  
Washington DC 20515

### Example: Envelope Addressed to Staffer in a Representative's Local Office

The Honorable Jon Kyle  
Member, United States House of Representatives  
Attention: Ms Marilyn Stuckwisch, Constituent  
Services Representative  
4520 East Camelback Road Suite 140K  
Phoenix AZ 85018

## Other Notations

- If sensitive/privileged material is to be enclosed, note this on the face of the envelope. Begin three lines below the return address block. Align at the left with the return address, type in all capital letters, and underline one of the following notations:

ADMINISTRATIVE CONFIDENTIAL  
TO BE OPENED BY ADDRESSEE ONLY

PERSONNEL CONFIDENTIAL  
TO BE OPENED BY ADDRESSEE ONLY

## Postal Service Requirements

- Provide all the critical information.

DJ Associates  
230 Park Ave.  
New York NY 10003-1502

Ms Sharon Customer  
806 S Arlington Mill Drive APT 1A  
Arlington VA 22204-2921

- Use the following standard Postal Service abbreviations on the envelope:

AL	Alabama	KY	Kentucky	OH	Ohio
AK	Alaska	LA	Louisiana	OK	Oklahoma
AZ	Arizona	ME	Maine	OR	Oregon
AR	Arkansas	MD	Maryland	PA	Pennsylvania
CA	California	MA	Massachusetts	PR	Puerto Rico
CO	Colorado	MI	Michigan	RI	Rhode Island
CT	Connecticut	MN	Minnesota	SC	South Carolina
DE	Delaware	MS	Mississippi	SD	South Dakota
DC	District of Columbia	MO	Missouri	TN	Tennessee
FL	Florida	MT	Montana	TX	Texas
GA	Georgia	NE	Nebraska	UT	Utah
HI	Hawaii	NV	Nevada	VT	Vermont
ID	Idaho	NH	New Hampshire	VA	Virginia
IL	Illinois	NJ	New Jersey	WA	Washington
IN	Indiana	NM	New Mexico	WV	West Virginia
IA	Iowa	NY	New York	WI	Wisconsin
KS	Kansas	NC	North Carolina	WY	Wyoming
		ND	North Dakota		

# Exhibit 12 — General Memorandum

→ Top margin 2 inches.

→ Use "Through" line if routed through other administrative levels unless accompanied by a yellow file-box clearance sheet. See Section 6.3.3.

→ Triple space.

→ 1-inch left margin. Use left justification only.

→ Begin subparagraph numbers flush with the left margin. See Section 6.1.2.

→ Include PHS rank but not job title.

→ Do not show on the original.

→ TO: Budget Analyst  
Budget Formulation Branch  
Through: Director, OMS  
Director, DFM/OMS  
Chief, BFB/DFM

FROM: Director  
Office of Public Health

SUBJECT: Proposed Fiscal Year 1992 Budget Justification Language

→ We suggest the following changes to last year's budget justification language to make it suitable for use in the President's fiscal year (FY) 1992 budget.

1. The Indian Health Service (IHS) proposes to restate the language under INDIAN HEALTH FACILITIES (IHF-1), which states:

↔ To fight the war on drugs, \$1,500,000, to remain available until expended, to allow the Indian Health Service to complete the construction or renovation of facilities, to provide detoxification and rehabilitation services in youth regional treatment centers.

This language should remain because the construction of youth regional treatment centers is not completed, and the IHS 5-year facilities construction plan calls for \$3,800,000 in FY 1992 and added amounts in FY 1993.

→ 2. The IHS proposes that the restrictive language: "no funds shall be available for the initial lease of permanent structures without advance provision in Appropriations Acts" be dropped because:

a. The clause, as recently interpreted by our General Counsel, forbids negotiation of permanent leases with third parties by Buy Indian and Public Law (P.L.) 93-638 contractors who use IHS contract funds to make lease payments. This would affect many Self-Determination programs, and we believe the Congress never meant to restrict tribal leasing options.

b. The IHS has developed a leasing priority system for long-term leases negotiated with Indian tribes under P.L. 94-437. Should the Congress drop or amend the language, the IHS would implement the new system and provide an annual list for congressional funding consideration.

→ Xxxxx X. Xxxxx, X.X.  
Rank (if applicable)

→ cc: IHS/OPH  
→ Prepared by: IHS/OPH: XXXXX:xx:8/2/95:443-1247:Rm.5A-27:  
Doc. (File Name): Action No: 528-1

↔

1.25-inch margin minimum on bottom of first page.

↔ 1-inch right margin

Start on fourth or fifth line from text.  
Start at center of page.



# Exhibit 13 — Second Page of General Memorandums

→ Top margin 1 inch.

→ Addressee's full title as it appears on the "TO:" line. Triple space.

→ Double space. Use when appropriate.

→ Do not show on the original.

→ Page 2 - Director

→ If you have any questions regarding the revisions to the guidelines or wish to discuss your concerns further, please call me. I may be reached on (301) 443-1011. ←

Xxxxxx Xxxxxxxxxx ←

→ Attachments (3)

→ cc: IHS/ES  
Prepared by: IHS/ES:XXXXX:xx:8/25/95:443-1011:Rm.5A-03:  
Doc(File Name):Action No:528-1

Must have at least 2 lines of text.

Start on fourth or fifth line below text.  
Do not list job title.  
Begin at page center.



1-inch bottom margin minimum on second and succeeding pages.

**Exhibit 14 — Variations of the General  
Memorandum Format  
"TO:" Line**

**Memorandum to "The Record"**

TO: The Record

**Memorandum to an Area Director**

TO: Director  
Xxxxxxxx Area

**Memorandum to an Area Staff Member**

TO: Senior Contracting Officer  
Through: Director, Xxxxx Area \_\_\_\_\_

**Memorandum to an Employee at the IHS Service Unit Level**

TO: Senior Program Analyst  
Indian Health Service Hospital  
Through: Director, Xxxxx Area \_\_\_\_\_  
Director, Xxxxx Service Unit \_\_\_\_\_

**Memorandum to the Secretary**

TO: The Secretary  
Through: DS \_\_\_\_\_  
COS \_\_\_\_\_  
ES \_\_\_\_\_

**Memorandum to the Surgeon General**

TO: Surgeon General

**Memorandum to Another Agency Head**

TO: Director  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**Memorandum to a Regional Office Staff Member**

TO: Assistant Regional Counsel  
Office of the General Counsel, Region V

# Exhibit 15 — Memorandum to Multiple Addressees

Use "See Below" when sent to more than 2 individuals.

Use 2 spaces after the colon.

Triple space.

1-inch left margin.  
Use left justification only.

→ TO: See Below  
FROM: Director  
Office of Public Health  
→ SUBJECT: Appointment of New Director, Office of Engineering Services  
Public Health Service Region VI--Dallas, Texas

→ I am pleased to inform you that CAPT Xxxxxx Xxxxxxx, who served for the past 4 years as the Director, Division of Facilities and Environmental Engineering, in Indian Health Service Headquarters, has been appointed as the Director, Office of Engineering Services, Public Health Service Region VI, Dallas, Texas. The effective date of his assignment to that position was January 1, 1991. Mail can be directed to him at the following address:

Xxxxxx X. Xxxxxx, P.E.  
Director, Office of Engineering Services  
1200 Main Tower Building, Room 1900  
Dallas, Texas 75202

Additionally, he may be reached by telephone at (214) 767-3491 or by fax at (214)729-2331.

We look forward to a continuing, mutually supportive relationship with Xxxxxx and his staff in the Office of Engineering Services--Dallas.

Xxxxx X. Xxxxxx, X.X.  
Rank (If Applicable)

Double space.

→ Addressees:  
Director, IHS  
Director, Oklahoma City Area  
Directors, IHS/HQE

Do not show on the original.

→ cc: IHS/OPH  
→ Prepared by: IHS/OPH: XXXXXX:xx:1/3/91:443-1247:Rm. 5A-27:  
Doc. (File Name):Action No: 528-1  
Revised by: IHS/OPH: XXXXXX:xx:1/3/91:443-1247:Rm. 5A-27:  
Doc. (File Name):Action No: 528-1



1.25-inch bottom margin minimum on first page.

Start on fourth or fifth line below text.  
Do not list job title.  
Begin at page center.

# Exhibit 16 — NOTE TO: (Informal Communication)

Use letterhead stationery.

Triple space.

1-inch left margin.  
Use left justification only.

NOTE TO MR. JONES

Subject: National Standards for Human Resources Development Programs,  
Managers, and Practitioners--INFORMATION

During your Office of Human Resources proposal presentation to Mr. Smith and others, I suggested that you consider applying national standards for human resources development (HRD) programs, managers, and practitioners. These standards are issued by the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD).

I strongly urge that these standards be applied to organizational arrangements, functional statements, position descriptions, and qualifications and rating criteria. The success of an Office of Human Resources will depend on attracting, and using appropriately, people with proven competencies in at least a few critical positions.

For your convenience, I have attached ordering information for ASTD's "Models for HRD Practices." I am looking forward to the implementation of an HRD effort.

XXXX X. XXXXXXX

Attachments:

cc: IHS/OD  
IHS/OMS

Prepared by: IHS/OD:XXX XX:8/2/95:443-1083:Rm.6-05:  
Doc. (File Name):Action No: 528-1

Start on fourth or fifth line from text.  
Start at center of page.



1.25-inch bottom margin minimum on first page.

FACT SHEET

REVIEW OF UNDERUTILIZED INPATIENT FACILITIES

Triple space. →

For years the Indian Health Service (IHS) has been concerned about several of its small, underutilized inpatient care facilities. That concern is heightened when the IHS finds that a very low inpatient census has persisted for a long time in a given facility. This is a concern because quality of care can be adversely affected when medical staff are unable to sustain critical inpatient care skills. When low inpatient workloads persist in a facility, the medical care providers begin to feel unchallenged and they are hard to retain. This further jeopardizes the ability of IHS facilities to deliver quality inpatient care. Unquestionably, it is in the best interest of patients who are cared for in IHS facilities that the medical staff in those facilities treat various conditions often enough to maintain proficiency. For this reason, at times, care in larger, nearby non-IHS facilities is best for Indian patients.

← 1-Inch left margin.  
Use left justification only.

1-Inch right margin.

A 1982 report by the General Accounting Office (GAO), an investigating arm of the Congress, identified nine IHS hospitals with unacceptably low inpatient utilization rates. The report recommended that inpatient services at those hospitals be discontinued. The IHS has made a concerted effort to review utilization rates at all of its small, rural hospitals to determine if economy or quality of care considerations mandate that inpatient services be discontinued at any of them. Additionally, the Office of Inspector General began an investigation of underutilized IHS inpatient care components using the GAO findings as a point of departure for their work.

In every case, when the IHS determines that inpatient care should not be continued at a specific location, the Congress must be notified at least 1 year before such services are stopped. Furthermore, even when inpatient care is not continued, outpatient services are maintained at, and sometimes above, the level provided before inpatient care was halted. Often, too, additional outpatient services are considered and, when warranted, are added to those already available. One basis for this is an IHS interest in promoting wellness, that is, avoiding the need for hospitalization in the first place, as opposed to treating conditions in an inpatient care setting.



1-Inch bottom margin minimum on second and succeeding pages.

# Exhibit 18 — Standard ACTION Memorandum

Top margin 2 inches.

See Section 5.3.5 for list of when to write an ACTION memorandum.

Use 7 spaces after "TO:"  
Double space.

Double space.  
Use 2 spaces after the colon.

Triple space.

Concise statement of problem.

Origin, background, and implications of the problem.

1-inch left margin.  
Use left justification only.

Limit memo to 2 pages or less.

For use by the addressee.

Put lengthy background information in attachment.

←

→ TO: Director  
→ FROM: Director  
Office of Management Support  
→ SUBJECT: Extension of 30-Year Retirement Date  
Captain Xxxx X. Xxxxxx--ACTION

→ ISSUE  
In a May 14 memorandum, CAPT Xxxx X. Xxxxxx asked you to support his request to delay mandatory retirement for 4 months to June 1, 1995.

→ DISCUSSION  
CAPT Xxxxxx is the Acting Director, Xxxx Area. His principal responsibilities are (describe scope of responsibility). He was assigned to the Xxxx Area in (year).

←→ CAPT Xxxxxx noted several reasons for wanting to continue on active duty. He would like to see (describe projects) completed, and he would use the time to orient his replacement and participate in the annual work planning conference.

Although CAPT Xxxxxx's request was routed through the Director, Xxxx Area, there was no Area recommendation on this matter. I have spoken to (the Area Director) who concurs with a 2-month extension. According to the Division of Commissioned Personnel (DCP), Office of the Surgeon General (OSG), 2-month extensions can bypass the normal review process.

### RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that you indicate support for a 2-month extension of CAPT Xxxxxx's retirement date to April 1, 1995, by initialing on the "Approved" line below and signing the memorandum, Tab A, to the Director, DCP, OSG.

### DECISION

→ Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

← Xxxx X. Xxxxxx, X.X.  
Rank (if applicable)

→ Attachment  
cc: Director, Xxxxxxx Area IHS  
Prepared by: IHS/XXXX:XXXXXX:xx:7/11/95:444-4444:Rm. 6A-XX:  
Doc. (File Name):Action No: 528-1

Use headings as shown.

1-inch right margin.

Start on fourth or fifth line from text.  
Start at center of page.

Do not show on the original.  
Do not show on the original.

1.25-inch bottom margin, minimum on first page.

# Exhibit 19 — Complex ACTION Memorandum

See Section 5.3.3 for list of when to write a complex ACTION memorandum.

Top margin 2 inches.

Use 7 spaces after "TO:"  
Double space.

Use 2 spaces after the colon  
Triple space.

1-inch margin.  
Use left justification only.

←

→ TO: Director

→ FROM: Associate Director  
Office of Public Health

→ SUBJECT: How To Prepare Complex ACTION Memorandums--ACTION

←

ISSUE

This section should contain a concise statement (preferably one sentence or short paragraph) of the issue or problem.

←

FACTS

This section should contain pertinent information regarding the origin, background, and implications of the issue or problem.

←

The text should be single spaced; double space between paragraphs.

OPTIONS AND DISCUSSION

1. OPTION: Each option should be listed clearly and concisely.

DISCUSSION: Following each option, there should be a discussion section that should include information about who would benefit if the option were chosen, who would be adversely affected, what would be the anticipated reaction of those affected, and how much the option will cost in terms of dollars, staff, and administrative responsibilities. The pros and cons of each option should follow.

Pros:

- 
- 

Cons:

- 
- 

↕

↔

Use headings as shown.

1-inch margin

1.25-inch margin minimum at the end of the first page.

# Exhibit 20 — Complex ACTION Memorandum (Page 2)

Top margin 1 inch.  
Use full title from "TO" line.

At least 2 lines of text  
must appear on the second and any  
following pages.

→ Page 2 - Director

2. OPTION: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

DISCUSSION: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PROG: \_\_\_\_\_  
• \_\_\_\_\_  
• \_\_\_\_\_

CONS: \_\_\_\_\_  
• \_\_\_\_\_  
• \_\_\_\_\_

**RECOMMENDATION**  
Provide a recommendation regarding the suggested course of action.  
When several options have been presented, a recommendation for each  
set of options should be made.

**DECISION**

1. OPTION: Each option or recommendation should be listed with  
appropriate approved/disapproved lines.  
Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

2. OPTION: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Disapproved \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

If you approve this option, please sign the letter at Tab A.

Xxxxx X. Xxxxx, X.X.  
Rank (if applicable)

2 Attachments:  
Tab A - Letter to Director, Xxxxx Area  
Tab B - Copy of Report on . . . . .

Double space.  
Tab each attachment  
and list each tab.

Start on fourth or fifth line from text.  
Start at center of page.

1-inch margin minimum on second and succeeding pages.



# Exhibit 21 — Variation of ACTION Memorandum

Follow this format for an ACTION memorandum written down the chain of command.

Top margin 2 inches.

Use headings as shown.

1-inch right margin.

See Section 5.3.5 for list of when to write an ACTION memorandum.

Use 7 spaces after "TO:"  
Double space.

Double space.  
Use 2 spaces after the colon.

Triple space.

Double space.

Concise statement of problem.

Origin, background, and implication of the problem.

1-inch left margin  
Use left justification only.

Limit to 2 pages or less.

→	TO:	Area and Associate Directors
→	FROM:	Director
→	SUBJECT:	Proposed Policy on Minimum Standards of Appointment, Credentials Reviews, and Clinical Privileging--ACTION
→	PURPOSE	This is to transmit for your review the following: Proposed Public Health Service (PHS) Policy and Procedures on Minimum Standards of Appointment, Credentials Review, and Clinical Privileging (attached at Tab A).
→	BACKGROUND	The PHS Interagency Advisory Council on Quality Assurance and Risk Management has developed this proposed policy on standards of appointment, credentialing, and clinical privileging. The proposal is the result of a number of issues related to quality assurance and risk management on which the council has deliberated in recent years. Other policies developed by the Council that have recently been completed are procedural policies related to the National Practitioner Data Bank. Each policy that has been transmitted to you for review and/or implementation contributes to the PHS commitment to continually assess and improve quality assurance activities throughout its programs.
→	DISCUSSION	The focus of this proposed policy is on appointment standards related to employment with PHS, the critical review of credentials for all PHS health professionals, and the granting of clinical privileges by appropriate PHS health care facilities and PHS-related health care entities. Although the proposed policy provides PHS-wide guidance in the aforementioned areas, it also permits individual agencies to develop specific procedures appropriate to the implementation of the policy once approved. Each PHS agency, therefore, may develop its own procedures to best facilitate the policy in its professional personnel operations. The PHS Interagency Council on Quality Assurance and Risk Management will review the policy annually.

1.25-inch bottom margin minimum on first page.

# Exhibit 22 — Variation of ACTION Memorandum (Page 2)

→ Top margin 1 inch.

→ Triple space.

→ At least 2 lines of text must appear on the second and any following pages.

→ Double space.

→ Put lengthy background in attachment(s), tab each attachment, and list each tab.

→ Do not show on original.

Page 2 - Area and Associate Directors

## ACTION

I request that you review the attached policy proposal and provide any comments within 30 days to:

James Wilson, M.D.  
Director, Bureau of Health Professions  
Parklawn Building, Room 8-05  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Rockville, Maryland 20857

Following evaluation and incorporation of responses as appropriate, I will transmit the revised policy to you for implementation.

Xxxx X. Xxxxx, X.X.  
Rank (if applicable)

Start on fourth or fifth line from text.  
Start at center of page.

Attachment:  
Tab A - Proposed PHS Policy and Procedures on Minimum Standards of Appointment, Credentials Review, and Clinical Privileging

cc: IHS/XXXX/XXXX  
Prepared by: IHS/XXX:XXX XXX:xx:7/11/90:444-4444:Rm.6A-XX:  
Doc. (File Name):Action No: 528-1



1-inch margin minimum on second and succeeding pages.

# Exhibit 23 — INFORMATION Memorandum

See Section 5.3.5 for when to write an INFORMATION memorandum.

Use 7 spaces after "TO:"

→ TO: The Secretary  
Through: DS \_\_\_\_\_ ←  
COS \_\_\_\_\_  
ES \_\_\_\_\_

Double space.

Double space.

Use 2 spaces after the colon.

→ FROM: Director  
→ SUBJECT: How To Prepare INFORMATION Memorandums--INFORMATION

Triple space.

→ PURPOSE

Use headings and format as shown.

This memorandum provides guidance on how to prepare an INFORMATION memorandum directed to a high-level official.

1-inch left margin.  
Use left justification only.

←→ INFORMATION TEXT

This type of memorandum provides information that the sender believes the official should have. The memorandum should be limited, in most cases, to two pages or less and divided into the two sections shown in this illustration. Additional sections may be added if they improve the clarity of the information. Attachments may be included as well.

1-inch right margin.

Double space.

→ Attachment

←  
XXXXX X. XXXXXX, X.X.  
Rank (if applicable)

Start on fourth or fifth line from text.  
Start at center of page.

1.25-inch margin minimum at the end of the first page.

# Exhibit 24 — BRIEFING Memorandum

See Section 5.3.5  
for when to write a  
BRIEFING memorandum.

Use 7 spaces after "TO:"

Double space.

Double space.  
Subject lines should identify event,  
day, date, and time.

Triple space.

1-inch left margin.  
Use left justification only.

Use headings and  
format as shown.

TO: The Secretary  
Through: DS  
COS  
ES

FROM: Director

SUBJECT: How To Prepare BRIEFING Memorandums to the  
Secretary--BRIEFING

## PARTICIPANTS

Outside the Department

Full Name, Title, Organization  
Full Name, Title, Organization

## HHS Officials

Full Name, Title, Organization  
Full Name, Title, Organization

## BACKGROUND

This section should include information about the size and nature of the group's constituency; purpose and general concerns of the group; public perceptions of the group; description of the group's previous, current, or future relationship with the Department (e.g., grants or contracts awarded to the group); and brief biographical descriptions of group leaders and other meeting attendees. Where appropriate, provide relevant excerpts of news clips or other background material as an attachment.

## ISSUES OF CONCERN

Describe as briefly as possible what the group wants from the Department. Identify the questions or issues the group may raise. Try to anticipate possible questions that may be raised and provide appropriate answers. (If the event is a meeting or a speech followed by a press opportunity, provide a list of questions and answers if possible.)

Use "Through" if routed  
through other administrative levels.  
See Section 6.3.3.

1-inch right margin.

1.25-inch margin minimum at the end of the first page.

# Exhibit 25 — BRIEFING Memorandum (Page 2)

→ Top margin 1 inch.

→ Use full fill from "TO:" line.

→ Triple space.  
At least 2 lines of text  
must appear on the second  
and any following pages.

→ Page 2 - The Secretary

## DISCUSSION

Summarize the Department's current or previous responses to each of the issues or concerns, including the following:

- Administration position, if any.
- Relevant Department programs with budget figures and other statistics. If an issue is controversial, if the budget figures are particularly relevant, or if there is an Administration position on the issue, then a more detailed discussion should be provided, including a list of pertinent data and points of controversy.
- Relevant activity in the Congress.

## TALKING POINTS

When appropriate, attach a list of recommended talking points for use by the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or Chief of Staff. These points should respond to the group's concerns and raise any departmental concerns as well. Relevant facts and data should be included.

→ Double space.

→ Tab each attachment  
and list each tab.

Cc's and prepared by notations do  
not appear on the original.  
They appear on copies only.

Start on fourth line from text. Start at  
center of page.

Xxxxx X. Xxxxx, X.X.  
Rank (if applicable)

→ 4 Attachments:

- Tab A - Résumé of . . . . .
- Tab B - Recent News Clippings
- Tab C - Questions and Answers
- Tab D - Talking Points



1-inch margin minimum on second and succeeding pages.

## Exhibit 26 — Standard Abbreviations

This exhibit contains an alphabetical listing of abbreviations frequently used within the Department. It is not all-inclusive and will be updated occasionally. See Section 3.1 in these guidelines and Chapter 9 of the GPO Style Manual for additional guidance on the use of abbreviations.

### LIST OF STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS

abbr.	abbreviation
acct.	account
A.D.	(anno Domini), in the year of our Lord
ADM	Admiral (PHS Assistant Secretary for Health, USCG, USN)
ADP	automated data processing
AHA	American Hospital Association
AHCCCS	Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System
AHCPR	Agency for Health Care Policy and Research
AI/AN	American Indian and Alaska Native (see Section 4.3.1)
AID	Agency for International Development
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
a.k.a.	also known as
a.m.	(ante meridian) before noon
AMA	American Medical Association
ANA	Administration for Native Americans (HHS)
ANA	American Nurses Association
ANMC	Alaska Native Medical Center (IHS)
AOA	Administration on Aging (HHS)
AOA	American Osteopathic Association
API	American Petroleum Institute
APO	(no periods) Army post office
approx.	approximately
ARC	American Red Cross
ASH	Assistant Secretary for Health
ASL	Assistant Secretary for Legislation (HHS)
ASMB	Assistant Secretary for Management and Budget (HHS)
ASPA	Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs (HHS)
ASPE	Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (HHS)
ASPER	Assistant Secretary for Personnel Administration (HHS)
assn.	association
assoc.	associate
ATS	Action Tracking System (IHS)
ATSDR	Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
Ave.	avenue
a.w.o.l.	absent without official leave

B.C.	before Christ
BHCDA	Bureau of Health Care Delivery and Assistance (HRSA)
BHP	Bureau of Health Professions (HRSA)
BIA	Bureau of Indian Affairs (DOI)
Bldg.	building
BLM	Bureau of Land Management (DOI)
BLS	Bureau of Labor Statistics (DOC)
Blvd.	boulevard
B.S.	bachelor of science (also B.Sc.)
BY	budget year
ca.	(circa) about
CAPT	Captain (PHS, USCG, USN)
CC	Clinical Center (NIH)
CCDPHP	Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (CDC)
CDBG	community development block grant
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDER	Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (FDA)
CDR	Commander (PHS, USCG, USN)
CDRH	Center for Devices and Radiological Health (FDA)
CEHIC	Center for Environmental Health and Injury Control (CDC)
cf.	compare or see
CFC	Combined Federal Campaign
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CFSAN	Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (FDA)
CHAMPUS	Civilian Health and Medical Program of the Uniformed Services
CHC	community health centers
CHR	Community Health Representative (IHS)
CHS	contract health services (IHS)
CHSDA	contract health service delivery area (IHS)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CID	Center for Infectious Diseases (CDC)
C.J.	(corpus juris) body of law
CMHC	community mental health center
CMO	Chief Medical Officer
Co.	company (commercial)
c.o.b.	close of business
c.o.d.	cash on delivery
COER	Commissioned Officers' Effectiveness Report (OSG/DCP)
COLA	cost of living allowance
cont.	continued
Conus	continental United States
Corp.	corporation (commercial)
COS	Chief of Staff (HHS)
C.P.A.	certified public accountant
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CPO	Chief Professional Officer
CPR	cardiopulmonary resuscitation
CPS	Center for Prevention Services (CDC)
CPSC	Consumer Product Safety Commission
CR	continuing resolution

CSC	Clinical Support Center (IHS)
Ct.	court
CVM	Center for Veterinary Medicine (FDA)
CY	calendar year
DAGM	Division of Acquisition and Grants Management (OMS/IHS)
DAS	Division of Administrative Support (OMS/IHS)
DASH(MB)	Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health (Management and Budget)
d.b.a.	doing business as
DCEH	Division of Community and Environmental Health (OPH/IHS)
DCP	Division of Commissioned Personnel (PHS/OSG)
DCPS	Division of Clinical and Preventive Services (OPH/IHS)
DCRT	Division of Computer Research and Technology (NIH)
D.D.	doctor of divinity
D.D.S.	doctor of dental surgery
DEA	Drug Enforcement Administration (DOJ)
Dep. Dir.	Deputy Director
DFEE	Division of Facilities and Environmental Engineering (OPH/IHS)
DFM	Division of Financial Management (OMS/IHS)
DHO	Director of Headquarters Operations (IHS)
DHPS	Division of Health Professions Support (OMS/IHS)
DHR	Division of Human Resources (OMS/IHS)
DIR	Division of Information Resources (OMS/IHS)
DMC	Division of Managed Care (OPH/IHS)
DOC	Department of Commerce
DOD	Department of Defense
DOE	Department of Energy
DOI	Department of the Interior
DOJ	Department of Justice
DOL	Department of Labor
DOT	Department of Transportation
D.P.H.	doctor of public health (also Dr.P.H.)
Dr.	doctor; drive
DRG	diagnostic related group
DRLA	Division of Regulatory and Legal Affairs (OMS/IHS)
DS	Deputy Secretary (HHS)
DVA	Department of Veterans Affairs
D.V.M.	doctor of veterinary medicine
EEO	equal employment opportunity
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
e.g.	(exempli gratia) for example
ENS	Ensign (PHS, USCG, USN)
E.O.	executive order
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPMS	Employee Performance Management System
ES	Office of the Executive Secretariat
ESRD	end stage renal disease
et al.	(et alii) and others
et seq.	(et sequentia) and the following
etc.	(et cetera) and so forth



f., ff.	and following page (pages)
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration (DOT)
FAR	Federal Acquisition Regulations
FB	Federal Building
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation (DOJ)
FCC	Federal Communications Commission
FDA	Food and Drug Administration
FECA	Federal Employees Compensation Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHA	Federal Housing Administration
FmHA	Farmers Home Administration (USDA)
FICA	Federal Insurance Contributions Act (Social Security)
FLSA	Fair Labor Standards Act
FMFIA	Federal Managers' Financial Integrity Act
FOB	Federal Office Building
f.o.b.	free on board
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FPM	Federal Personnel Manual
FPO	fleet post office
FR	Federal Register (publication)
FSA	Family Support Administration (HHS)
FTC	Federal Trade Commission
FTE	full-time equivalent (a work year)
FTP	full-time permanent (employment or positions)
FTS	Federal Telecommunications System
FWS	Fish and Wildlife Service (DOI)
FY	fiscal year
GAO	General Accounting Office
GIMC	Gallup Indian Medical Center (IHS)
G.M.&S.	general medical and surgical
GNP	gross national product
Gov.	governor
GPO	Government Printing Office
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
gr. wt.	gross weight
GSA	General Services Administration
GTR	Government Travel Request
HCFA	Health Care Financing Administration (HHS)
HHS	Health and Human Services (Department of)
HIB	Hemophylia Influenza - Type B
H.J. Res.	House Joint Resolution (with number)
HMO	Health Maintenance Organization
HMSA	Health Manpower Shortage Area
HPSL	Health Professions Student Loan
H.R.	House Bill (with number)
H. Rept.	House Report (with number)
H. Res.	House Resolution (with number)
HRSA	Health Resources and Services Administration
HUD	Housing and Urban Development (Department of)

ibid.	(ibidem) in the same place
ICC	Interstate Commerce Commission
id.	(idem) the same
i.e.	(id est) that is
IG	Inspector General
IHF	Indian Health Facilities
IHS	Indian Health Service
INS	Immigration and Naturalization Service (DOJ)
IOM	Institute of Medicine
IQ	intelligence quotient
IRA	Individual Retirement Account
IRS	Internal Revenue Service (Treasury)
JCAHO	Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations
JAG	Judge Advocate General
J.D.	(jurum doctor) doctor of laws
Jr.	junior
L.L.B.	bachelor of laws
LL.D.	doctor of laws
LOC	Library of Congress
loc. cit.	(loco citato) in the place cited
LOS	length of stay
LTC	long-term care
Ltd.	limited
LT	Lieutenant (PHS, USCG, USN)
LTCDR	Lieutenant Commander (PHS, USCG, USN)
Lt. Gov.	lieutenant governor
LTJG	Lieutenant Junior Grade (PHS, USCG, USN)
M.A.	master of arts
MC	Member of Congress (also master of ceremonies)
MCH	maternal and child health
M.D.	doctor of medicine
MediCal	Medicaid California
Mlle.	mademoiselle
Mme.	madam
Mmes.	mesdames
MMIS	Medicaid Management Information System
mo.	month
MOS	military occupational specialty
MP	military police
MPP	Medicare Participating Physician
M&R	maintenance and repair
Mr.	courtesy title for a male (plural Messrs.)
Mrs.	conventional or courtesy title before a married woman's name
Ms.	general feminine courtesy title (plural Meses.)
M.S.	master of science
MSPB	Merit Systems Protection Board

NA	not available, not applicable
NAPA	Native American Programs Act of 1974
NAS	National Academy of Science
NASA	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NCHS	National Center for Health Statistics (CDC)
NCI	National Cancer Institute (NIH)
NCNR	National Center for Nursing Research (NIH)
NCTR	National Center for Toxicological Research (FDA)
NE	northeast
NEI	National Eye Institute (NIH)
net wt.	net weight
N.F.	National Formulary
NHLBI	National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NIH)
NIA	National Institute on Aging (NIH)
NIAAA	National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIH)
NIAID	National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIH)
NIAMSD	National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Disorders (NIH)
NICHHD	National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NIH)
NID	National Institute on Deafness (NIH)
NIDA	National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIH)
NIDDKD	National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Disorders (NIH)
NIDR	National Institute of Dental Research (NIH)
NIEHS	National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIH)
NIGMS	National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIH)
NIH	National Institutes of Health
NIMH	National Institute of Mental Health (NIH)
NINCDS	National Institute of Neurological and Communicative Disorders/Stroke (NIH)
NIOSH	National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (CDC)
NIST	National Institute of Standards and Technology (DOC)
NLM	National Library of Medicine (NIH)
NNMC	National Naval Medical Center
NLRB	National Labor Relations Board
No.	number (plural "Nos.")
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC)
NPS	National Park Service (DOI)
NRC	Nuclear Regulatory Commission
NSA	National Security Agency
NSF	National Science Foundation
NTSB	National Transportation Safety Board
NW	northwest
OASPHS	Office of the Assistant Secretary for Public Health and Science
OCA	Office of Consumer Affairs (HHS)
OCR	Office for Civil Rights (HHS)
OD	Office of the Director
OGC	Office of the General Counsel (HHS)
OHDS	Office of Human Development Services (HHS)

OMS	Office of Management Support (IHS)
OPH	Office of Public Health (IHS)
OIG	Office of Inspector General (HHS)
OIH	Office of International Health
OMB	Office of Management and Budget (HHS)
op. cit.	(opere citato) in the work cited
OS	Office of the Secretary
OSG	Office of the Surgeon General
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration (DOL)
OTA	Office of Technology Assessment (Congress)
OTC	over the counter
OTP	Office of Tribal Programs (IHS)
OTSG	Office of Tribal Self-Governance (IHS)
PAC	political action committee; also Professional Advisory Committee
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
PC	personal computer
PCIS	Patient Care Information System (IHS)
Pharm.D.	doctor of pharmacy
Ph.D.	doctor of philosophy (also D.Ph. or Dr.P.H.)
PIMC	Phoenix Indian Medical Center (IHS)
PIN	personal identification number
PJD	program justification document (IHS/OEHE)
PJDQ	program justification document-quarters (IHS/OEHE)
P.L.	Public Law (also Pub.L.)
p.m.	(post meridian) afternoon
PMRS	Performance Management and Recognition System
P.O. Box	(with number) "post office box," in general sense
POR	program of requirements
PPS	prospective payment system
PRO	professional review organization
Prof.	professor
pro tem	(pro tempore) temporarily
P.S.	(post scriptum) post script; also public school (with number)
PSA	public service announcement
PSRO	professional standards review organization
PTA	Parent-Teachers Association
QMIS	Quarters Management Information System (IHS)
QITS	Quarters Information Tracking System (IHS)
RADM	Rear Admiral (PHS, USCG, USN)
RAM	random access memory; also Resource Allocation Methodology (IHS)
R&D	research and development
R&I	renovation and improvement
RD	regional director
Rd.	road
REA	Rural Electrification Administration
Rev.	reverend

R.F.D.	rural free delivery
RFP	request for proposal
RIF	reduction-in-force
RPI	real property inventory
RRM	Resource Requirements Methodology (IHS)
R.N.	registered nurse
RO	regional office
RR	railroad
Rt. Rev.	right reverend
Ry.	railway
SBA	Small Business Administration
sc.	(scilicet) namely (in law - ss)
S. Con. Res.	Senate Concurrent Resolution (with number)
SCS	Soil Conservation Service (USDA)
s.d.	(sine die) without date
S. Doc.	Senate Document (with number)
SE	southeast
S&E	salaries and expenses
SEC	Securities and Exchange Commission (also Secretary)
SES	Senior Executive Service
SGLI	Servicemen's Group Life Insurance
sic	thus; as written
SIDS	sudden infant death syndrome
S.J. Res.	Senate Joint Resolution (with number)
SLUC	standard level user charges (rent payments for GSA-assigned space)
SNF	skilled nursing facility
SOP	standard operating procedure
sp. gr.	specific gravity
sq.	square (street)
Sr.	senior
S. Rept.	Senate report (with number)
S. Res.	Senate resolution (with number)
SSA	Social Security Administration (HHS)
SSN	Social Security number
St.	street (also saint)
Ste.	saint
Stat.	United States Statutes at Large
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
Supt.	superintendent
Surg.	surgeon
Surg. Gen.	Surgeon General
SW	southwest
TB	tuberculosis
Ter.	terrace
TVA	Tennessee Valley Authority

uc.	uppercase
UIHP	Urban Indian Health Programs (IHS)
U.N.	United Nations
USA	United States Army
USAF	United States Air Force
U.S.C.	United States Code
USCG	United States Coast Guard (DOT)
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USMC	United States Marine Corps
USN	United States Navy
U.S.P.	United States Pharmacopeia
USPS	United States Postal Service
USUHS	Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences
v. or vs.	(versus) against
VADM	Vice Admiral (PHS Surgeon General, USCG, USN)
VD	Venereal Disease Program (CDC)
VIP	very important person
viz	(videlicet) namely
WC	Workers' Compensation Program (DOL)
WHO	World Health Organization
WIC	Women, Infants, and Children Program (USDA)
WIN	Work Incentive Program (HHS)
w.o.p.	without pay
WRAMC	Walter Reed Army Medical Center
YPLL	years of productive life lost

## Exhibit 27 — OS and IHS Correspondence Due Dates

### DOCUMENTS

### DUE DATE FOR PREPARATION

#### Secretary Letters:

Replies to the Congress and the Public  
(Secretary Signature)

8 calendar days

Direct Replies to the Congress (IHS  
Signature)

6 work days to signature\*

Direct Replies to the Public (IHS Signature)

10 work days to signature\*

#### White House Letters:

Drafts for White House Signature

2 work days\*

Citizen Letters for Direct Reply (IHS  
Signature)

9 work days\*

#### Congressional Liaison Office Letters:

Constituent Letters to the Congress for  
Direct Reply (IHS Signature)

10 work days

#### IHS/ES Correspondence:

Replies to the Congress (Director, Deputy  
Director, and DHO Signature)

10 work days to IHS/ES for signature\*\*

Replies to the Public (Director, Deputy  
Director, and DHO Signature)

10 work days to IHS/ES for signature\*\*

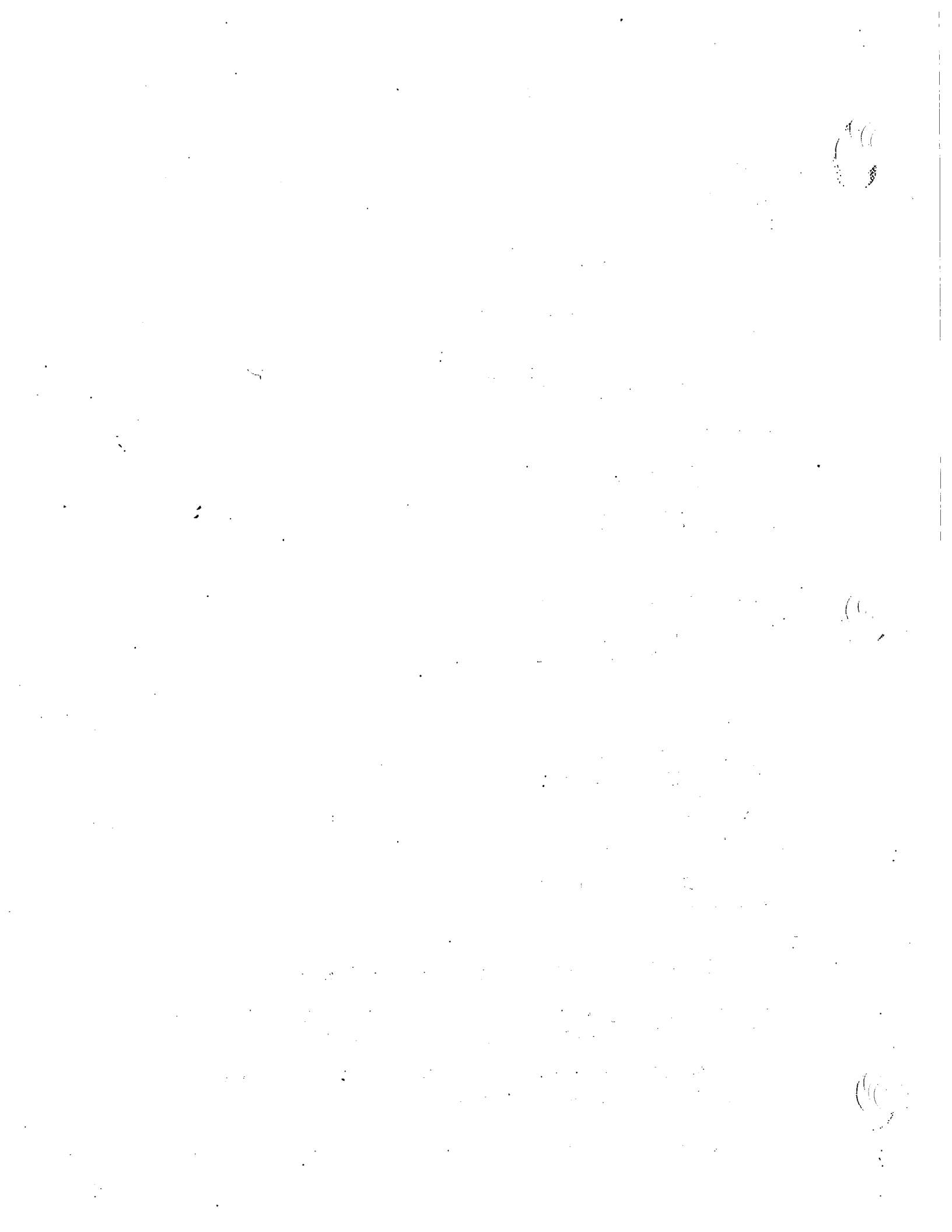
Direct Replies to the Public (for Line  
Manager's signature)

10 work days for copy of response to  
IHS/ES\*\*

Note: for high priority items, shorter due dates may be assigned by OS.

\* For correspondence assigned from OS, due dates may vary from those listed above. For extensions from OS/ES, a written justification is needed.

\*\* If an extension is needed, please advise your office correspondence coordinator so (s)he can request an extension from the IHS/ES.





**Bibliography for Writers,  
Editors, and Secretaries**

(5)

(5)

—

(5)

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