

Style Guide

April 2022



ICE

ICE Health Service Corps

FOREWORD


The IHSC-01-06 G-02 *Style Guide* supplements the following IHSC Directive:

- IHSC-01-06, *Communications Directive*

The IHSC Communications Unit authors and maintains the Style Guide. IHSC generally adheres to the journalistic writing style presented in the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook. As with many organizations, IHSC departs from AP style in some areas. This Style Guide seeks to promote IHSC's writing style among IHSC staff, and help writers produce consistent, grammatically correct, clear, and concise content. Those elements, consistently applied, add credibility to the message and messenger.

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Introduction

As communicators we write to create shared meaning through consistency, clarity, conciseness, and credibility. The IHSC Style Guide provides guidance for staff to create consistent, clear, concise, well-written documents. IHSC's Communications Unit (ICU) adheres to the journalistic writing style presented in the Associated Press (AP) Stylebook. This IHSC Style Guide seeks to promote the IHSC's writing style, and help writers produce consistent, grammatically correct, clear, and concise content. Those elements, when consistently applied, add credibility to the message and writer.


Why do we need concise documents?

The Plain Language Act of 2010 requires federal agencies to write all publications, forms, and publicly distributed documents in a "clear, concise, well-organized" manner. While the Plain Language Act of 2010 relates specifically to publicly accessible documents, it is important for internal IHSC documents to also meet this "clear, concise, well-organized" criteria. Clear, well-written documents improve document readability, which relates to improved and more efficient business practices.

I cannot find the answer to my grammar or style question in this document.

The field of writing, and communications in general, constantly evolves. ICU welcomes questions, comments, and suggestions. ICU update this style guide yearly and as necessary. Please contact the ICU Office of Communications via email at [\(b\)\(7\)\(E\)@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:(b)(7)(E)@ice.dhs.gov) with any questions, comments, or feedback.

To ease navigating through this large document, ICU recommends using the electronic PDF file rather than printing a paper copy. The electronic file allows readers to easily find desired terms or topics by using the **Find** tool in Adobe. Also, once the reader clicks the desired page number in the Table of Contents, Adobe automatically flips to the desired page. Readers can easily return to the Table of Contents by clicking the word "Page" at the bottom center of each page.

 *Technical Tip:* To activate the **Find** tool in Adobe, click **CTRL** key and **F** key. A search box pops up. Enter the desired word(s) and click **Enter**. Adobe shows the first mention of the word; by clicking **Next**, Adobe jumps to additional mentions of the word(s).

Writing Principles

When drafting documents consider the following general writing principles:

- Write for the intended audience.
- Use short sentences. A document with many long sentences results in a decrease of readability. Writers improve readability by breaking apart clauses into the separate sentences.

- Ensure there is “white space” in the document. “White space” consists of those parts of a document that do not have text or graphics. Studies show that document readability improves with more white space. To include white space, consider:
 - Limit paragraph size. A document with many long paragraphs has little white space and can decrease document readability. Limiting the number of sentences per paragraph improves readability.
 - Use headings, bulleted lists, and tables to organize information in a way that makes it more readable and easier to understand.
- Use active voice. Please refer to Section 1.7: Active Voice for details on how to use active voice and eliminate passive voice.
- Use consistent terminology. If you refer to a form as “IHSC Form 123,” use that term consistently throughout the document. Staff may misunderstand information if authors use different terms to describe the same item throughout a document.
- Cut excess words. If a single word communicates the same message as multiple words, use the single word.

- Example: “IHSC is ~~ready and really~~ prepared to lead this project.”

Explanation: Writers do not need to use “ready” as it is synonymous with “prepared.” Also, writers do not need to use “really” before “prepared” to make the sentence as concise as possible.

- Example: “You must complete the form,” instead of, “It is essential for you to complete the form.”

Explanation: The first sentence is shorter and direct and communicates the same message as the longer sentence. Readability improves when using shorter sentences.

- It is also important to consider the tone of the document you draft. To determine the tone of your document ask yourself:

Who is the intended reader/audience? What do you want the reader/audience to do with the information presented?

- Select the appropriate language to make the message clear and obtain the fitting response from the audience.
 - Example: The language you use should differentiate suggestions from requirements. “You should lock the safe,” is a suggestion; while “You must lock the safe,” is a requirement. A proposal memo may present suggestions, while a policy typically presents requirements. It is

important to select the appropriate language to clearly communicate the action you want the audience to take.

Authoritative References

- The IHSC Communications Unit generally follows The Associated Press (AP) Stylebook with a few exceptions that are noted within the pages of this guide. The most popular style guides include:
 - The Associated Press (AP) Stylebook 55th edition.
 - DHS Writing Style Guide, December 2020.
 - DHS Executive Correspondence Handbook, January 2021.
 - U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Style Guide, October 2009.
- References for plain language include:
 - Plain Language.gov. “Improving Communication from the Federal Government to the Public.” <http://www.plainlanguage.gov/>.
 - Center for Plain Language. “Center for Plain Language.” <http://centerforplainlanguage.org/>.
 - U.S. Office of Personnel Management. “Information Management – Plain Language.” <https://www.opm.gov/information-management/plain-language/>.
 - U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “Health Literacy–Plain Language.” <http://www.cdc.gov/healthliteracy/developmaterials/plainlanguage.html>.

Chapter 1: Punctuation, Grammar, Usage, and Style

The following definitions serve as references for Section 1: Punctuation, Grammar, Usage, and Style.

- Conjunction - A word that joins together sentences, clauses, phrases, or words (e.g., and, but, or, nor).
- Independent clause - A group of words that contains a subject and verb and completes an entire thought. An independent clause can stand alone as a sentence.
- Non-essential element - A word or group of words not essential to the meaning of the sentence. The author can remove a non-essential element from the sentence without changing the meaning of the sentence.

Section 1.1: Punctuation

Ampersand (&)

- Use the ampersand when it is part of a company's formal name or composition title: *House & Garden*, *Procter & Gamble*, *Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway*.
- The ampersand should not otherwise be used in place of *and*, except for some accepted abbreviations: *B&B*, *R&B*.

Apostrophe

- Add 's for plural nouns not ending in *s*: *the alumni's contributions*, *women's rights*.
- Add only an apostrophe for plural nouns ending in *s*: *the churches' needs*, *the girls' toys*, *the horses' food*, *the ships' wake*, *states' rights*.
- Use only in constructions where warranted: *Patriots quarterback Tom Brady* doesn't get an apostrophe as an adjective, but *Tom Brady, the Patriots' starting quarterback*, gets an apostrophe as a possessive.


Brackets and use of [sic]

Use brackets, not parentheses, to enclose changed words or insertions within direct quotations.

- Example (correct): "The month [of May] was chosen to commemorate the many cultural contributions of Asian American and Pacific Islanders."
- Example (incorrect): "The month (of May) was chosen to commemorate the many cultural contributions of Asian American and Pacific Islanders."

Colon

- Used between independent clauses. Use a colon when the second clause explains or amplifies the first clause.
 - Example: The clinical director has two tasks today: he needs to submit the daily report and follow up on the charge nurse's request.

 *Helpful Tip:* A colon is not required between independent clauses. If you prefer, you can treat each clause as its own sentence and use a period to separate each clause.

- Example: "The clinical director has two tasks today. He needs to submit the daily report and follow up on the charge nurse's request."
- Example: The form included the following: name, age, gender, and alien registration number.

Note: Capitalize the first word after a colon only if it is a proper noun or the start of a complete sentence: *He promised this: The company will make good on all the losses.* But: *There were three considerations: expense, time and feasibility.*

- When introducing long direct quotes. Use a colon to introduce quotations that consist of more than one sentence.
 - Example: The director reiterated: "The report identified several areas of improvement. We investigate these areas and propose ways to improve them."

Comma

- As with all punctuation, clarity is the biggest rule. If a comma does not help make clear what is being said, it should not be there. If omitting a comma could lead to confusion or misinterpretation, then use the comma.
- Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not put a comma before the conjunction in most simple series:
 - Example: The flag is red, white and blue. He would nominate Tom, Dick, Harry or Jeanette. She goes to school, plays league soccer and takes private dance lessons.

- When a conjunction such as *and*, *but* or *for* links two clauses that could stand alone as separate sentences, use a comma before the conjunction in most cases.
 - Example: The nurse performed vitals on the noncitizen, and the doctor examined him.
 - Example: The HSA completed his review, but the clinical director still needs to sign it.
- With adjectives relating to the same noun. Use commas to separate a series of adjectives related to the same noun.
 - Example: The well-organized, extensive policy is located on SharePoint.
- When introducing direct quotes. Use a comma to introduce a quotation of one sentence or less.
 - Example: The pharmacist stated, “The patient refused to refill the medication.”

Note: If you introduce a quotation consisting of multiple sentences, use a colon to introduce the quotation. Please refer to the “Colon” section above for an example.

- With nonessential clauses – use commas to set off nonessential clauses.
 - Example: The physician, dressed in full PPE gear, examined the patient.

Explanation: “Dressed in full PPE gear” is a nonessential clause that, if the writer removes, does not change the meaning of the sentence.

- With essential clauses that are critical to the reader's understanding of what the author had in mind. Must not be set off from the rest of a sentence by commas.
- The use of commas can affect the meaning of a sentence. Be mindful of the message you try to convey. The following sentences are identically worded sentences but the second one uses commas, while the first one does not.
 - Example (correct): Health care professionals who do not complete the training will be reprimanded.
 - Example (incorrect): Health care professionals, who do not complete the training, will be reprimanded.


Explanation: In the incorrect example, the use of the comma communicates that *all* health care professionals will be reprimanded, not just those who do not complete the training. This is an incorrect message.

- Between city and state names. Use a comma to separate the city and state and a comma after the state.

- Example: He was traveling from Nashville, Tennessee, to Austin, Texas, en route to his home in Albuquerque, New Mexico.
- Example: She said Cook County, Illinois, was Mayor Daley’s stronghold.
- Between titles and the name of an organization. Use a comma to separate titles, as well as the title and name of the organization or office or unit.
 - Example: Dr. Stewart Smith, DHSc, MPH, MA
 - Example: Chief, Medical Case Management Unit
 - Example: Assistant Director, IHSC

Note: If you use “of” or “of the,” a comma is not used.

 - Example: The chief of the Medical Case Management Unit.
- Between the digits of numbers $\geq 1,000$ —use a comma to appropriately separate the digits of numbers in the thousands, millions, billions, etc.
 - Example: 1,500,655
- Between the day and year—use a comma to separate the day and year when presenting a date.
 - Example: June 2, 2016

 *Helpful Tip:* If you only present the month and year, a comma is not needed.

 - Example: June 2016
- Abrupt Change: Use dashes to denote an abrupt change in thought in a sentence or an emphatic pause. But avoid overuse of dashes to set off phrases when commas would suffice.
 - Example: Through her long reign, the queen and her family have adapted — usually skillfully — to the changing taste of the time.
- Series within a phrase: When a phrase that otherwise would be set off by commas contains a series of words that must be separated by commas, use dashes to set off the full phrase.
 - Example: He listed the qualities — intelligence, humor, conservatism, independence — that he liked in an executive.


Ellipsis

- An ellipsis is commonly used to show that one or more words are omitted in a quote, sentence, or paragraph. Be especially careful to avoid deletions that would distort the meaning.
 - Example: The nurse practitioner examined the noncitizen and noted an elevated temperature, tenderness in the adrenal gland . . . and increased agitation.


Explanation: This sentence omits other notations that the nurse practitioner disclosed, because they were not necessary for the particular document.

Exclamation Point

- Used to express strong emotion with a particular sentence.

 *Helpful Tip:* The exclamation point is rarely used in IHSC documents. IHSC staff should not use exclamation points for professional documents, unless absolutely required (e.g., if a document quotes a noncitizen's comment that was originally communicated with strong emotion).

- Example: The patient angrily expressed, "I need my medicine now!"

 Incorrect: "Halt!", the corporal cried.
Correct: "Halt!" the corporal cried.

- Used to join words to avoid confusion or to form a single idea from more than one word.
 - Example: The patient recovered from the heart attack. The doctor re-covered the bottle to avoid contamination.
- To link words in a compound modifier (two or more words that express the same concept) that precede a noun, except for "very" and adverbs ending in "-ly."
 - Example: The 24-year-old patient was discharged.
 - Example: The full-time staff nurse.
- Use of the hyphen is far from standardized. It can be a matter of taste, judgment, and style sense. Think of hyphens as an aid to readers' comprehension. If a hyphen makes the meaning clearer, use it. If it just adds clutter and distraction to the sentence, do not use it.

- Generally, use a hyphen in modifiers of three or more words: a know-it-all attitude, black-and-white photography, a sink-or-swim moment, a win-at-all-costs approach.
 - Example: non-IHSC-staffed facility

Parentheses

- Used to set off nonessential elements in a sentence still important for the audience.
 - Example: The results (Table 2) show that additional training is required.
- To show personal anecdotes in a report.
 - Example: The noncitizen was transported to the hospital on December 1, 2014. (Investigator's Note: Written documentation of the noncitizen's transfer to the hospital was not available.)
- The temptation to use parentheses is a clue that a sentence is becoming contorted. Write the sentence another way. If a sentence must contain incidental material, then commas or two dashes are frequently more effective. Use these alternatives whenever possible.

Period

- Most abbreviations made up of initial letters from two or more words do not take periods — FEMA, TSA, DHS. There are some exceptions, among them U.S. and U.N.
- Periods always go inside quotation marks.
- Use a single space after a period at the end of a sentence.


Question Mark


- IHSC commonly uses the question mark to end a direct question.
 - Example: The noncitizen specifically asked, "I have been out of my medicine for two days. Can I get a refill?" *Who started the riot? Did he ask who started the riot?* (The sentence is a direct question despite the indirect question at the end.) *You started the riot?* (A question in the form of a declarative statement.)
- Placement of quotation marks: Inside or outside, depending on the meaning:
 - Example: Who wrote "Gone With the Wind"? He asked, "How long will it take?"

Quotation Marks

- Used to enclose the exact statements from a particular person or source in a document.

- Example: The assistant director explained, “Congress needs the report and it must be complete by 5 p.m. today.”

 Helpful Tip: If language is directly quoted from the noncitizen’s record, write the language within quotation marks.

 Helpful Tip: If a quote is long (i.e., three sentences or more), quotations are not used. Instead, present the quoted statement after a colon indent the quoted text.


- Always place commas and periods inside quotation marks. The placement of other punctuation is dictated by context. If the quoted material contains a question, the question mark would be placed inside the quotation marks.
- Semi-colons and colons always go outside the ending quotation mark.
- Question marks and exclamation points placed inside or outside quotation marks, depending on the situation. If the question mark or exclamation point only applies to the quoted material, the question mark or exclamation point goes inside the ending quotation mark. If the question mark or exclamation point applies to the entire sentence, the question mark or exclamation point goes outside the ending quotation mark.
 - Example: The form requested, “How many years of experience do you have?”
 - Example: What caused the employee’s response of, “I’m cancelling my vacation”?

Note: If writer uses a period, question mark, or exclamation point inside the ending quotation mark, this serves as the end of the sentence. An additional punctuation mark should not be included outside the quotation marks.


- Example (correct): The report stated, “Detainee acknowledged understanding.”
- Example (incorrect): The report stated, “Detainee acknowledged understanding”.

Semi-Colon

- Used to separate independent clauses when the writer omits a conjunction. This should be limited to clauses that are similar and somewhat related.
 - Example: The HSA is CCHP certified; the AHSA is not.

 Helpful Tip: IHSC also accepts, and more common, using a period between each independent clause. Use the semicolon to communicate a greater separation of information than a comma, but less of a separation than a period.

- To separate independent clauses when the writer includes a conjunction or transitional expression.
 - Example: The investigator was scheduled to stay until Friday; however, he finished his interviews early and departed on Wednesday.
- To separate elements of a series, when the series consists of long segments or each element also uses commas.
 - Example: Dr. Smith, Assistant Director; CAPT Jennifer Moon, DAD of Clinical Services Division; CAPT Diedre Presley, DAD of Administration Division; and CAPT Terry Smith, DAD of Health Operations Support Division, reviewed the report.

 Helpful Tip: Always use a semicolon before the last conjunction (e.g., “and,” “or”) in the series.

Section 1.2: Acronyms and Abbreviations

- Acronym examples: IHSC, ASAP, FYI
- Abbreviation examples: Health Ops, Appt., Mr.
- A few universally recognized abbreviations are required in some circumstances. Some other are acceptable depending on the context. But in general, avoid alphabet soup. Do not use abbreviations or acronyms that the reader would not quickly recognize.
- Make every effort to limit use of acronyms to those approved for second or subsequent reference by the AP Stylebook and those listed here. Introduce the acronym no more than two sentences from the first spelled out reference; if that is not possible, don't use the acronym. Remember, the fact that an acronym or abbreviation is acceptable for second and subsequent reference does not make its use mandatory. Clarity and ease of reading rules apply.

Table 1: Approved Abbreviations for Common Government Organizations

<i>Proper Noun</i>	<i>Approved Abbreviation</i>
Federal Emergency Management Agency	FEMA (on first reference when the agency is in the media for disaster response, and second and subsequent references)
Transportation Security Administration	TSA (on second and subsequent references)
United Nations	U.N. (on second and subsequent reference)
United States	U.S. (use periods when used as an adjective)
U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services	USCIS (on second and subsequent references)
U.S. Coast Guard	U.S. Coast Guard (external) USCG (internal)
U.S. Customs and Border Protection	CBP (on second and subsequent references)
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement	ICE (on second and subsequent references)
U.S. Department of Homeland Security	DHS (on second and subsequent references)

- Unless necessary for your audience to know the acronym or abbreviation, do not use an acronym or abbreviation for a term if it will not be used again in the document.
- The plural of an acronym always uses a lower case “s” without an apostrophe.
 - Example: The MDs met on Friday.

E.g. and i.e.

- These terms do not mean the same thing and should not be used interchangeably.
 - “e.g.” (*exempli gratia*) means “for example”
 - “i.e.” (*id est*) means “that is”
- A comma is always used after “e.g.” and “i.e.”
 - Example: If a form includes sensitive PII (e.g., social security number, bank account number) it needs to be shredded immediately after getting scanned.
 - Example: You should not enter the facility after closing (i.e., after 9 p.m.).
- When using “e.g.,” you do not need to include “etc.” at the end of your listed items. “E.g.” already demonstrates that the listed items are examples and not a complete list of all possible items.
 - Example: You need to bring a photo ID (e.g., driver’s license, military ID, work ID).

Fiscal Year (FY)

- When accompanied by the year, the term “fiscal year” should always be capitalized (e.g., Fiscal Year 2011). It should not be capitalized when used generally.
- If the term is used multiple times throughout the document, it should be written out in full on first usage, followed by (FY). Subsequent mentions should use FY followed by one space and the four digit year (e.g., FY 2011).

United States (U.S.)

- Spell out “United States” when used as a noun. Use “U.S.” as an adjective even upon first mention in a document.
 - Example: The noncitizens successfully entered the United States.
 - Example: LCDR Eric Wong is a U.S. Public Health Service officer.
 - Example: She is a U.S. citizen.
- No periods occur in the abbreviated form for United States of America (USA). Note: Use “U.S.” when identifying “U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)” and “U.S. Public Health Service.”
- Use periods in the abbreviation, U.S. within texts.

Credentials and Degrees

- Credentials and degrees typically present as acronyms. Like other acronyms, credentials and degrees must not have periods, unless required. Table 1 presents commonly used degrees and professional credentials.
- If mention of degrees is necessary to establish someone’s credentials, the preferred form is to avoid an abbreviation and use instead a phrase such as: Fatima Kader, who has a doctorate in psychology.
- Use an apostrophe in bachelor’s degree, a master’s, etc., but there is no possessive in Bachelor of Arts or Master of Science.
- Do not precede a name with a courtesy title for an academic degree and follow it with the abbreviation for the degree in the same reference.

Table 2: Acronyms used for Common Credentials and Degrees

<i>Credential/Degree</i>	<i>Acronym Used</i>
Advanced practice registered nurses	APRN
Bachelor of Arts	BA
Bachelor of Science	BS
Bachelor of Science in Nursing	BSN
Certified Correctional Health Professional	CCHP
Certified in Public Health	CPH
Doctor of Chiropractic	DC
Doctor of Dentistry	DDS
Doctor of Health Science	DHSc
Doctor of Medicine	MD
Doctor of Nursing Practice	DNP
Doctor of Optometry	OD
Doctor of Osteopathy	DO
Doctor of Pharmacy	PharmD
Doctor of Philosophy	PhD
Doctor of Public Health	DrPH
Doctor of Psychology	PsyD
Doctor of Social Work	DSW
Esquire	Esq.
Family Nurse Practitioner	FNP
Juris Doctorate	JD
License Clinical Social Worker	LCSW
License Practical Nurse	LPN
Licensed Vocational Nurse	LVN
Master of Arts	MA
Master of Business Administration	MBA
Master of Science in Nursing	MSN
Master of Nursing, Nurse Practitioner	MNNP
Master of Public Health	MPH
Master of Science	MS
Master of Social Work	MSW
Nurse Practitioner	NP
Physician Assistant	PA
Physical Therapist	PT
Registered Nurse	RN
Registered Pharmacist	RPh

**Note:* This table is not an inclusive list and includes typical credentials and degrees for IHSC staff. If you need to use a particular credential/degree that is not listed, please refer to another reference.

- IHSC classifies PAs and NPs as “advanced practice providers.” IHSC recommends APP as the acronym for advanced practice providers.
- When including credentials and degrees after a name, separate the name and the first credential or degree by a comma and separate any additional credentials or degrees with commas. If the sentence continues, include a comma after the last listed credential or degree. For example:
 - Example: Dr. Stewart Smith, DHSc, MPH, MA
 - Example: IPU submitted the report to Dr. Stewart Smith, DHSc, MPH, MA, for signature.

Section 1.3: Symbols

Section (§)

- When citing a “Section” of a regulation, use the “§” symbol. The “§” should only be used for a regulation “Section.”



Technical Tip: To insert the section symbol in a Microsoft Word document, go to the **Insert** tab, then click **Symbol**, and select **More Symbols**. Click the **Special Characters** tab, select the **Section** character, and click **Insert**.

- If you plan on using the “Section” character in many documents, consider changing the shortcut key for “Section” to something short and easy to remember. For example, if you change the shortcut to **Alt+S** you would hold down the **Alt** keyboard key and type **S** to create the section symbol in a document.

Greater Than, Less Than, Greater and Equal To, Less and Equal To (>, <, ≥ and ≤)

- The greater than (>), less than (<), greater and equal to (≥), and less and equal to (≤) symbols are commonly used when writing technical information related to health care. For example, treatment goals and certain lab values use these symbols to specify the goal or range (e.g., treat hypertension to reach goal of ≤ 140/90 mmHg). Remember to always use the correct symbol to communicate the correct message.



Technical Tip: The greater than and less than symbols are on the computer keyboard. To insert the greater and equal to (≥) and less and equal to (≤) symbols, go to the **Insert** tab, click **Symbol**, and select the applicable symbol to insert into the document.

Percent (%)

- Use the percent sign (%) when presenting data in a table or chart.
 - Example: Her mortgage rate is 4.75%.
- For amounts less than 1%, precede the decimal with a zero.
 - Example: The cost of living rose 0.6%.
- In casual uses, use words rather than figures and numbers. Example: She said he has a zero percent chance of winning. If it is necessary to start a sentence with a percentage, spell out percent. Example: Eighty-nine percent of sentences don't have to begin with a number.
- Use decimals, not fractions, in percentages. Example: Her mortgage rate is 4.5%.

Section 1.4: Numbers, Dates, and Time

Numerals

- In general, spell out one through nine. Use figures for 10 or above and whenever preceding a unit of measure or referring to ages, animals, events or things. Also in all tabular matter, and in statistical and sequential forms.”
 - Example: The Yankees finished second. He had nine months to go.
- When presenting an age, always use the numeral.
 - Example: The 30-year-old noncitizen arrived at the facility.
- If a sentence starts with a number, write out the number.
 - Example: Forty members attended. Forty-one members attended.

Dates


- Capitalize the names of months in all uses. When a month is used with a specific date, abbreviate only *Jan.*, *Feb.*, *Aug.*, *Sept.*, *Oct.*, *Nov.* and *Dec.* Spell out when using alone, or with a year alone.
- When a phrase lists only a month and a year, do not separate the year with commas. When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with commas.
 - Examples: January 2016 was a cold month. Jan. 2 was the coldest day of the month. His birthday is May 8. Feb. 14, 2013, was the target date. She testified that it was Friday, Dec. 3, when the crash occurred.
- If the sentence continues after presenting the date, use a comma after the year. An exception to this rule applies if the writer includes date range; in this situation, include a comma after the

year that presents last.

- Example: On Jan. 4, 2016, the noncitizen arrived at the facility.
- Example: The clinic operated from Aug. 1, 2014 to Sept. 6, 2015, and successfully provided care to patients during that time.

Time

- In line with recommendations in the DHS Executive Correspondence Handbook, communicate time in 12-hour (clock) time. When presenting the time, communicate the hour, followed by a colon without spaces, then the minutes, followed by a space and either “a.m.” or “p.m.” If you communicated the top of the hour, IHSC accepts omitting the colon and minutes.
 - Example: The meeting is scheduled for 10:30 a.m.
 - Example: The meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m.

 *Helpful Tip:* If you end a sentence with a.m. or p.m. you do not need to include an additional period, since these terms already have a period at the end.


- Use figures for time of day except for noon and midnight: 1 p.m.; 10:30 a.m.; 5 o'clock; 8 hours, 30 minutes, 20 seconds; a winning time of 2:17:3 (2 hours, 17 minutes, 3 seconds).
- Avoid such redundancies as *10 a.m. this morning*, *10 p.m. tonight* or *10 p.m. Monday night*. Use *10 a.m.* or *10 p.m. Monday*, etc.
- Use “to” between a range of time when both times are in varying 12-hour time blocks.
 - Example: The meeting is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Section 1.5: Plurals and Possessives

Plurals

- To make a noun plural, you typically add an “s” to the singular noun.
 - Example: nurses, pharmacists, physicians, vaccines.
- For singular nouns ending in s, x, ch, sh, or z, you typically add an “es” to the singular noun.
 - Example: boxes, stitches, lunches.
- If a singular noun ends in “ch” and has a “k” sound, add an “s” to the singular noun.

- Example: stomachs.
- For singular nouns ending in a “y” and preceded by a consonant, you typically change the “y” to “ies” to make it plural.
 - Example: capabilities, batteries.
- For singular nouns ending in a “y” and preceded by a vowel, you typically add an “s” to make the noun plural.
 - Example: days.
- For singular nouns ending in “o,” you typically add an “s” or “es” to make the noun plural. Whether you use an “s” or “es” is dependent on the word.
 - Example: memos, placebos, tomatoes, heroes.
- For singular nouns ending in “f,” “fe” or “ff,” you typically add an “s” to make the noun plural. However, some nouns may require changing the “f” or “fe” to “ves.”
 - Example: shelves, knives, halves.
- Singular nouns that end with a silent “s” do not require any changes to make plural.
 - Example: The Bugle Corps and the Commissioned Corps attended the event. These Corps participated in the opening ceremony.

 *Helpful Tip:* These are the basic rules. Like many things, exceptions to these rules exist. If you have trouble making a certain noun plural, please check other references or reach out to an ICU staff member for assistance.

Section 1.6: Indefinite Articles

- Indefinite articles include: “a” and “an.”
- Use the indefinite article “a” before a word that starts with a consonant sound.
 - Example: a stethoscope
 - Example: a noncitizen
 - Example: a one-year-old
 - Example: a urologist

- Example: a neurologist
- Example: a historical observation
- Use the indefinite article “an” before a word that starts with a vowel sound.
 - Example: an obstetrician
 - Example: an hour
 - Example: an AED machine
- When using an acronym, it is important to use the appropriate indefinite article for the acronym and not what the acronym stands for. In some instances, the full term uses one indefinite article, while the acronym uses the other indefinite article.
 - Example: a registered nurse
 - Example: an RN
 - Example: a physician assistant
 - Example: a PA
 - Example: a medical doctor
 - Example: an MD

Section 1.7: Active Voice

Use active voice in documents and eliminate passive voice. In passive voice, the subject of the sentence does not do the action; rather, an unnamed subject does the action. Passive voice sentences also use a form of the “to be” verb (e.g., is, are, was, were, been) in conjunction with another verb, and the subject of the sentence does the action.


Table 3: Examples of Active Voice vs. Passive Voice

<i>Active Voice</i>	<i>Passive Voice</i>
The RN evaluated him.	He was evaluated by an RN.
The report mentions that admission rates are increasing.	It is mentioned in the report that admission rates are increasing.
The dentist cleaned the patient’s teeth.	Her teeth were cleaned by the dentist.
An overnight computer upgrade resolved the delay in processing that was reported last week.	The delay in processing reported last week has been resolved by an overnight computer upgrade.

The manager submitted her award for review.

The award has been submitted for review.

- To eliminate passive voice, determine who or what does the action. The sentence “The report has been submitted daily,” does not communicate *who* submits the reports, which leaves the audience asking questions.
- To change from passive to active voice consider making the following edits to your document:
 - Switch the order of the sentence. Active sentences list the subject (one doing the action) first, then the verb, then the object of the action.
 - If the sentence still reads clearly, remove the “to be” verb in a sentence.

 *Helpful Tip:* It is important to remember that “to be” verbs can be used as linking verbs, and these should not be mistaken as passive voice. For example, “The facility is accredited.” This sentence specifies what is accredited and is not passive voice.

- It is also important to remember that progressive tense is not passive voice. If something is due to be complete in the future or is currently in process, the progressive tense is appropriate. For example, “IHSC Headquarters staff are completing required annual training courses.” This sentence specifies who is completing the required annual training at the current time.
- There are some situations exist where you cannot change the sentence from passive voice to active voice. If you cannot determine a way to say it in active voice, continue writing your document. The goal is to have as little passive voice in your document as possible.

Section 1.8: Usage and Formatting

When drafting an IHSC document, you should follow the usage and formatting recommendations below to ensure your document visually appears like other IHSC documents.

Authors of Documents

- When more than one author contributes to a document, list authors in the order of contributions made to the document. For authors who contributed the same amount, list the author in the highest position or rank first and followed by the authors in decreasing position or rank. If the authors have the same position or rank, then list the names in alphabetical order by last name. It is acceptable to use a comma or semi colon to separate authors in a list.

Fonts

- Always use 12 pt., Times New Roman, black font for DHS and ICE correspondence. This includes official documents for internal and external dissemination. Additional documents, such as the ICE PowerPoint template may recommend various other fonts (e.g., Arial, Joanna). In

those cases, follow the guidance provided in that particular ICE template.

Italics

- Use italics to set off a non-English word or phrase that might be unfamiliar to the reader. If the foreign phrase is used frequently in the document, use italics only for the first use. If the phrase is used only rarely in the document, use italics for each use.
 - Example: A *laissez-faire* approach to the market can have serious repercussions.
- Use italics to call attention to specific words or phrases.
- Do not use italics if the foreign phrase is commonly used in English. If the word is in Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, you do not normally use italics.

Bullets

- Use bullet points when writing a list of items. When listing items in a bullet format, you must either include a period after every bulleted item or include a comma or semicolon after each item, with the exception of a period with the last bulleted item.
- If the listed items are full sentences, it is best to use a period after each bulleted item (Example 1). For shorter items, you should use the comma format (Example 2) or semicolon format (Example 3).
 - Example 1
Leadership needs to complete the following:
 - Hire a new health services administrator for the facilities with vacancies.
 - Establish a new procedure for triaging task requests.
 - Select a chief for a newly formed unit.
 - Example 2
The facility has the following:
 - Medical clinic,
 - Comprehensive medical staff, and
 - State of the art equipment.
 - Example 3
The facility has the following:
 - Medical clinic;
 - Comprehensive medical staff; and

- State of the art equipment.
- It is important to always keep bullets formatted consistently throughout the document (i.e., same type of bullets used and same tabs/indentation parameters).

Page Numbers

- If a document consists of more than one page, the document must include page numbers from Page 2 until the end of the document. The first page must not include a page number.
- The page number typically aligns centered at the bottom in the footnote section (as it is included for this IHSC Style Guide) or it aligns left at the top in the header section. For memorandums, when you input page numbers in the header section, you must also include the subject of the memorandum.

- Example:

CRCL Medical Referral for Mr. Joe Smith (A112 25 384)
Page 2

- Example:

FY 16 Facility Data Page 4



Technical Tip: To include auto-populated page numbers, double click in either the header or footer section of your document (dependent on where you would like the page numbers located in your document). The toolbar will automatically pull up the **Header and Footer Design** tab. In the **Header and Footer** section, select **Page Number**. If you include the page number in the header, select **Top of Page** and select the set up that aligns the page number on the left. If you include the page number in the footer, select **Bottom of Page**, and select the set up that aligns the page number in the center. Once the page numbers are in the document, ensure the font is consistent with the font used throughout the main document.

Margins

- Unless instructed differently in a template, always use 1” margins on all sides of the page (i.e., left, right, top and bottom).



Technical Tip: To verify you use the correct margins and/or to adjust margins, navigate to the **Page Layout** tab. In the **Page Setup** section, select **Margins** and select the appropriate 1” margins, typically identified as “Normal” in Microsoft Word.

Spacing

- Use a single space between each sentence in a document.
- Note: The DHS Executive Correspondence Handbook explains that for official correspondence to the secretary, deputy secretary or other stakeholders outside of DHS (e.g., Congress), two spaces should be used between sentences.



Technical Tip: Microsoft Word has a tool that allows you to visualize the number of spaces in a document and paragraph marks. To view these, click the **Home** tab, navigate to the **Paragraph** section, and click ¶ (i.e., the Paragraph symbol). Dots will be visible throughout the document. A dot signifies a single space, two dots signify a double space.

Section 1.9: Miscellaneous Grammar, Usage, and Style Recommendations

This section intends to present common grammatical, usage, and style issues that arise when drafting written communications.

Federal

- Use a capital letter for the architectural style and for corporate or governmental bodies that use the word as part of their formal names. Lowercase when used as an adjective to distinguish something from state, county, city, town or private entities.
 - Example: federal agency.
 - Example: federal employee.
 - Example: Federal Trade Commission.
 - Example: Federal Government.

Follow Up vs. Follow-Up

- The need for a hyphen in follow up is dependent on the manner you use the word in the document. “Follow up” (i.e., no hyphen) should be used when you use the term as a verb. “Follow-up” (i.e., with a hyphen) should be used when you use the term as an adjective.
 - Example: The doctor told me to follow up with him on Tuesday.
 - Example: During my follow-up visit, the doctor told me to continue with my diet.



Helpful Tip: If you can add “a” or “the” before “follow-up” and the sentence still makes sense, the word is being used as an adjective and should include a hyphen.

On Call and On-Call

- The need for a hyphen in on call is dependent on the manner you use the word in the document. Use “On call” (i.e., no hyphen) when used as a noun. Use “On-call” (i.e., with a hyphen) when used as an adjective.
 - Example: I am on call for the weekend.
 - Example: The nurse had to contact the on-call physician for the medication order.

On-Site and Off-Site

- The terms on-site and off-site should always use a hyphen.

Capitalization

- Follow AP’s guidelines: In general, avoid unnecessary capitals. Use a capital letter only if you can justify it by one of the principles listed here. Many words and phrases, including special cases, are listed separately in the AP Stylebook.
- Entries that are capitalized without further comment should be capitalized in all uses.
- If there is no relevant listing in the AP Stylebook for a particular word or phrase, consult Webster’s New World College Dictionary. Use lowercase if the dictionary lists it as an acceptable form for the sense in which the word is being used.
- Avoid capitalizing *state*, *nation*, *government*, and *federal* when used as a common noun: state of Georgia, state of Maine.

Job titles

- In all public affairs documents (internal and external), use full titles to highlight component, subcomponent, title and full name. In maintaining departmental preference to capitalize titles and follow the AP Stylebook, IHSC prefers to place titles before the name, where it is capitalized as a formal title. Placing the title behind the name, after a comma, it is lower case and parenthetical.
 - Example: *Earlier today, Deputy Assistant Director CAPT Jennifer Moon testified...*
 - Example IHSC Preferred: *Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas traveled...*
 - Incorrect: *Tae Johnson, Acting Director Immigration and Customs Enforcement, traveled...*

Shall

- Do not use “shall” in IHSC documents, especially IHSC policies and guides. While some readers interpret “shall” as a requirement (i.e., must), others interpret it as a suggestion (i.e., should). Instead, use “must” or “should” to communicate a requirement that staff must complete.

Technology-Related Writing and Formatting

- We complete many day-to-day tasks on computer. As such, many documents we receive include instructions and guidance related to computer programs and related processes. To clearly communicate information related to computers and computer programs, follow the below formatting examples:
 - Example: Under the **Home** tab, navigate to the **Paragraph** section and click the **Center** image to center the text.
 - Example: Press the **CTRL** key and **C** key to copy the highlighted text.
- If you advise the audience to input certain information (i.e., type something on their keyboard), present the information that needs to be inputted in quotations.
 - Example: In the **Agency** field, type “DHS/ICE/ERO/IHSC.”
- For instructions, IHSC accepts to use the “>” (i.e., greater than sign) to illustrate intended steps to follow to access the desired area of a program.
 - Example: Click **Home > Select > Select Objects**.

Chapter 2: IHSC-Specific Guidance

Many of the documents we write contain terminology specifically related to IHSC, the health care field, and detention. This section addresses the matters that relate specifically to IHSC documents.

Section 2.1: Acronyms and Abbreviations for IHSC Units and Positions

- An *acronym* is a word formed from the first letter or letters of a series of words. An *abbreviation* is not an acronym. In general, avoid alphabet soup. Do not use abbreviations or acronyms that the reader would not quickly recognize.
- Use the following recommended abbreviations and acronyms for internal and external IHSC communications (Table 5: IHSC Recommended Abbreviations and Acronyms for IHSC Units and Positions). Always define the acronym or abbreviation upon first mention in external communications outside of IHSC.

Table 4: IHSC Recommended Abbreviations and Acronyms for IHSC Units and Positions

<i>Full Name</i>	<i>Acronym(s)/Abbreviation(s)</i>
U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Health Service Corps	ICE Health Service Corps IHSC
Assistant Director, IHSC	AD, IHSC
Deputy Medical Director	DMD
Chief of Staff	COS
Deputy Chief of Staff	DCOS
IHSC Communications Unit	ICU
IHSC Investigations Unit	IIU
IHSC Office of Policy	IOP
Taskings and Program Support Unit	TPSU
Deputy Assistant Director of Administration	DAD of Admin
Chief of Administration	COA
Data Analytics Office	DAO
IHSC Personnel Unit	IPU
Resource Management Unit	RMU
Health Information Technology Unit	HITU
Health Records and Technology Office	HRTO
IHSC Credentialing and Privileging Unit	ICPO
Medical Education and Development Unit	MEDU
Public Health and Law Enforcement Liaison Program	PHLE
Records and Information Management Office	RIM
Solutions Development Office	SDO
Staffing Contract Management Program	
Technology Management Office	TMO

Deputy Assistant Director of Clinical Services/Medical Director	DAD of Clinical Services/Medical Director (or simply DAD of Clinical Services)
Advanced Practice Provider Program	APP Program
Behavioral Health Unit	BHU
Clinical Services Support Unit	CSSU
Deputy Medical Director	DMD
Infectious Disease Program	IDP
Medical Services Unit	MSU
Nursing Services Unit	NSU
Psychiatry Services Unit	PSU
Public Health, Safety, and Preparedness Unit	PHSP
Deputy Assistant Director of Health Care Compliance	DAD of Health Care Compliance
Health Plan Management Unit	HPMU
Medical Case Management Unit	MCMU
Medical Quality Management Unit	MQMU
Deputy Assistant Director of Health Systems Support	DAD of Health Systems Support
Health Operations Plans and Programs	HOPPs
Health Operations Unit	HOU
IHSC Special Operations Unit	ISOU

- Capitalize the term “Unit” only when referring to a specific unit or units. Do not capitalize when referring a unit or units generally.
 - Example: The DAD of Administration oversees RMU, IPU, and MEDU. These Units are responsible for various tasks.
 - Example: IHSC comprises of units.


Health Services Administrator (HSA), Assistant Health Services Administrator (AHSA), and Field Medical Coordinator (FMC)

- Always define the acronyms health services administrator (HSA), assistant health services administrator (AHSA), and field medical coordinator (FMC) upon first use. The full terms “health services administrator,” “assistant health services administrator,” and “field medical coordinator,” are position descriptions. Authors should not capitalize these terms within a document – however, always capitalize the acronym.
 - Example: The health services administrator (HSA) at the facility welcomed the auditing team. The HSA and assistant health services administrator (AHSA) compiled all requested documents in a timely manner. The HSA and AHSA have no pending requests from the audit team.

Note: If you use these terms to describe your job title specifically with your name (such as in the signature line of an email or letter or To/Through/From fields of a memo), you should capitalize these as your job title.

- Example:

TO: CDR Johnathon Drexel
Health Services Administrator
Elizabeth Contract Detention Facility

 *Technical Tip:* Microsoft Office will typically autocorrect “HSA” to “has.” To turn this autocorrection off, open Microsoft Word and navigate to the **File** tab, click **Options** then click **Proofing**. Click **AutoCorrect Options**. In the **Replace** box, type “HSA.” It will automatically direct you to a row saying “replace hsa with has.” With this row selected, click **Delete**, then click **OK**. Word will no longer autocorrect “HSA” to “has.”

Section 2.2: IHSC Staff

- Different types of staff support IHSC operations. The staff classification types within IHSC include U.S. Public Health Service (PHS) Commissioned Corps officers, federal civil servants/General Schedule (GS) employees, and contractors. Refer to these staff member groups in the following way:

Table 5: IHSC Recommended Language for IHSC Staff Classification

Staff Type	Recommended Language	Recommended Acronym
U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps officer	U.S. Public Health Service officer	PHS officer
federal civil servant/General Schedule	federal civil servant	GS
contractors	contractor	n/a

Note: When referring to U.S. Public Health Service officers or PHS officers, do not capitalize “officers.”

- The recommendations presented in Table 6 ensure consistency across various IHSC documents. However, if you decide to use a different description/language (e.g., U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps officer rather than U.S. Public Health Service officer), use the same language throughout the entire document and any other linked documents. For example, the terms used in a directive should be consistent with the terms used in the associated guide.
- Staff can be considered singular (i.e., one person) or plural (i.e., group of people). For IHSC documents, if you refer to a group of IHSC employees refer to them as “IHSC staff.” If you

refer to a specific IHSC employee, refer to them as an “IHSC staff member” or an “IHSC employee.”

- Example: IHSC staff are ready to implement the new initiative.
- Example: IHSC staff maintain files for seven years.
- Example: The nursing staff are required to attend the training presentation.
- Example: The IHSC staff member is required to attend the training presentation.

Note: Microsoft Office flags “staff” as a singular term, so the spelling/grammar check will recommend changing the verb tense. When performing the Spelling and Grammar Check, be sure to click **Ignore Once** so that the verb accurately communicates in the correct plural state.

Ms.

- Always use Ms., never use Mrs.

Section 2.3: Alien Registration Number Format

- Use the following format when identifying a noncitizen by their alien registration number (A-Number):
 - Example: A123 456 789
- Do not include the number symbol or hyphens between the numbers. Insert a space between every three numbers. If you identify the noncitizen by name followed by their A-number, communicate the A-number between parentheses (Example 1) or between commas (Example 2). If the A-number the writer communicates alone, such as in the subject line or in a header, IHSC does not require (Example 3).
 - Example 1: This memo is in response to a complaint from Joe Smith (A111 222 333).
 - Example 2: This memo is in response to a complaint from Joe Smith, A111 222 333, submitted on December 1, 2016.
 - Example 3: Medical referral 11-222 for A111 222 333.

Section 2.4: Noncitizen Names in IHSC Documents

- When identifying a noncitizen in an IHSC document, use the following format:

[First name, with first letter capitalized] [LAST NAME, with all letters capitalized]
- The first mention of the noncitizen’s name should follow the above format. After the first

mention, refer to the noncitizen by Mr. or Ms. [Last name, with all letters capitalized].

- Example: IHSC received a letter from Joe SMITH. In his letter, Mr. SMITH described his care while in ICE custody.
- Many noncitizens may have multiple last names that are either hyphenated or not hyphenated. If this is the case, follow the below formats:

Non-Hyphenated Dual Last Names

- The first mention of the noncitizen's name should follow the below format. After the first mention, refer to the noncitizen by Mr. or Ms. [Last name, with all letters capitalized].

[First name, with first letter capitalized] [Last Name, with first letter capitalized] [2ND LAST NAME, with all letters capitalized]

- Example: IHSC received a letter from Joe Jones SMITH. In his letter, Mr. SMITH described his care while in ICE custody.

Hyphenated Dual Last Names

- The first mention of the noncitizen's name should follow the below format. After the first mention, refer to the noncitizen by Mr. or Ms. [LAST NAME, with all letters capitalized] - [2nd Last name, with first letter capitalized].

[First name, with first letter capitalized] [LAST NAME, with all letters capitalized] - [2nd Last name, with first letter capitalized]

- Example: IHSC received a letter from Joe BROWN-Smith. In his letter, Mr. BROWN-Smith described his care while in ICE custody.

Section 2.5: Drug Names

- When referencing a prescription or over-the-counter drug names, identify the established name (generic name) of the drug. The established name always presents in lowercase letters. Capitalize brand names, lowercase generics. Capitalize the first letter of the established name if used as the first word in a sentence.
- IHSC accepts to also identify the proprietary name (trade name) of the drug. Capitalize the first letter of the proprietary name of the drug. If the writer communicates both the established and proprietary name of the drug in a document, reference the proprietary name followed by the established name in parentheses.

Table 6: Correct use of Proprietary Drugs

<i>Correct*</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>
Motrin (ibuprofen)	Motrin
Ibuprofen	
Lasix (furosemide)	Lasix
Furosemide	
Tylenol (acetaminophen)	Tylenol
Acetaminophen	
Pepto Bismol (bismuth subsalicylate)	Bismuth Subsalsicylate
bismuth subsalicylate	

**Two possible correct options presented above for each incorrect example. Remember, the established (generic) name must always be presented.*

Section 2.6: Commonly Used Terms in IHSC Documents

Health Care

- Always spell out “health care” as two separate words.

eHR/eCW program

- When referring to noncitizen health records, always refer to the electronic health record (eHR) or eClinicalWorks (eCW). The IHSC eHR infrastructure uses a cloud-based eHR system, eCW. Always spell out these terms at first mention in a document, followed by the acronym. Only use the acronym for future mentions in the same document.
 - Example: The doctor documented the interaction in the noncitizen’s electronic health record (eHR). All facility health care staff can access the eHR.

- Example: The nurse entered her note in eClinicalWorks (eCW). All staff must enter notes into eCW by the end of the day.
- Example: The IHSC electronic health record (eHR) is eClinicalWorks (eCW).

Note: IHSC uses the electronic health record (eHR). Always refer to it by this name and not by other variations (e.g., electronic medical record, electronic health file).



Technical Tip: Microsoft Office typically autocorrects “eHR” to “her.” To turn this autocorrect off, open Microsoft Word and navigate to the **File** tab, click **Options**, click **Proofing**, and select **AutoCorrect Options**. In the **Replace** box, type “chr.” It automatically directs you to a row saying “replace chr with her.” With this row selected, click **Delete**, then click **OK**. Word no longer autocorrects “eHR” to “her.”

CIPS program

- When referring to the pharmacy software system used in IHSC facilities, use the term Correctional Institution Pharmacy Software (CIPS). Always spell out the term at first mention in a document, followed by the acronym.

sMARt program

- When referring to Simple Medication Administration Record Technology (sMARt) used in IHSC facilities, use the term sMARt. Always spell out the term at first mention in a document, followed by the acronym.

eBO program

- eBO stands for Enterprise Business Optimizer. eBO uses data from eCW to generate reports.

MedPAR program

- MEDPAR stands for Medical Payment Authorization Request (MedPAR).

ICE ENFORCE Software Applications

- IHSC routinely refers to These applications include:

(b)(7)(E)

- Define these acronyms separately upon first mention in the document. These applications are distinct and should be identified as such.

-

(b)(7)(E)

Detention Standards and Accrediting Organizations

- IHSC regularly refers to various detention standards. Table 7 includes the common detention standards and recommended acronyms.

Table 7: IHSC Recommended Acronyms for Detention Standards and Accrediting Organizations

<i>Full Name</i>	<i>Acronym</i>
Performance-Based National Detention Standards	PBNDS
American Correctional Association	ACA
National Commission on Correctional Health Care	NCCHC
National Detention Standards	NDS
Family Residential Standards	FRS
The Joint Commission	TJC

- A common error is not including a hyphen in Performance-Based National Detention Standards. Always remember to include the hyphen.
- The detention standard or accrediting organization should be spelled out fully at first mention in a document followed by the acronym in parentheses (e.g., “American Correctional Association (ACA)”). Future mentions of the detention standard in the same document should only use the acronym.
 - Example: The facility had a successful American Correctional Association (ACA) audit. The Medical Quality Management Unit (MQMU) chief received the ACA audit report this week.

Note: Some standards have varying versions, usually specified by a year (e.g., PBNDS 2021) or edition (e.g., ACA Performance-Based Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities, 4th edition). It is very important to always specify the version you reference.

- Example: The facility must follow Performance-Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS) 2021.

Internal and External Stakeholders and Entities

- IHSC commonly interacts with various offices, stakeholders, and internal and external entities. Table 8 includes some of the common stakeholders and entities IHSC interacts with, as well as their recommended acronym.

Table 8: Common Stakeholders and Entities that Interact with IHSC and their Recommended Acronyms

<i>Name</i>	<i>Acronym</i>
Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	CRCL
Detention Reporting and Information Line	DRIL
Joint Intake Center	JIC
Office of Detention Oversight	ODO
Office of Diversity and Civil Rights	ODCR
Office of Inspector General	OIG
Office of the Principal Legal Advisor	OPLA

Section 2.7: Format of IHSC Facility Names

- Many refer to IHSC facilities either by the detention facility name or by the city the facility resides in. For example, Batavia and Buffalo Federal Detention Facility identify the same facility. Use the actual facility name, and not the city the facility resides in. IHSC uses the same facility name as ERO. Refer to **Appendix A** for a complete list of IHSC facility names.
- Use the same name of the facility throughout the document to ensure the document is clear and easy to understand.
- When referring to a facility in a document, do not use “the” before the facility name.

Correct: The detainee was transferred to Buffalo Federal Detention Center. The noncitizen arrived at BFDC in July 2016.

Incorrect: The detainee was transferred to the Buffalo Federal Detention Facility. The noncitizen arrived at the BFDC in July 2016.

Chapter 3: Citations

- Consider including a reference to support that data or information if the document includes specific data or information that is not well known to the audience. Include reference as a footnote on the respective page for memos. List all references at the end of the document for policies, guides, and other reference documents, such as “References” or in the case of policy, in the “Applicable Standards” section.
- For any type of citation:
 - End each listed citation with a period.
 - If you cite the whole reference, do not specify the pages. Simply end the citation after the previous field.
 - Provide an “Accessed On” date for citations involving websites or webpages.

Section 3.1: Regulations

Federal Statutes

- List the following elements: official name of the Act, code volume, U.S.C., section symbol followed by the section number when citing federal statutes. Provide the end of the citation in parentheses if the statute edition date was8 recently repealed, amended, or enacted. Most citations do not include a date.
 - Example: Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 U.S.C. § 1222.

Federal Regulations

- Use the title number, code’s acronym, section symbol followed by the section number of the regulation when citing federal regulations. If the regulation was recently repealed, amended, or enacted, then provide the date at the end of the citation in parentheses. Most citations do not include a date.
 - Example: 42 U.S.C. § 40.
- Common code acronyms include:
 - Code of Federal Regulations – C.F.R.
 - U.S. Code – U.S.C.

Section 3.2: References Associated with Detention Standards

- IHSC regularly refers to various detention standards. The common cited detention standards are from the following governing bodies:
 - American Correctional Association (ACA)
 - Performance-Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS)
 - National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC)
- When citing detention standards:
 - Identify the governing body (e.g., American Correctional Association).
 - Cite the version of the standard (typically a year or edition).
- If you cite a particular section of a standard, you must also identify the section number and, if possible, the section name.

[Governing Body]: [Standard], [Year]: [Section Number], [Section Name].

- For additional section numbers, include a semicolon between each section number or section name (if presented). Writer should list section numbers in increasing order (i.e., cite the sections in the order presented in the standard).
- Sample citations for each detention standard the IHSC Style Guide presents on the following page in Table 9: Sample Detention Standards Citations.

Table 9: Sample Detention Standards Citations

<i>Governing Body</i>	<i>Sample Citation</i>
Performance-Based National Detention Standards	Performance-Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS) 2011: 4.3, Medical Care.
American Correctional Association	American Correctional Association: Performance-Based Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities, 4th edition: 4-ALDF-4C-13, Pregnancy Management; and 4-ALDF-4C-22, Health Screens. <i>Or, if the section titles are not known, use the following citation format:</i>

	American Correctional Association Performance-Based Standards for Adult Local Detention Facilities, 4th edition: 4-ALDF-4C-13; and 4-ALDF-4C-22.
National Commission on Correctional Health Care	<p>National Commission on Correctional Health Care: Standards for Health Services in Jails, 2014: J-E-01, Information on Health Services; and J-E-02, Receiving Screening.</p> <p><i>Or, if the section titles are not known, use the following citation format:</i></p> <p>National Commission on Correctional Health Care: Standards for Health Services in Jails, 2014: J-E-01; and J-E-02.</p>

- ACA and NCCHC both publish various standards and references. Therefore, it is always important to specify the standard(s)/reference(s) you refer to in your document.

Citing Detention Standards in a Policy

- If you cite these detention standards in a policy (i.e., directive or operations memorandum) you should list each cited detention standard reference under the appropriate governing body header. If you cite multiple references pertaining to a particular governing body, they should all be listed under the same governing body header.
- Also, if you cite particular sections of a reference, they should appear on a separate line with a period at the end of each section title. The formatting for citing a detention standard in a policy is:

[Governing

Body]

[Standard 1],

[Year]:

[Section Number 1]: [Section Name 1].

[Section Number 2]: [Section Name 2].

[Standard 2], [Year]:

[Section Number 1]: [Section Name 1].

* If possible, the section number and name should be presented. If only the writer knows the section numbers, IHSC accepts to only include the section number. If you cite the entire reference, simply write the standard title, including the edition or year, and conclude with a period.

- Examples:

8-1. Performance-Based National Detention Standards (PBNDS):

PBNDS 2011:

4.3: Medical Care.

Note: PBDNS has the year in the title of the detention standard, so you should not separate the year from “PBNDS” with a comma.

8-2. National Commission on Correctional Health Care

Standards for Health Services in Jails, 2014:

J-E-01: Information on Health Services. J-E-02:

Receiving Screening.

Standards for Mental Health Services in Correctional Facilities, 2015.

Section 3.3: Additional Professional References

- The citations described below IHSC Style Guide bases on the Chicago Manual of Style (CMS), Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide.

Books

One author

[Author Last Name], [Author First Name]. [*Title in italics*]. ([Publication City]:
[Publisher], [Year]).

Two or more authors

[Author 1 Last Name], [Author 1 First Name] [Author 1 Middle Initial], [Author 2 Last Name], [Author 2 First Name] [Author 2 Middle Initial]. [*Title in italics*]. ([Publication City]: [Publisher], [Year]), [Page(s)].

Note: If the author does not have a middle initial, simply list the author's last name and first name as presented above.

Note: CMS requires listing up to seven authors for the full biography, so continue to list authors with commas separating each author. Before the last author, insert an "and" after the last comma and list the last author's last name, first name, and middle initial (if applicable). If more than seven authors exists, include ", et al." at the end of the 7th author's name.

Journal

Print

[Author Last Name], [Author First] [Author Middle Initial]. "[Title of Article]." [*Journal Title in italics*] [Issue Number] ([Year]): [Page(s)].

Online

[Author Last Name], [Author First Name] [Author Middle Initial]. "[Title of Article]." [*Journal Title in italics*] [Issue Number] ([Year]): [Page(s)]. Accessed [Date – Month Day, Year]. doi: [DOI] or [Website Address].

Note: If the journal does not include a DOI (digital object identifier) number, delete "doi:" from the template above and simply paste the website address/URL.

Newspaper and Magazine

Print

[Author Last Name], [Author First Name]. "[Article Title]." [*Newspaper/Magazine Title in italics*], [Date – Month Day, Year].

Online

[Author Last Name], [First Initial]. "[Article Title]." [*Newspaper/Magazine Title in italics*]. Accessed [Date – Month Day, Year], [Website Address].

Website

[Organization Name]. “[Title of Website].” Accessed [Date – Month Day, Year]. [Website Address].

Chapter 4: Use of DHS, ICE, and IHSC Branding

- The ICE Office of Public Affairs maintains ICE branding. The various DHS and ICE branding guidelines, including copies of the ICE PowerPoint template and ICE signature and badge images (i.e., ICE logos) are provided on the ICE Office of Public Affairs inSight page. Note: the ICU Sharepoint page includes the current template.
- ICU serves as IHSC’s point of contact for branding and keeps a database of pertinent graphics, logos, signatures, and seals, in accordance with DHS and ICE branding. It is important to note that the IHSC logo (i.e., coin image) is only approved for internal documents and it must always be presented in conjunction with the official ICE seal. External documents (i.e., any documents sent outside of IHSC) must follow DHS and ICE Branding Guidelines and can only include the official ICE seal.
- Contact ICU at (b)(7)(E) @ice.dhs.gov for questions concerning branding in IHSC documents.

Chapter 5: IHSC Templates

- Templates for commonly used documents are accessible on the [IHSC ICU SharePoint page](#), under the ICU Resources header on the lower right corner of the webpage. If you draft a document that does not have a template available, please reach out to ICU at [\(b\)\(7\)\(E\)@ice.dhs.gov](mailto:(b)(7)(E)@ice.dhs.gov), for assistance. ICU either locates the template for you or assists with developing a new template for that particular type of document.

Memorandums

- A memorandum is a short message used as a means of informal communication within the organization, for transmitting information in writing. It is exchanged between departments and units within the organization.
- The primary objective of memos is to disseminate business policies, procedures or related official business. These are written in one to all perspective and can serve different purposes like conveying news, directions and information to multiple recipients, calling people to action or meeting.
- A signature is not required for a memorandum.

Letters

- A business letter is a form of written communication, that contains a long message, addressed to the party external to the organization, i.e., supplier, customer, manufacturer or client. It starts with a salutation, is written in the third person, and has a complementary close.
- A signature is required for a letter.

Chapter 6: Commonly Misused Words

Commonly Misused Words	Definition and Example	Definition and Example
accept/except	accept: to receive; to agree I accept your suggestions.	except: apart from; but; excluding I approve the suggestions, except the last one.
additionally, in addition to, also, besides	Same meaning. IHSC prefers in addition and also. Avoid additionally. The price of gasoline also increased.	
advice/advise	advice: a noun recommendation; guidance The committee seeks advice from community leaders.	advise: a verb to recommend; to suggest I must advise you that email is insecure communication.
affect/effect	affect: to influence Policy decisions affect global security.	effect: a result; to bring about; being in full force; to accomplish What was the effect of the committee's work? The road closure effected traffic patterns.
aid/aide	aid: the act of helping Accepted students must apply for financial aid prior to enrollment.	aide: person acting as an assistant The candidates brought their campaign aides.
a lot/alot/many/allot	a lot: a considerable quantity or extent; always two words. allot: to parcel out; to assign a share alot is not a word. Correct: It takes a lot of vigilance to mitigate risk.	many: consisting of or amounting to a large but indefinite number Better: It takes many vigilant citizens to mitigate risk.
all ready/already	all ready: everything is ready Once the papers are all ready, we can send them.	already: relating to time. The meeting is already finished.
all right/alright	all right: a statement of affirmation, satisfaction, agreement. IHSC preferred style Is it all right to wear white after Labor Day?	alright: a statement of affirmation, but this spelling is less preferred and not standard. Not IHSC style

although/though	although: in spite of the fact that, even though IHSC prefers the use of although, but both are correct.	though: in spite of the fact that, even though. Not IHSC style. The dress, though expensive, was just what I wanted for the party.
although/while	although: in spite of the fact that, even though Although I was full, I still ordered dessert.	while: at the same time* *Not a hard-and-fast rule. Often, while can be used in place of although. Be careful. While we were sleeping, an inch of rain fell.
all together/altogether	all together: in a group, always two words We sat all together on the boardwalk.	altogether: completely, in all, on the whole Altogether, the songs on this album present vivid
alternate/alternative	alternate: to change back and forth; every other one in a series When I cross-train, I alternate between running and cycling.	alternative: a choice between two things or possibilities An alternative to driving your car is taking public transit. The alternative to freezing in the winter is wearing a heavy coat.
allude to/refer to	allude to: to mention indirectly The report alluded to problems with the system.	refer to: to mention directly The report referred to other references on the subject.
among/amongst	among: American English. IHSC prefers among.	amongst: British English
any more/anymore	any more: additional, any longer I'm not waiting any more. See the difference: "I don't buy books anymore because I don't need any more books."	anymore: an adverb meaning nowadays or any longer I don't jog anymore.
anyone/any one	anyone: any single person or thing Does anyone have a stamp?	any one: any person or thing Any one of the sandwiches on the menu would be fine.
assure/ensure/insure	Ensure: guarantee Steps were taken to ensure accuracy.	Assure: to make sure or give confidence. She assured us the statement was accurate.

	<p>Insure: references to insurance</p> <p>The policy insures his life.</p>	
backward/backwards	<p>backward: American spelling. IHSC prefers backward.</p>	backwards: British spelling
because/since	<p>because: cause and effect</p> <p>Because prices went up, demand went down.</p>	<p>since: from a certain time</p> <p>Since 1980, demand has gone up.</p>
because (of)/due to	<p>because (of): for that reason</p> <p>Note: Because is almost always the right choice.</p>	<p>due to: as a result of</p> <p>Just ok: Production went up due to more exploration.</p> <p>Better: Production went up because of more exploration.</p>
between/among	<p>between: connecting or comparing two objects</p> <p>The driving distance between Baltimore and Philadelphia is surprisingly short.</p> <p>I had to choose between chocolate and vanilla.</p>	<p>among: in or into the midst of; connecting or comparing more than two objects</p> <p>Feel free to speak freely. You're among friends.</p> <p>I had to choose among the four ice cream flavors.</p>
biannual/biennial/semiannual	<p>biannual/semiannual: occurring every half year, meaning twice a year.</p> <p>Note: DHS prefers to say twice a year, which removes any possible confusion.</p> <p>We have a lease agreement requiring that payments be paid on a biannual basis in January and July.</p> <p>This poetry anthology is updated on a semiannual basis in June and December.</p>	<p>biennial: occurring every two years</p> <p>Note: DHS preference is to say every two years.</p> <p>Our group's next biennial conference will be in two years.</p> <p>This insect has a biennial lifecycle.</p>
big/large	<p>big: often countable (more colloquial/common)</p> <p>Not preferred: big price increase, biggest weapons cache</p>	<p>large: related to objects that are quantifiable</p> <p>Note: In general, IHSC prefers large.</p> <p>Large price increase... largest weapons cache...</p>

brake/break	brake: a device for stopping or slowing motion The train slows when the driver applies the brake.	break: to separate into parts; to smash; a disruption The water pressure might break the tubes.
breakout/break-out	breakout: shown in parts or categories, as statistical data The breakout of imports showed levels by country.	break-out: adjective modifying table or meeting; smaller or separate item I liked the break-out session.
canceled/cancelled	canceled: American spelling, IHSC preferred	cancelled: British spelling
complement/compliment	complement: to complete; something that completes Pipelines complement tankers at key locations by relieving bottlenecks.	compliment: to praise; an expression of praise My boss complimented me for my good work.
comprise/compose	comprise: to be made up of or consist of; the whole comprises the sum of its parts. Something is never comprised of something else. Note: These two words are not synonyms. "Is comprised of" is generally incorrect. Comprise does not mean include. OPEC's membership comprises 12 countries. The United States comprises 50 states.	composed of: to make up; to form the substance of OPEC's membership is composed of 12 countries.
continuously/continually	continuously: uninterrupted or constant The video plays continuously.	continually: continued occurrence; one reoccurrence We continually review and update our policies.
data/datum	data: a collection of pieces of factual information including statistics; data is plural. Correct: The data are correct. Incorrect: The data is correct.	datum: a single piece of factual information Datum is technically correct, but not commonly used.
different from/different than	Similar meaning. IHSC prefers different from. Different from is almost always the correct choice. Correct: My ideas are different	Less correct: My ideas are different than yours.

	from yours.	
due to/because (of)	due to: as a result of Just OK: Production went up due to more exploration.	because (of): for that reason IHSC prefers <i>because</i> . Better: Production went up because of more exploration.
email/e-book	Email has no hyphen, per AP Style and common use.	AP Stylebook continues to hyphenate e-book, e-reader
ensure/insure/assure	ensure: to make certain We monitor network traffic to ensure site security. assure: to state with confidence; to declare earnestly The director assured the staff the budget was adequate.	insure: to protect against financial loss Indemnity clubs insure the tankers that transport petroleum imported into the United States.
everyday/every day	everyday: commonplace; normal These are my everyday shoes.	every day: each day; regularly; daily I go for a walk every day.
everyone/every one	everyone: every person, everybody, all the people Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting.	every one: each one of a number of people or things Every one of the pieces of garbage must be picked up from the floor.
expected/forecast/projected	expected or forecast (to be): Estimates of what is expected or forecast to happen, given historical trends, recent data, and specific assumptions.	projected (to be): Generally, projections by DHS are not statements of what will happen but what might happen, based on assumptions.
farther/further	farther: at or to a greater distance An average vehicle traveled farther in 1994 than in 1988.	further: moreover; to a greater extent In the United Kingdom, deregulation is further along than in other countries.
fewer/less	fewer: for items you can count Fewer people attended the meeting this week.	less: for items you can't count This recipe has less salt.
flammable/inflammable	Both mean 'easy to burn.' These kinds of words are called contronyms. Best to avoid these words. Use explicit words to describe.	

forward/forwards/foreword	forward: to go toward American English. IHSC prefers forward. forwards: British English	foreword: introduction to a book. Foreword is only a noun. I enjoyed reading the foreword to that book.
forecast/projected/ expected	forecast or expected (to be): Estimates of what is expected or forecast to happen, given historical trends, recent data, and specific assumptions.	projected (to be): Generally, projections are not statements of what will happen, but of what might happen, based on assumptions.
forth/fourth	forth: forward in time, place, and order Despite setbacks, we are moving forth. <i>Better to say forward.</i>	fourth: next after the third The Surry nuclear plant is the fourth largest in the region.
historic/historical	historic: famous; important in history George Washington is a historic figure.	historical: of, belonging to, or referring to history Gone with the Wind is a historical novel.
hone/home in	hone: to sharpen, make more effective Hone the message to a quote.	home in: direct onto a point or target IRS is homing in on fraud.
Internet/intranet	Internet: a global system of interconnected public and private computer networks The World Wide Web is one service that uses the Internet.	intranet: a private computer network; an internal website Use the intranet to find employee phone numbers.
impact/effect	impact: an effect, used as a noun Note: Don't use as a verb. The effort had a profound impact.	effect: a result; to bring about Correct: What was the effect of that legislation?
impacted/affected	impacted: packed or wedged in; colloquially, affected or influenced. Don't use impacted as a verb Incorrect: The Gulf Coast was impacted by the storm.	affected: to influence or to change Correct: The hurricane's strength was affected by water temperatures.
its/it's	its: belonging to it; its is the possessive form of it. IHSC has consolidated its analysis of detention facilities into its latest report.	it's: it is; it's is a contraction Correct: It's cold outside today. (which means) It is cold outside today.
later/latter	later: at some time after a given time	latter: of, relating to, or being the second of two groups or things or

	I can meet with you later.	the last of several groups or things referred to I liked the latter proposal the most.
lead/led	lead: (verb) to guide; to show the way Our country continues to lead the world in preparedness. lead: (noun) a bluish-white, soft, heavy metal Lead remains the weight of choice for avid fishermen.	led: past tense of the verb lead Improved technology led to cybersecurity advances.
loose/lose	loose: not tight The loose standards extend throughout the industry and allow for abuse.	lose: to give up; misplace; not win Young people lose interest in reading the news.
maybe/may be	maybe: perhaps; possible Maybe I will be able to come to the meeting tomorrow.	may be: might be; could be I may be able to come to the meeting tomorrow.
more than/over/above	more than: of a greater quantity There are more than 1,000 applicants for the position.	over: above or in excess of The price of gasoline went above \$4 per gallon.
online/on line/on-line	online: involving the Internet (no hyphen) When you're on the Internet, you're online.	on line: operational, ready for use The new airport scanners came on line last year.
overtime/over time	overtime: extra work Rob had to work overtime this weekend.	over time: over some length of time The supplies were stockpiled over time.
pair/pare	pair: two of a kind The journalist had a camera hidden in a pair of earrings.	pare: to reduce; to peel Pare your expenses to those required for the mission.
palette, palate, pallet	palette: an array of colors palate: roof of mouth	pallet: a wooden platform
personal/personnel	personal: private We do not collect personal information for any purpose.	personnel: employees Humanitarian assistance personnel arrived.
precede/proceed	precede: to go before	proceed: to continue

	The 1992 and 1994 editions precede the current one.	The ventilation system removes vapor while operations proceed.
principal/principle	<p>principal: foremost</p> <p>The principal use for this wax is in candles.</p> <p>principal: head of a school</p> <p>Mr. Jones was named principal of Maywood Elementary School.</p> <p>principal: a sum of money</p> <p>You paid back the principal of your loan.</p>	<p>principle: a rule; standard of good behavior</p> <p>The decision was based on principle, not profit.</p>
projected/ forecast/expected	projected (to be): Generally, threat levels from DHS are not statements of what will happen, but of what might happen	forecast or expected (to be): Estimates of what is expected or forecast to happen, given historical trends, recent data, and specific assumptions.
regardless/irregardless	<p>regardless: despite everything</p> <p>Regardless of the risk, he left.</p>	irregardless: not a word, rather a common misspelling of the word regardless.
seams/seems	<p>seams: lines formed by sewing together fabric, or a fissure or crack in a surface</p> <p>Earthquakes occur at deep seams in the earth.</p>	<p>seems: appears</p> <p>Earthquake preparedness throughout the United States seems to be improving.</p>
sight/cite/site	<p>sight: the act of seeing</p> <p>Customers were excited by the sight of the new model.</p> <p>cite: to quote or mention formally in commendation</p> <p>Please cite all of your sources.</p>	<p>site: a location</p> <p>We don't know how much chlorine gas leaked from the wreck site.</p>
stationary/stationery	<p>stationary: not movable</p> <p>The monitor is stationary, so you'll have to move your chair if you cannot see it.</p>	<p>stationery: writing paper</p> <p>Our office will need to order more stationery with our logo on it.</p> <p>Remember: The last vowel in paper and stationery is e.</p>
than/then	<p>than: compared with</p> <p>Developed economies use oil</p>	<p>then: at that time; next in time</p> <p>The maps were developed using</p>

	much more intensively than the developing economies.	GIS software and then converted to PDF format.
that/which	that: a pronoun used to introduce essential information. That phrases have no preceding comma. That and which are not interchangeable. I like books that tell good stories.	which: a pronoun used to introduce non-essential information. Nearly always has a comma before it This book has a good story, which is one reason I liked it. Note: Which and that are not interchangeable. Which is not a more elegant way to say that.
their/there/they're	their: pronoun meaning belonging to them We used their research in our book. They're: contraction of they are Employees have background checks. They're thorough.	there: adverb indicating direction Place your signed application over there, on the counter.
thorough/through/threw/though	thorough: complete; painstaking The company conducts a thorough background check. through: from side to side or from end to end; completed Admission is for kindergarten through twelfth grade. <i>Not preferred: I am through with this assignment.</i>	threw: tossed Because your son threw the ball, your insurance will not pay to replace the window. though: in spite of the fact that. Informal version of although. <i>Not IHSC preferred style. Use although in formal writing.</i>
toward/towards	toward: American spelling. Preferred by IHSC.	towards: British spelling
traveled/travelled	traveled: American spelling. Preferred by IHSC.	travelled: British spelling
upward/upwards	upward: American spelling. Preferred by IHSC.	upwards: British spelling
verbal/oral	verbal: technically, written and spoken	oral: relating to spoken words; pertaining to the mouth
weather/whether	weather: state of atmospheric conditions	whether: used to introduce alternative possibilities

	The city's website has a link to the local weather forecast.	This figure indicates whether markets are shifting.
Web/the Web	Web: an adjective meaning "related to the World Wide Web." More precise to say "Internet." I did Web research to write my term paper.	the Web: short for the World Wide Web, when used as a noun. I used the Web to research my vacation.
Web site/Web page	Web site: a collection of Web pages. It is a proper noun, short for World Wide Web. IHSC's Web site contains a lot of useful information.	Web page: a single web page (with a single URL). Web is short for World Wide Web and is capitalized. The data is in a IHSC Web page.
which/that	which: a pronoun used to introduce non-essential information. Nearly always has a comma before it This book, which is one of my favorites, is a historical novel. Note: Which and that are not interchangeable. Which is not a more elegant way to say that. If you can use the word that, use that.	that: a pronoun used to introduce essential information. Phrases with no preceding comma I like books that have good stories. Incorrect: This is the book which I bought yesterday. Correct: This is the book that I bought yesterday.
while/whilst	while: American spelling preferred by DHS. While we were taking a test, the teacher left the room.	whilst: British spelling Whilst we were taking a test, the teacher left the room.
your/you're	your: belonging to you Your water use is measured with a meter.	you're: contraction for "you are" You're likely to see policy changes after that incident.

Appendix A: IHSC Facility Acronyms

IHSC Facility Name	Region	Facility Location	Acronym
Alexandria Staging Facility	East	Alexandria, Louisiana	ASF
Berks County Residential Center	Central	Leesport, Pennsylvania	BCRC
Buffalo Federal Detention Facility	Central	Batavia, New York	BDFD
Caroline Detention Center	East	Bowling, VA	CDF
El Paso Service Processing Center	West	El Paso, Texas	EPSPC
Elizabeth Contract Detention Facility	East	Elizabeth, New Jersey	ECDF
Eloy Detention Center	West	Eloy, Arizona	EDC
Florence Service Processing Center	West	Florence, Arizona	FSPC
Folkston ICE Processing Center	East	Folkston, GA	FPC
Houston Contract Detention Facility	East	Houston, Texas	HCDF
Krome Service Processing Center	East	Miami, Florida	KSPC
LaSalle ICE Processing Center	Central	Jena, Louisiana	LIPC
Montgomery Processing Center	Central	Conroe, TX	MPC
Northwest ICE Processing Center	West	Tacoma, Washington	NIPC
Port Isabel Service Processing Center	East	Los Fresnos, Texas	PISPC
South Texas ICE Processing Center	Central	Pearsall, Texas	STDC
South Texas Family Staging Center	West	Dilley, Texas	STRFC
T. Don Hutto Detention Center	Central	Taylor, Texas	TDHDC
Varick Staging Facility	East	New York, New York	VSF
York Transfer Operations Program	Central	York, Pennsylvania	YCP
IHSC Headquarters	n/a	District of Columbia	IHSC HQ

Note: Always identify the full facility name at first mention of the document and include the recommended acronym. Use the acronym for all other mentions in the document.

Note: Do not use “the” before identifying the facility name. For example, “The noncitizen was transferred to Houston Detention Center” not, “The noncitizen was transferred to the Houston Detention Center.”

Appendix B: Plain Writing Checklist

On Oct. 13, 2010, President Obama enacted the Plain Writing Act of 2010. The purpose of the Act is *“to improve the effectiveness and accountability of Federal agencies to the public by promoting clear government communication that the public can understand and use.”* This law changed how the federal government communicates with the public and all government agencies are expected to adhere to the Plain Writing Act guidance.

IHSC has a vast mission and a dedicated responsibility to secure the safety of the American people. In light of our responsibility to national priorities such as emergency preparedness, and detention health care, it is paramount that IHSC present information effectively and efficiently.

Does your document:

Address the average reader?

Know the expertise and interest of your average reader and write to that person. Do not write to the experts, the lawyers, or your management, unless they are your intended audience.

Serve the reader’s needs?

Organize your content in the order the reader needs — the two most useful organization principles, which are not mutually exclusive, are to put the most important material first, exceptions last; or to organize material chronologically.

Have useful headings?

Headings help the reader find the way through your material. Headings should capture the essence of all the material under the heading — if they do not, you need more headings! You should have one or more headings on each page.

Use “you” and other pronouns to speak to the reader?

Using pronouns pulls the reader into the document and makes it more meaningful to him. Use “you” for the reader (“I” when writing question headings from the reader’s viewpoint) and “we” for your agency.

Use active voice?

Using active voice clarifies who is doing what; passive obscures it. Active voice is generally shorter, as well as clearer. Changing our writing to prefer active voice is the single most powerful change we can make in government writing.

Active sentences are structured with the actor first (as the subject), then the verb, then the object of the action.

Use short sections and sentences?

Using short sentences, paragraphs and sections helps your reader get through your material. Readers get lost in long dense text with few headings. Chunking your material also inserts white space, opening your document visually and making it more appealing.

Use the simplest tense possible?

The simplest verb tense is the clearest and strongest. Use simple present whenever possible — Say, “We issue a report every quarter,” not “We will be issuing a report every quarter.”

Use base verbs?

Use base verbs, not nominalizations — also called “hidden verbs.” Government writing is full of hidden verbs. They make our writing weak and longer than necessary. Say “we manage the program” and “we analyze data” not “we are responsible for management of the program” or “we conduct an analysis of the data.”

Omit excess words?

Eliminate excess words. Challenge every word — do you need it? Pronouns, active voice, and base verbs help eliminate excess words. So does eliminating unnecessary modifiers — in “HUD and FAA issued a joint report” you don’t need “joint.” In “this information is really critical” you do not need “really.”

Use concrete, familiar words?

You don’t impress people by using big words, you just confuse them. Define (and limit) your abbreviations. Avoid jargon, foreign terms, Latin terms, and legal terms. Avoid noun strings.

Use “must” to express requirements.

Use “must” not “shall” to impose requirements. “Shall” is ambiguous, and rarely occurs in everyday conversation. The legal community is moving to a strong preference for “must” as the clearest way to express a requirement or obligation.

Place words carefully?

Placing words carefully within a sentence is as important as organizing your document effectively. Keep subject, verb, and object close together. Put exceptions at the end. Place modifiers correctly — “we want only the best” not “we only want the best.”

Use lists and tables to simplify complex material?

You can shorten and clarify complex material by using lists and tables. And these features give your document more white space, making it more appealing to the reader.

Use no more than two or three subordinate levels?

Readers get lost when you use more than two or three levels in a document. If you find you need more levels, consider sub-dividing your top level into more parts.