APRIL 2022

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE
STYLE GUIDE

NIJ | **National Institute of Justice**

STRENGTHEN SCIENCE. ADVANCE JUSTICE.

National Institute of Justice Style Guide

Updated April 2022

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Part I. General Style and Editorial Guidelines

NIJ generally follows the *AP Stylebook*. The information below highlights some key guidance as well as critical areas in which NIJ style deviates from AP.

For spelling, compounding, style, and usage questions that are not covered by the *AP Stylebook,* AP recommends consulting *Webster's New World College Dictionary,* 5th ed. As a rule of thumb, use the first spelling listed in that dictionary unless the *AP Stylebook* provides a specific exception.

For notes, references, and bibliographies, NIJ generally follows the *Chicago Manual of Style*. See Part II. Notes and References for more information.

[NEW] NIJ is committed to using humanizing, person-first language that decouples traits, conditions, and actions from the person being described. As a rule, NIJ refers to the person or individual and then adds descriptive language if needed. For instance, NIJ uses phrases such as "person who committed a crime" or "individual who is incarcerated" instead of terms like "offender" or "prisoner." For more details on person-first language in specific cases, see the Preferred Terms and Usage section below. A table of person-first terms is also provided in Appendix A.

Abbreviations and Acronyms

Acronyms are words formed from the first letter or letters of a series of words (*laser* is light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation). Abbreviations are shortened words (*co.* for company). NIJ avoids using acronyms when possible. Editorial judgment may be needed.

- Abbreviations and initials of personal names that are followed by periods are set without spaces (U.S., A.B. Carter).
- Abbreviations of contractions and initials or numbers retain a space (§ 116, op. cit.).
- Use periods for most two-letter abbreviations, e.g., U.S., U.K., U.N.
    - Note: D.C. except in addresses and citations in notes, bibliographies, and references
    - Exceptions: AP, GI, ID, EU
- U.N., U.K. are acceptable on first reference and as both nouns and adjectives.
- U.S. — Okay if an adjective, but spell it out as a noun (U.S. Postal Service, but "The United States shares borders with Canada and Mexico.").
- Use all capitals, but no periods, for longer abbreviations and acronyms when individual letters are pronounced: FBI, DOJ, HHS, CDC.
- U.S. state names —
    - **Do not** abbreviate state names when used in the body of a story, whether standing alone or in conjunction with a city, town, village, or military base (e.g., "They got stuck behind a buggy in Lancaster, Pennsylvania," not "They got stuck behind a buggy in Lancaster, Penn.").
    - Avoid abbreviating state names in headlines.
    - Use postal code abbreviations only in addresses, notes, and references.
    - Exception: If necessary for context, use postal code abbreviations in parentheses in the names of local law enforcement organizations: Vallejo (CA) Police Department.
- Abbreviate the following formal titles when they appear directly before a person's name: *Dr., Gov., Lt. Gov., Rep., Sen.* For example —
    - *Gov. John Doe*
    - *former Lt. Gov. Jane Doe* (note that "former" is not capitalized)

- o *Sen. John Doe*

  All other formal titles are spelled out when preceding a name (*President, Vice President, Attorney General*).

- The acronym for a term should be provided only if it appears again after the first use, or in the rare case that the acronym is recognizable to readers but the full term may not be.
  - o **[UNLIKE AP]** Place the acronym in parentheses after the full term on first use in the text. Simply use the acronym on second reference.
  - o Even if the first use of the full term is possessive, the acronym should not include an apostrophe: *The National Crime Information Center's (NCIC) uniform offense codes.*
- AP style lists a number of acronyms and abbreviations that can be used on first reference without definition. Some examples: *FBI, CIA, DUI, GOP, SWAT, DNA, RNA, GPS.*
  - o In NIJ publications, NIJ can be used on first reference; it does not have to be introduced as the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). However, editors should consider the intended audience for the publication and use their editorial judgment.
- Do not establish an acronym or abbreviation in a head or a subhead (for example, don't do this: "How Many Sexual Assault Kits (SAKs) Were in the Storage Locker?"). However, some acronyms or abbreviations may be used in a head or subhead, at the editor's discretion, before they are established in the text (e.g., STEM, R&D).
- Spell out acronyms at the beginning of each section in long documents and webpages.
- When making the plural form of an acronym, use a lowercase "s" (no apostrophe needed). For example: CEDs, SAKs, BWCs, GPSs, SANEs.
- Do not use an article in front of an acronym used as a noun, unless the usage is generally accepted (*the FBI, the CIA, the IRS,* but *DOJ, NIJ, BJS, ONDCP, EPA, BOP, CDC*).
- Use *a* or *an* with an acronym on the basis of its pronunciation. If the first sound is a consonant (including "y" when used as a consonant), use *a*. If the first sound is a vowel, use *an.* For example: an NIJ publication; an OJP initiative; a DOJ budget; an FBI partnership; a HUD program; an HHS study; a UAS crash; a SAK backlog.
- Latin abbreviations: The abbreviation *e.g.* is for the Latin words meaning "for example," and *i.e.* means "that is." For plain language writing, it's generally better to write out these terms rather than to use the abbreviations. If you use the abbreviation, note the distinction between the meanings of the two terms and choose the correct one. Follow the abbreviation with a comma. In place of et al., it is clearer to use "and others." When et al. must be used, however, such as in a note or reference, the word "and" is omitted before the "et" (which means "and" in Latin); also note that after the "et," there is no period.

Academic Degrees and Titles

Do not precede faculty names with "Dr." or "Professor." Do not list degrees after the name in the byline or in references in text. You may indicate specific postgraduate degrees only in the acknowledgments or biographies box. If an individual does not have a postgraduate degree, such as a research assistant, you may include the bachelor's degree in the acknowledgments or biographies box.

Academic subjects are generally lowercased except when subjects are proper nouns, such as English or French. Some examples of AP's capitalization rules for academia follow:

- She urged Jane Doe, professor of chemistry, to write about chemistry and crime analysis (subsequently, Doe).
- John Doe, president of West Virginia University; President Doe.
- Jane Doe, chair of the Department of Forensic and Investigative Science; a professor of biology.

- In biography box: John Doe, Ph.D., is the W. Alton Jones Associate Professor of Chemistry. (Associate Professor is capitalized here because it is part of the title of an endowed position.)
- Professor Emeritus (capitalized as an honorary, conferred title).

See also Ranks and Civilian Titles.

Capitalization

- Avoid unnecessary capitals.
- Follow AP style for capitalizing job titles or official titles of federal officials before or after the person's name or if the title stands alone.
  - Note: This rule covers titles such as *NIJ director* and *attorney general*. Capitalize only when used immediately before a name (*NIJ Director Jane Smith*), otherwise lowercase (*The attorney general launched a new initiative*).
- Capitalize names of government departments and offices when they are not widely used or generic (e.g., *Office of Research and Evaluation*). Lowercase widely used or generic names of government agencies and offices (e.g., *adult protective services, communications office*), unless used in reference to a specific office (*Florida's Adult Protective Services, NIJ's Office of Communications*). Lowercase subsequent condensed references to proper names of government departments (*the agency, the office, the department*).
  - Exception: Capitalize *the Institute* when referring to NIJ (see Preferred Terms and Usage)
- Capitalize *act* only when it appears as part of the formal title of enacted or pending legislation: *the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act,* but *the act.* The term *bill* is not capitalized.
- Do not capitalize prepositions and conjunctions in titles and headings unless they have more than three letters:
  - *Convicted by Juries, Exonerated by Science*
  - *Police Integrity: Public Service With Honor*
  - *Policing Neighborhoods: A Report From St. Petersburg*
  - *Women and Children Who Are Victims of Abuse*
- Capitalize *To* in infinitives in titles and headings
  - *Adapting an Evidence-Based Program To Reduce Gang Involvement*
- Additional guidelines to note:
  - *Black*
  - *Congress*, but *congressional, congressionally*
  - *federal, state, territory, tribe, nation*
  - *federally, statewide, territorial, national, nationwide*
  - *government*
  - **[UNLIKE AP]** *Indian country* (note lowercase *country*)
  - *Indigenous,* but *tribal*
  - *website, webcam, webcast, webmaster, webpage,* but *web writer, web address, on the web, web browser*
  - *PDF*, not *pdf* **except** when specifying media in a website link (for example: Download the final report (pdf, 36 pages)).
  - *URL*, not *url*
  - *email*, not *Email*, except in a list of contact information
  - *First Amendment, 14th Amendment* (see also the Numbers section below)
  - *U.S. Constitution*, *the Constitution* (always capitalize when referring to the U.S. Constitution), *Massachusetts Constitution*, but *state constitution*

- *legislature* and *senate* when used generically or to refer to multiple state legislatures (*the Kansas and Colorado legislatures*, *a state senate*) and *Legislature* and *Senate* when referring to a specific body (*U.S. Senate*, *Kansas Legislature*).

Compounding and Unit Modifiers

- Use hyphens to avoid ambiguity or to form a single idea from two or more words. Do not hyphenate two-word phrases when the first word is an adverb that ends in "ly." When in doubt, check the *AP Stylebook* for individual prefixes and suffixes. Also, AP style generally follows *Webster's New World College Dictionary* for compounding. Note some of the following uses in AP style:
  - words beginning with *anti-* are hyphenated, except for words with specific meanings (see the list in the *AP Stylebook*)
  - *cease-fire* (noun, adjective), *cease fire* (verb), but *Operation Ceasefire* or *CeaseFire* (depending on the city of the program) (see entry for Operation Ceasefire under Preferred Terms and Usage)
  - *child care* (noun, modifier)
  - *cross-examine, cross-examination, cross section* (noun), but *crossover* (noun, adjective)
  - *day care* (noun, modifier)
  - *front line* (noun), *front-line* (adjective)
  - *follow-up* (noun, modifier), *follow up* (verb)
  - *health care* (noun, modifier)
  - *in-depth* (modifier)
  - *reentry* (in all cases)
  - *underway* (one word in all uses)
- In general, do not hyphenate prefixes that appear before a word starting with a consonant. Use a hyphen if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows begins with the same vowel. Exceptions: *cooperate, coordinate,* and double-e combinations such as *reelect, preexisting*. Use a hyphen if the word that follows is capitalized. Use a hyphen to join doubled prefixes: *sub-subparagraph*. Some of these may be exceptions to first listed spellings in *Webster's New World College Dictionary*. Prefixes that generally do not need a hyphen include the following, noting some exceptions:
  - *ante* (but *ante-mortem*)
  - *bi*
  - *co* (except when forming words that indicate occupation or status: *co-author, co-signer, co-worker*)
  - *counter*
  - *fore*
  - *infra*
  - *inter*
  - *intra*
  - *mid*, but *mid-America, mid-1990s*
  - *mini*
  - *multi*
  - *non* (but use a hyphen before proper nouns)
  - *pre* (no hyphen in double-e combinations: *preempt, preexisting*), but *pre-convention, pre-dawn, pre-noon*

- o *re* (no hyphen in double-e combinations: *reentry, reelect, reemphasize, reestablish, reexamine*), but hyphenate if the word would have a different meaning as one word, e.g., *re-cover* (cover again), *re-sign* (sign again)
  - o *semi*
  - o *trans* (but *trans-Atlantic* and *trans-Pacific*)
  - o *ultra*
  - o *un*
  - o *under*
- *After,* as a prefix, is printed solid when used to form a noun, but is hyphenated when used to form a unit modifier: *aftereffect, afterthought,* but *after-school activities.*
- *Post,* as a prefix, should be hyphenated if not listed in *Webster's New World College Dictionary.* Some exceptions: *postconviction, postdate, postelection, postgraduate, postoperative, postwar,* but *post-bellum*, *post-mortem*.
- Use a hyphen for unit modifiers beginning with "all": *all-around* (not *all-round*), *all-inclusive, all-out, all-time.*
- For suffixes, generally follow *Webster's New World College Dictionary*. If a combination is not listed there, use two words for the verb form and hyphenate nouns and unit modifiers. Some common examples:
  - o *breakup, buildup, checkup, crackup, pileup, setup, smashup, speedup, tuneup*
  - o *businesslike,* but *bill-like, shell-like* (to avoid tripling a consonant)
  - o *citywide, communitywide, countrywide, statewide, nationwide*
  - o *childless, tailless, waterless,* but *shell-less* (to avoid tripling a consonant)
  - o *clockwise, lengthwise, otherwise,* but *penny-wise, street-wise*
  - o *crossover*
  - o *cutoff, liftoff, playoff, standoff, showoff, takeoff,* but *rip-off, send-off, shut-off*
  - o *fallout, flameout, hideout, pullout, sellout, walkout, washout,* but *cop-out, fade-out*
  - o *holdover, stopover, takeover, walkover,* but *carry-over*
  - o *shutdown, slowdown*
  - o *standoff, standout*
  - o *takeout, takeover*
  - o *twofold, fourfold*

Dates
- In text, write out months in full when they appear alone or with the year only.
- Use the following forms for months as part of a month, day, and year combination: Jan., Feb., March, April, May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.
  - o On the *NIJ Journal* cover, use #Month/Full Year (e.g., 11/2019).
  - o On all other publication covers and title pages, write out month (e.g., November 2019).
- When a phrase lists a month and year, do not separate with commas: *February 2008 was a cold month.*
- When a phrase lists a month, day, and year, place a comma before and after the year: *Feb. 14, 2008, is the target date.*
- In tables and figures only, use the following forms for months without a period: *Jan, Feb, Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec.*
- In text, write out the days of the week in full.
- In tables, use the following forms for days of the week without periods: *Sun, Mon, Tue, Wed, Thu, Fri, Sat.*

Italics

Within text, use italics for the titles of books, online publications, journals, magazines, and other periodicals. However, place white papers, NIJ final reports, articles, chapters, and the titles of other sections within a publication in quotation marks.

Commas, periods, colons, and semicolons that follow directly after an italicized word or phrase should also be italicized. For example (note the italicized comma following *Journal*): The *NIJ Journal,* which was first published in 20 B.C., remains popular despite its age. Parentheses following an italicized word or phrase should not be italicized.

In general, do not use italics to emphasize words or sentences in main text. Before placing words in italics, ask the following questions: Why is this word/sentence more important than the others? Will the audience discern its importance, or can it only be conveyed through italics?

Lists

[UNLIKE AP] Use bullets to list items, and use the same grammatical structure for each bullet. A bulleted list is preferable to a lengthy list within a paragraph. Numbered lists may be used occasionally instead of bulleted lists if the intent is to emphasize the items' order. Bulleted lists are introduced by a statement ending with a colon or a dash, or can simply follow a heading. Begin each item with a capital letter **(short phrases can be initial-capped),** and end each item with a period **(for sentences or long items)**, or no punctuation for very short items. If any one of the list items requires a period, end each item with a period for consistency. Do not end items with commas or semicolons or end the penultimate list item with "and." Examples follow:

The assessments revealed several program deficiencies:

- Localities often do not have the resources they need to locate victims and register them for restitution.
- Jurisdictions do not have the funding they need to maintain a collections staff.
- There is no state-level integrated technology to help staff track restitution owed and paid to victims.

Gun violence prevention and intervention starts with problem solving. Problem-solving policing pushes police officials to:

- Identify concentrations of crime or criminal activity.
- Determine what causes these concentrations.
- Implement responses to reduce these concentrations.

Prevention Programs

- Operation Ceasefire
- Directed Police Patrols
- Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative

Through the survey, the Compensation Program determined —

- How applicants learned about the program.
- What would make both the application process and receiving services easier.
- What type of assistance the victims needed.

- Whether these victims had considered not applying for assistance and, if so, why.

Numbers

- Ordinal indicators should be set on the baseline, not superscript. For example: *The 1st Circuit, the 25th Annual Wisconsin Piano Tossing Competition.*
- Spell out numbers one through nine except for units of measurement (dimensions), degrees, decimals, money, percentages, or proportions; use figures for 10 and above. The ordinals first through ninth are also spelled out, except in political, geographical, and military designations:
  - *List of four robberies*
  - *The 17 shootings*
  - *First floor*
  - *Seventh Street*
  - *1st Congressional District*
  - *8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, the 8th Circuit*
- When using numerals for second and third, use *2nd* and *3rd*, *not* 2d and 3d, except as part of a legal citation: *2nd ed.,* but *214 F.3d 417.*
- Spell out all numbers except for years at the beginning of a sentence. Spell out numbers one through nine even when they appear in the same sentence as a number 10 and above:
  - *The group included eight individuals convicted of fraud and 16 individuals convicted of money laundering.*
  - *Thirteen individuals escaped from the state penitentiary.*
  - *1974 saw the passage of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act.* But avoid this construction if possible. Instead, write *The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act was enacted in 1974.* Or, even better, *The U.S. Congress enacted the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act in 1974*.
- Use figures for time of day and dates, but write out one through nine when referring to durations of time: *8 a.m., 8:30 p.m.; Feb. 14, 2008,* but *one day, two weeks, three months, four years, five decades, six centuries.*
- Use the % sign when paired with a numeral, with no space, in most cases. Try to avoid starting a sentence with a percentage; if it's necessary, spell out both the numeral and "percent."
  - *Of the 122 sources used in the study, 65% came from open-source data.*
  - *Thirty-three percent of the data came from official records.*
- Use figures for units of dimension: *5 feet, 6 inches, 4 yards, a 6-foot-4-inch man.*
- Use figures for ages.
  - *The victim of incest was 6 years old*.
  - *The Every Student Succeeds Act is 5 years old.* Suggest rewriting to avoid this construction. Instead, write *The Every Student Succeeds Act passed five years ago*. Or *Congress passed the Every Student Succeeds Act five years ago*.
  - *a 5-year-old boy, a 7-year-old girl, a 35-year-old woman*
- Fractions standing alone or followed by *of a* or *of an* are generally spelled out: *three-fourths of an inch, a quarter of a mile.* Use figures for precise amounts larger than 1, converting to decimals whenever practical: *1 ½, 1.5*.
- Format a range of numbers as, e.g., *$12 million to $14 million* or *$12-$14 million*. Also: *a pay increase of 12%-15%* or *12% to 15%.*

Preferred Terms and Usage

- **[NEW]** *addiction* – do not use this term; see entry for *substance use disorder*

- *administrative segregation* — NIJ does not use this term; see entry for *restrictive housing*
- *although,* not *while* (unless noting a period of time)
    - He tripped and fell over the small child **while** pursuing the suspect.
    - The researchers found that ~~while~~ **although** there were similarities between the programs, they differed in terms of reporting requirements, functionality, and policies for sharing reports with other departments.
- *American Indian, Alaska Native,* or *Native American.* Also *Indigenous*. But *tribe, tribal,* unless as part of a proper name: *the Hoopa Valley Tribe*. Note the capitalization in *Indian country* (this is an exception to AP). Editors should always check with the NIJ subject matter expert about when and how to use these terms and whether *Indian, AIAN, AI/AN,* or *AI&AN* are acceptable on second reference.
- *Black* (capitalized when used in a racial, ethnic, or cultural sense)
- *body armor* or *bullet-resistant (or stab-resistant) armor/vest*, not *bullet-proof armor/vest*
- *challenges* (as in, Challenge.gov) — This will almost always be lowercase.
    - Capitalize only when using the full name of a specific challenge or in a header or title. For example: *NIJ announced the Gun Safety Technology Challenge in 2015.*
    - Lowercase when not referring to a specific challenge. For example: *The challenge closed without any awards made.* (But, per the above, *The Gun Safety Technology Challenge closed without any awards made*.)
    - Lowercase when referring to challenges in general. For example: *NIJ has issued seven challenges since 2012.*
- *citizens* when specifically discussing citizenship or programs that apply only to citizens, otherwise *the public* is preferred.
- *compared to* when pointing out resemblances, often unexpected, between essentially dissimilar objects; use *compared with* to point out differences, often unexpected, between essentially similar objects.
- *conducted energy device* (*CED* on second reference), not *Taser*
    - Because most people are familiar with Taser and not CED, NIJ recommends introducing the term as "… conducted energy devices (CEDs), such as the Taser, are …"
    - Taser should be capitalized. It should **not** be written as TASER or Taser™ (see [Trademarks](#) section for more information).
- *correctional officers* or *corrections officers,* not *prison guards* or *correction officers*
- *crime laboratory,* not *crime lab* on first use. *Crime lab* is acceptable on second use.
- *dataset*
- *decision-maker, decision-making*
- *domestic partner violence* — NIJ does not use this phrase; see entry for *intimate partner violence*
- *email,* but *e-book, e-newsletter, e-reader, e-commerce*
- *etc.* Avoid whenever possible. Use "such as," "including," or "for example" to imply more items/options than are listed. Using "etc." tells your reader one of two things: either you don't have the information or you do have it but you're not bothering to include it.
- *exhibit* for tables, figures, and charts
- *forensic science*, not *forensics* or *forensic sciences*
- *gun safety technology,* not *smart gun technology* or *smart gun*
- *http://* or *https://* at the start of a web address: *https://www.justice.gov, https://www.urban.org*

- o EXCEPTION: "OJP.gov" and "NIJ.ojp.gov" should be used when directing readers to either site generally, such as when providing a keyword in print and PDF documents (see section [Writing Referral Text for Content on NIJ.ojp.gov and OJP.gov](#) below). Additionally, NIJ.ojp.gov can be used in NIJ logos (see NIJ branding guide).
- *human remains,* not *dead body*
- *human trafficking,* not *trafficking in persons*
- **[UNLIKE AP]** *Indian country* (lowercase "country" in accordance with 18 U.S.C. 1151 and 40 C.F.R. 171.3)
- *internet*
- *intimate partner violence,* not *domestic violence* or *domestic partner violence*
- *the Institute* is an acceptable replacement for NIJ except on first reference, but NIJ is preferred; use only if NIJ sounds awkward; note capitalization.
- *justice-involved* (e.g., justice-involved youth) — do not use this term
- *keyword*, singular — not keywords — even if there is more than one word. Keyword should also be used when the keyword is an NCJ or award number.
- *law enforcement,* not *police*, because sheriffs are not police. Use police or sheriff when referring specifically to a particular police or sheriff's department or to a jurisdiction that has police (e.g., "Police officers from the Houston Police Department participated in the training," or "Thousands of sexual assault kits are stored, untested, in law enforcement property rooms across the country. In Houston, police are working with researchers to learn more about the kits in their possession.").
- *offline, online*
- *Operation Ceasefire* or *Operation CeaseFire* may be acceptable depending on the city. Confirm with the individual program for its proper spelling.
    - o Chicago's program was *Operation CeaseFire* (the model is now called *Cure Violence*).
    - o Boston's program is *Operation Ceasefire.*
- *and/or* — avoid *and/or* in any case except internal or contractual documents
- *percentage* (not *percent*) when no specific number is mentioned. Use the % symbol with figures: *The percentage of youth homicides occurring at school has remained at less than 3% of the total number of youth homicides*.
- **[NEW]** *person belonging to racial and/or ethnic minority groups,* not *minority*
- **[NEW]** *person charged with a crime,* not *defendant*
- **[NEW]** *person committing a crime,* not *offender* or *perpetrator*
    - o *person at high risk of offending,* not *high-risk offender*
    - o *person committing serious crimes,* not *serious offender*
    - o *person convicted of crime who has completed any court-ordered punishment,* not *ex-offender*
    - o *person not committing a crime* or *person who has never committed/been convicted of a crime,* not *nonoffender*
    - o *person who chronically offends,* not *chronic offender*
    - o *person who offends throughout the life course,* not *life-course persistent offenders*
- **[NEW]** *person convicted of a crime,* not *convict*
    - o *person convicted of a felony,* not *felon*
- **[NEW]** *person on parole,* not *parolee*
- **[NEW]** *person on probation,* not *probationer*
- **[NEW]** *person who abused,* not *abuser*
- **[NEW]** *person who has desisted from crime,* not *desister*

- **[NEW]** *person who has recidivated,* not *recidivist*
  - *person convicted of a violent crime who has recidivated,* not *violent recidivist*
- **[NEW]** *person who is incarcerated* or *person incarcerated for [name of offense],* not *inmate* or *prisoner*
- **[NEW]** *person with pedophilia,* not *pedophile*
- *policymaker, policymaking*
- *postconviction*
- *prostituted persons,* not *sex workers* or *prostitutes*
- *protection orders* or *protective orders*; either is acceptable
- *research and development*, write out on first reference; on second reference, use R&D; note that there are no spaces between the letters and the ampersand in R&D
  - R&D can be used in headers before the full text appears in the body text but treat the first reference in text as above.
- **[NEW]** *respondent, applicant, petitioner, beneficiary, migrant, noncitizen,* or *non-U.S. citizen,* not *alien*
  - *unaccompanied noncitizen child* or *unaccompanied non-U.S. citizen child,* not *unaccompanied alien child*
  - *undocumented noncitizen, undocumented non-U.S. citizen,* or *undocumented individual,* not *undocumented alien* or *illegal alien*
- *restrictive housing* — use this instead of *administrative segregation* or *solitary confinement*
- *September 11, Sept. 11, 2001*, or *9/11*
- **[NEW]** *sex offender* can be used when discussing legislation or rules about residency and notification; otherwise, use *person convicted of a sex offense*
- *sexual assault,* not *rape,* in general, but not always. Sexual assault is the more inclusive term. Rape refers specifically to forced penetration. Editorial judgment may be needed.
- *sexual assault kit,* not *rape kit*
- *smart gun/smart gun technology* — do not use this term; see entry for *gun safety technology*
- *solitary confinement* — do not use this term; see entry for *restrictive housing*
- *substance use disorder,* not *substance abuse disorder* or *addiction*
- *Taser* — see entry for *conducted energy device*
- *they/them/their* – use as a nongendered singular pronoun instead of "he or she," "him or her," or "his or hers" (e.g., "Child welfare agencies are often hard-pressed to learn what becomes of a child when they enter the juvenile justice system.")
- *victim advocate*
- *web*, *webpage, website, webcam, webcast*
- **[NEW]** *youth involved in the juvenile justice system* or *youth adjudicated in juvenile court,* not *juvenile delinquent* or *juvenile offender*
  - *youth who commit serious offenses,* not *serious juvenile offenders*

Punctuation

The *AP Stylebook* has a complete punctuation guide, but you can refer to the list below for guidance on common questions.

- **Apostrophe**
  Use only to indicate possession, not to form the plural or contraction of a figure, symbol, or combination of letters: *1920s, OKs, YMCAs.*

Omit the apostrophe after a word ending in "s" when it is used primarily in a descriptive sense: *citizens band radio, teachers college, writers guide.*

For a full list of rules for apostrophe usage, see the *AP Stylebook* entry on Possessives.

- **Colon**
  Use a colon to introduce lists, texts, and tabulations. Capitalize the text following the colon if it forms a complete sentence or if it is a proper noun.

- **Comma**
  [UNLIKE AP] NIJ uses a serial comma in all lists.
  - *The flag is red, white, and blue.*
  - *He had orange juice, toast, and ham and eggs for breakfast.*
  - *The main points to consider are whether the athletes are skillful enough to compete, whether they have the stamina to endure the training, and whether they have the proper mental attitude.*

  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. As a general rule, use a comma before and after explanatory phrases, appositives, and identifiers:
  - After a state when using a city and state: *In Newark, New Jersey, the Police Department ….*
  - In a complete date within a sentence: *On May 1, 1995, President Clinton signed the bill.* Do not use a comma if only writing the month and year (*June 1994*).
  - In city/state lists, use commas between individual cities and states: *Portland, Oregon; Tucson, Arizona; and Springfield, Massachusetts.*

- **Dash**
  Use an em-dash to set off a phrase that contains a series of words set off by commas or to indicate an abrupt change in thought. Place a space before and after an em-dash in a sentence: *He listed the qualities — intelligence, humor, independence — that he liked in an executive.*

  An en-dash (rather than a hyphen) may be used in number ranges if it is applied consistently within a document.

- **Ellipsis**
  Treat an ellipsis as a three-letter word with spaces before and after: *I … tried to do what was best.* Do not place spaces between the dots in an ellipsis. Do not use ellipses at the beginning or end of a direct quote; use an ellipsis to indicate the omission of one or more words within a quoted passage.

- **Hyphen**
  In headers and subheads, capitalize the word following a hyphen. For example, *Decision-Makers End Funding for Reentry Program.*

  Use a hyphen in a range of numbers: *1995-1997*. Hyphens are generally preferable to en-dashes in ranges, but either is allowable if used consistently.

- **Period**
  Use only one space after a period.

- **Quotation marks**
  Place periods and commas inside quotation marks. Colons, semicolons, question marks, dashes, and exclamation points are placed outside quotation marks unless they are part of the material being quoted.

  Quotation marks are not necessary for nonliteral terms that have a commonly accepted meaning in the criminal justice field: *hot spot, broken windows.* However, when quotation marks are used, they should be used only the first time.

- **Semicolon**
  Use a semicolon to separate a complex series of major elements when those elements also contain commas: *the country's resources consist of large ore deposits; lumber, waterpower, and fertile soils; and a strong, rugged people.* Do not use a semicolon when a comma will suffice.

Ranks and Civilian Titles

AP provides extensive lists of military ranks and instructions on using them for law enforcement and firefighters (keyword "military titles"). It also provides lists indicating which titles should be spelled out and which abbreviated. In general, capitalize a military rank when it is part of a formal title before an individual's name on first reference. Then use only the last name.

- Gen. John Doe is the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan. The general endorsed the idea. (subsequently, Doe)
- retired Gen. Jane Smith (subsequently, Smith)

AP provides more general guidelines for civilian titles through search categories such as legislative, organizational, courtesy, and religious titles. A person's title is generally used once with only the last name used thereafter. Courtesy titles such as Mr. and Ms. are not used. Examples include —

- Sen. Jane Doe (legislative)
- House Minority Leader John Doe (organizational)

In general, capitalize only formal titles used directly before an individual's name and not set off by commas. Lowercase formal titles when they follow a name, when the name is set off by commas, or when no name is given.

A formal title indicates authority or professional or academic activity:

- President John Doe
- Jane Doe, vice president, attended the international summit

Other titles are descriptive and occupational:

- Mayor Doe; Jane Doe, mayor of Chicago; the mayor
- Governor John Doe; the governor of Colorado, John Doe; the governor

See also Academic Degrees and Titles.

State Names

The names of the 50 U.S. states should be **spelled out** when used in the body of a story, whether standing alone or in conjunction with a city, town, village, or military base.

Use *New York state* when necessary to distinguish the state from New York City.

Use *state of Washington* or *Washington state* when necessary to distinguish the state from the District of Columbia.

Place one comma between the city and the state name, and another comma after the state name, unless ending a sentence: *He was traveling from Nashville, Tennessee, to Austin, Texas, en route to his home in Albuquerque, New Mexico. She said Cook County, Illinois, was Mayor Smith's stronghold.*

Trademarks

Do not use the symbol with a trademark name. Capitalize the word when referring to a trademark brand, word, or name. When possible, use the generic equivalent unless the trademark name is necessary. For example, use *conducted energy device* rather than *Taser*.

Writing Referral Text for Content on NIJ.ojp.gov and OJP.gov

NIJ products often refer readers to content on NIJ.ojp.gov or OJP.gov for additional information. NIJ prefers to use short URLs or keywords rather than writing out full URLs where possible. The NIJ web content manager will establish short URLs or keywords as needed.

[NOTE: This does **not** apply to endnotes, footnotes, and bibliographies. See Part II for detailed information on formatting notes and references.]

Short URL references should use the following style:

> … at NIJ.ojp.gov/xxxx.

Examples:

> Learn more about NIJ's domestic radicalization and terrorism portfolio at NIJ.ojp.gov/dr-research.

> Watch a video on the impact of NIJ's Solving Cold Cases with DNA program at NIJ.ojp.gov/coldcaseimpact.

Keyword references should use the following style:

> … at NIJ.ojp.gov, keyword: xxxx.

> … at NIJ.ojp.gov, keyword: xxx yyy etc. (Note that keyword is singular even when there is more than one word.)

Examples:

> Learn more about standards at NIJ, including accessing a list of active standards and information on standards under development, at NIJ.ojp.gov, keyword: standards.

> Read the full report, *Homeland Security in Small Law Enforcement Jurisdictions: Preparedness, Efficacy, and Proximity to Big-City Peers*, at OJP.gov, keyword: 239466.

Additional Considerations

Always check the short URLs and keywords with the NIJ web content manager before including them in a publication. The web content manager can create unique URLs or keywords for use in a particular publication.

When directing readers to NIJ publications, the NCJ number can serve as the keyword. NCJ numbers will usually work on both OJP.gov and NIJ.ojp.gov.

For ongoing projects (that is, projects without final reports), the award number can serve as the keyword on NIJ.ojp.gov.

In PDFs —

(1) The "at NIJ.ojp.gov (or OJP.gov), keyword: xxx" text should be rendered as an invisible link (i.e., text should be linked but remain roman, not blue/underlined) to the destination URL. That allows readers to click directly on the text and go to the destination page or document rather than typing the keyword into their browser.

(2) For text referring readers to a publication that involves downloadable media (such as PDF, Word, Excel, and PowerPoint), NIJ prefers that the link send readers to web abstracts or publication summaries rather than linking directly to the downloadable document, when possible.

Part II. Notes and References

The guidelines listed here are for the notes section of documents.

NIJ follows the conventions in the *Chicago Manual of Style,* 16th ed. NIJ uses endnotes rather than footnotes, and it does not use the American Psychological Association style of embedded text references (e.g., Wilson, 1995) with a list of citations at the end of the document. In long documents, however, such as Special Reports or Science and Technology Reports, references may be used instead of or along with endnotes.

For the sake of consistency, use the same format for endnotes and references, with three differences for references:

- Authors should be last name first.
- Use periods instead of commas.
- Give page numbers only for periodicals.

For a shorter work or for a Special Report/Research in Brief by a single author, endnotes should generally be consolidated at the end of the document and listed sequentially (not by chapter or section). Endnotes may appear at the end of each chapter or section of multiauthor works.

Notes to exhibits should be placed at the bottom of the exhibit. If an exhibit has only one note, use an asterisk to designate it; if it has more than one, each note should be indicated by numerals in sequential order.

Notes to sidebars should be placed at the end of the sidebar, not the end of the larger publication.

General Format for Notes
- Author names are spelled out Firstname Lastname (do not use first initials). If there are four or more authors, use only the first author's name followed by "et al."
- Titles capitalized initial-capped style.
- Titles of larger works are italicized.
- Titles of smaller works (chapter, articles) or unpublished sources are set in roman type and enclosed in quotation marks.
- Abbreviate editor/edited by (ed.), translated/translated by (trans.), volume (vol.), and edition (ed.).
- If a reference is to a particular passage in a work, the page numbers should be included.

Multiple Citations in One Note
Separate citations by semicolons, with "and" before the final citation. If the works or authors appear in the text (names, quotations), they should appear in the same order in the note.

Using Short Forms in Subsequent Notes
If you use a source more than once, provide a full citation first and a short form citation in subsequent references.

NIJ does not use Ibid. After the first citation, use the short form.

Note: If this is part of a longer work, such as a book with chapters, use the full form when a new chapter or major section begins.

The basic structure of the short citation is last name of author, main title of work cited (usually shortened if more than four words), page numbers. Use full numbers when indicating page numbers (131-132 rather than 131-2 or 131-32).

Examples:

Michael D. White, "Police Officer Body-Worn Cameras: Assessing the Evidence," Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2014.

Short form: White, "Police Officer Body-Worn Cameras."

Samuel A. Morley, *Poverty and Inequality in Latin America: The Impact of Adjustment and Recovery* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 24-25.

Short form: Morley, *Poverty and Inequality*, 43.

Regina M. Schwartz, "Nationals and Nationalism: Adultery in the House of David," *Critical Inquiry* 19 no. 1 (1992): 131-132.

Short form: Schwartz, "Nationals and Nationalism," 138.

Note: For long-form citations of periodicals, a colon precedes the page numbers, but in short form, page numbers are preceded by a comma.

See below for examples with [multiple authors](#) or [translators](#).

URLs for Online Sources

NIJ citations to online sources should not include URLs or link to pages outside the NIJ.ojp.gov domain unless the source:

- Is a federal or state government site (.gov, .mil, or .fed)
- Has a primarily research or educational focus that is noncommercial and nonpartisan
  - Note that all scholarly journals fall under this exception. In cases where the source has a DOI, it should always be used as the URL in the form https://doi.org/10.xxx.

News sites are not allowable links.

Exceptions to these rules may be required as determined by the NIJ web content manager.

Using "Accessed on" in Online Source Citations

Include an "accessed on" date in an endnote if the page being cited changes frequently, or if it has been updated since the original access date in a way that would change the meaning of the citation.

Citing Indirect Sources

Always try to cite to original sources and avoid using a source cited within another source. However, when the original source is unavailable, Chicago recommends the use of "quoted in" for the note:

Dr. P.C.H. Brouardel, 19th-century French medico-legalist, quoted in *ASCLD/Lab Guiding Principles of Professional Responsibility for Crime Laboratories and Forensic Scientists,* http://www.identacode.org/ASCLD_Guiding_Principles.pdf.

Ian Hacking, *The Social Construction of What?* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 103, quoted in Manuel DeLanda, *A New Philosophy of Society* (New York: Continuum, 2006), 2.

Books

One Author
John E. Douglas, *Mind Hunter: Inside the FBI's Elite Serial Crime Unit* (New York: Pocket Books, 1995).

Short form: Douglas, *Mind Hunter*.

Chaomei Chen, *Mapping Scientific Frontiers: The Quest for Knowledge Visualization*, 2nd ed. (London: Springer, 2013), 163, http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007%2F978-1-4471-5128-9.

Short form: Chen, *Mapping Scientific Frontiers*.

Two Authors
Cynthia Lum and Christopher S. Koper, *Evidence-Based Policing: Translating Research Into Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017).

Short form: Lum and Koper, *Evidence-Based Policing.*

Three Authors
Joyce Heatherton, James Fitzgilroy, and Jackson Hsu, *Meteors and Mudslides: A Trip Through Time (*New York: Routledge, 2008).

Short form: Heatherton, Fitzgilroy, and Hsu, *Meteors and Mudslides*, 22.

Four or More Authors
Terence P. Thornberry et al., *Gangs and Delinquency in Developmental Perspective* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

Short form: Thornberry et al., *Gangs and Delinquency.*

Dana Barnes et al., *Plastics: Essays on American Corporate Ascendance in the 1960s* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 91-92.

Short form: Barnes et al., *Plastics*, 91-92.

However, in a reference list or bibliography, include all the authors.

Book With Editor
Adelaida R. Del Castillo, ed., *Between Borders: Essays on Mexicana/Chicana History* (Encino, CA: Floricanto, 1990), 334.

Short form: Del Castillo, *Between Borders*, 334.

Book With Translator
Gabriel Garcia Marquez, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, trans. Edith Grossman (London: Cape, 1988), 242-255.

Short form: Marquez, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, 243.

Chapter in an Edited Book

Simson L. Garfinkel et al., "Advanced Forensic Format: An Open Extensible Format for Disk Imaging," in *Advances in Digital Forensics II*, ed. Martin S. Olivier and Sujeet Shenoi (New York: Springer, 2006), 13-27.

> Short form: Garfinkel et al., "Advanced Forensic Format," 13-27.

Editions Other Than First

"Reasonable Medical Probability," *Black's Law Dictionary*, 10th ed. (Westlaw, 2014).

> Short form: "Reasonable Medical Probability," *Black's Law Dictionary*.

Periodicals

Elements

- Author names (use first author et al. for four or more authors)
- Title and subtitle of article or column
- Title of periodical
- Issue information (such as volume, issue number, date)
- Page reference (where appropriate)
- For online periodicals, DOI in the form https://doi.org/10.xxx. If there is no DOI, use the URL instead.

Page numbers

If citing the article as a whole, use the page range of the entire article; if citing a specific portion of the article, just include the page numbers that portion appears on.

Journal Articles

Kenna Quinet, "The Missing Missing: Toward a Quantification of Serial Murder Victimization in the United States," *Homicide Studies* 11 no. 4 (2007): 319-339, https://doi.org/10.1177/1088767907307467.

Lin Huff-Corzine et al., "Shooting for Accuracy: Comparing Data Sources on Mass Murder," *Homicide Studies* 18 no. 1 (2014): 105-124, https://doi.org/10.1177/1088767913512205.

Dan Hartnett et al., "The Effectiveness of Functional Family Therapy for Adolescent Behavioral and Substance Misuse Problems: A Meta-Analysis," *Family Process* 56 no. 3 (2017): 607-619, https://doi.org/10.1111/famp.12256.

Jack R. Greene, "The Upside and Downside of the 'Police Science' Epistemic Community," *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice* 8 no. 4 (2014): 379-392, https://doi.org/10.1093/police/pau043.

Laura Fogger-Rogers, Ann Grand, and Margarida Sardo, "Beyond Dissemination — Science Communication as Impact," *Journal of Science Communication* 14 no. 3 (2015): 2, https://doi.org/10.22323/2.14030301.

Magazines and Newspapers

Endnote citations for articles in magazines and newspapers closely follow the form of citations for scholarly articles, but there are three significant differences:

- Include the month or month and day of the magazine or newspaper article in the citation in addition to the year.

- Unlike in a citation for a scholarly journal article, the year of publication is not enclosed in parentheses when citing a magazine or newspaper article.
- Do not include a URL or link for news articles.

Darryl Fears, "NIH Ends Era of U.S. Medical Research on Chimpanzees," *The Washington Post*, November 18, 2015.

Virginia Hughes, "Why Police Lineups Will Never Be Perfect," *The Atlantic*, October 2, 2014.

NIJ Final Reports and OJP Publications

NIJ Final Reports
NIJ final reports follow the guidelines for listing authors described above. Final report titles are placed in quotation marks. Include the award number (available on the face sheet of the report). Most final reports are available online and notes should include their URL.

Meagan Cahill et al., "Foreclosures and Crime: A Space-Time Analysis," Final report to the National Institute of Justice, award number 2010-IJ-CX-0029, February 2015, NCJ 248652, https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/248652.pdf.

Michael J. Williams, John G. Horgan, and William P. Evans, "Evaluation of a Multi-Faceted, U.S. Community-Based, Muslim-Led CVE Program," Final report to the National Institute of Justice, award number 2013-ZA-BX-0003, June 2016, NCJ 249936, https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/249936.pdf.

NIJ Journal Articles
Citations to *NIJ Journal* articles follow Chicago guidelines for magazine articles but take note of the following:

- For publication date, use the posting date of the HTML version.
- Use the NIJ.ojp.gov URL.

Seri Irazola et al., "Addressing the Impact of Wrongful Convictions on Crime Victims," *NIJ Journal* 274, October 2014, https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/addressing-impact-wrongful-convictions-crime-victims.

Stephen Gies, "GPS Supervision in California: One Technology, Two Contrasting Goals," *NIJ Journal* 275, December 2015, https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/gps-supervision-california-one-technology-two-contrasting-goals.

Alison Brooks Martin, "Plan for Program Evaluation from the Start," *NIJ Journal* 275, May 2015, https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/plan-program-evaluation-start.

Other OJP Publications
Most other OJP publications take the form Chicago recommends for government series. The information below has been tailored for OJP. Consult Chicago when citing to other government publications.

Elements

- Author name
- Title (italicized)
- Series (if applicable — InShort, Research in Brief, Special Report, Research for Practice)

- Washington, DC (Note: "DC" is printed without periods only when it is the city of publication in a note or reference)
- U.S. Department of Justice
- Name of OJP Agency
- Date of publication — Month Year
- NCJ number
- OJP.gov URL

Do not list the Government Printing Office as the publisher.

Office for Victims of Crime, *In Their Own Words: Domestic Abuse in Later Life,* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, August 2010, NCJ 227928, https://www.ovc.gov/publications/infores/pdftxt/InTheirOwnWords.pdf.

Christy A. Visher, *Pretrial Drug Testing*, Research in Brief, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, September 1992, NCJ 137057, https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/137057NCJRS.pdf.

Shannan M. Catalano, *Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2010,* Special Report, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, November 2012, NCJ 239203, http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/ipv9310.pdf.

Reports (Other Than NIJ)

William J. Krouse and Daniel J. Richardson, "Mass Murder with Firearms: Incidents and Victims, 1999-2013," Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, July 30, 2015, https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R44126.

Robert Fein et al., *Threat Assessment in Schools: A Guide to Managing Threatening Situations and to Creating Safe School Climates,* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Elementary and Secondary Education, Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program, and U.S. Secret Service, National Threat Assessment Center, July 2004, https://www2.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/threatassessmentguide.pdf.

Online Sources

Include an access date if the page being cited changes frequently, or if it has been updated since the access date in a way that would change the meaning of the citation. Only include URLs if they meet the guidelines listed in URLs for Online Sources above.

If excluding the URL according to these guidelines would result in ambiguity regarding the citation type, add "web" to the citation in place of a URL.

Generic Form for Online Sources

FirstName LastName, "Title of Webpage," *Publishing Organization or Name of Website in Italics*, publication date or update date or access date, URL.

Joel Anderson, "The Black Cop In Baltimore," *BuzzFeed*, posted February 18, 2016.

Brad Plumber, "Hurricane Patricia: Why a Record Storm Did Surprisingly Little Damage," *Vox*, last updated October 26, 2015.

Eric Knorr, "How PayPal Beats the Bad Guys With Machine Learning," Ahead of the Curve, *InfoWorld,* April 13, 2015.

Blogs

Blog entries follow the general format for online sources with the addition of "(blog)" after the publisher or website title (which is generally the blog's title). If the word "blog" is in the title of the blog, you do not need to include it after the title. Inclusion of the blog's URL should follow the guidelines listed in URLs for Online Sources above.

Christopher Ingraham, "A Terrifying and Hilarious Map of Squirrel Attacks on the U.S. Power Grid," *Wonkblog*, *The Washington Post*, January 12, 2016.

Joachim Krapels and Marco Hafner, "Attacking Poverty Through Employability Interventions," *The RAND Blog*, October 16, 2015, http://www.rand.org/blog/2015/10/attacking-poverty-through-employability-interventions.html.

U.S. Government Accountability Office, "How Much Does Crime Cost?" *WatchBlog,* November 29, 2017, https://blog.gao.gov/2017/11/29/how-much-does-crime-cost.

General Website Homepage

CNN.com, accessed July 26, 2012.

Justice.gov, accessed October 28, 2015, http://www.justice.gov.

Page Within Website

In citations that do not include a URL, "web" may be used instead to clarify that the source is a website.

Individual author:

Kris Ankarlo, "How DC Is Turning Department of Forensic Sciences Around, Part I," *CBS DC*, October 14, 2015, web.

No author identified:

"IACP/DuPont™ Kevlar® Survivors' Club®," *DuPont,* web.

"About BetaGov," *BetaGov,* October 26, 2017, web.

"Crime Statistics," *City of New York Police Department*, accessed April 17, 2016, http://www1.nyc.gov/site/nypd/stats/crime-statistics/crime-statistics-landing.page.

Staff author:

CNN Wire Staff, "Researchers List Top 10 Airports for Spreading Disease," *CNN*, last modified on July 26, 2012.

Multimedia

Include running time and medium (e.g., podcast audio, TED video). If it is a recording of a speech or performance, provide information about the original source (e.g., filming date) in addition to the online source (e.g., posted date).

General form: Firstname Lastname of Performer, Writer or Creator, *Title of Text*, indication of format/medium, running time, publication date, URL.

Michael Pollan, "Michael Pollan Gives a Plant's-Eye View," filmed March 2007, TED video, 17:31, posted February 2008.

Radiolab, "Sight Unseen," podcast audio, 30:34, posted April 28, 2015.

Medical Discovery News, "The Discovery of the Radio," radio show, *utmb Health*, 2007.

Interviews and Personal Communication

Interviews and personal communication must be included as notes; do not put them in a reference list or bibliography.

Unpublished interview examples:

Andrew Macmillan (principal advisor, Investment Center Division, FAO), in discussion with the author, September 1998.

Benjamin Spock, interview by Milton J.E. Senn, November 20, 1974, interview 67A, transcript, Senn Oral History Collection, National Library of Medicine, Bethesda, MD.

Unattributed interview example:

Interview with health care worker, March 23, 2010.

Published or broadcast interview example:

McGeorge Bundy, interview with Robert MacNeil, *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*, PBS, February 7, 1990.

David Whyte, interview with Krista Tippet, "The Conversational Nature of Reality," *On Being*, podcast audio, 51:00, posted April 17, 2016.

Personal communication example:

Constance Conlon, email message to author, April 17, 2000.

Press Releases

Office of the Oklahoma Attorney General, "Attorney General Hunter, Local, State Leaders Announce Initiative to Help Solve Cold, Missing and Unidentified Person Cases," press release, Oklahoma City: Office of the Oklahoma Attorney General, August 16, 2018.

Conference and Other Unpublished Papers

Paper presented at a meeting or conference:

Julie Smith, "Meth Labs and Toxicity," paper presented at annual meeting of the National Sheriffs Association, Spokane, WA, November 2002.

Steven Branigan, "Identifying and Removing Bottlenecks in Computer Forensic Imaging," poster session presented at NIJ Advanced Technology Conference, Washington, DC, June 2012.

Thesis or dissertation:

Julie Smith, "Meth Labs and Toxicity," Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2002.

Solicitations/Funding Opportunities

National Institute of Justice funding opportunity, "Title of Solicitation," grants.gov announcement number NIJ-20XX-XXX, posted Month Day, Year, URL.

National Institute of Justice funding opportunity, "FY 2017 DNA Capacity Enhancement and Backlog Reduction (CEBR) Program," grants.gov announcement number NIJ-2017-11581, posted March 13, 2017, https://nij.gov/funding/Documents/solicitations/NIJ-2017-11582.pdf.

Award Descriptions

National Institute of Justice funding award description, "Development of a Computer Simulation Model To Describe Potential Bruising Patterns Associated With Common Childhood Falls," at the University of Louisville Research Foundation, award number 2014-DN-BX-K006, https://nij.ojp.gov/funding/awards/2014-dn-bx-k006.

Notes in HTML Versus Print

All note formatting above is presented in print style.

Notes in HTML-only products (e.g., NIJ.ojp.gov articles, online *NIJ Journal* articles) should link the title text to the publication's URL instead of providing the URL text at the end of the note.

Chaomei Chen, *Mapping Scientific Frontiers: The Quest for Knowledge Visualization*, 2nd ed. (London: Springer, 2013), 163.

Short form: Chen, *Mapping Scientific Frontiers*.

Laura Fogger-Rogers, Ann Grand, and Margarida Sardo, "Beyond Dissemination — Science Communication as Impact," *Journal of Science Communication* 14 no. 3 (2015): 2.

Michael J. Williams, John G. Horgan, and William P. Evans, "Evaluation of a Multi-Faceted, U.S. Community-Based, Muslim-Led CVE Program," Final report to the National Institute of Justice, award number 2013-ZA-BX-0003, June 2016, NCJ 249936.

U.S. Government Accountability Office, "How Much Does Crime Cost?" *WatchBlog,* November 29, 2017.

Part III. Web Writing

This section includes some specific rules about writing for the NIJ website but does not cover everything. It walks you through the web writing process at NIJ, covers best practices for web writing, and provides guidance on common web style issues and issues specific to NIJ.

The people who read NIJ publications are like the people who read *Scientific American,* the *Harvard Business Review,* and the *New York Times.* They are intelligent and busy individuals who may or may not know much about methodology or NIJ. They want accurate information that's timely, easy to read, and helps them do their job better.

The Inverted Pyramid

NIJ editors follow the newspaper industry's inverted pyramid rule: We put the most important part of the story at the beginning. The introductory sentences tell the reader what the finding is, why it is significant, and its relevance to the field. Newspaper editors often must cut an article to fit a limited space. To do so, they cut text from the end of the story because few people read all the way to the end. NIJ editors are less ruthless about space, but still follow the newspaper rule of thumb: Put the most important information at the beginning and cut from the end. This approach also works well on the web, where we want the most important information in the top half of the webpage.

The manuscript you submit to your NIJ editor should be clear, concise, and well-structured. Headings, subheadings, lists, tables, graphs, and illustrations should be presented in a way that a busy reader can scan the report and still get the main points.

Examples of Effective Web Writing

This section discusses the following guidelines for writing effective webpages:

- Consider the Audience
- Follow the "Page Principle"
- Use Plain Language
- Use Familiar Words
- Use Active Voice
- Create Pages for Scanning, Not Reading
- Organize Content by "Chunking"

Consider the Audience

You will define the audience at the kickoff meeting. By elaborating on the following questions, the purpose of each page will be more clearly defined:

- Who are they?
    - Think of the audience as individual people, not vague institutions.
- What tasks are they trying to accomplish?
- What questions do they have?
- What answers do we have?

Follow the "Page Principle"

- **Each page should live on its own**
  Users will not necessarily follow the logical progression of the site outline. You should write each page as if it will be the only page a user will visit. In other words, content should include

enough information so that a first-time reader will understand the message. Use links to other pages to avoid repeating concepts so much that the main subject of the page is buried.

- **Each page should contain one main topic**
  Limit each webpage to just one main topic, with subtopics, if appropriate. Users will scan the page to find what they need — they don't want a book. By limiting the page to just one main point, the site will be much more effective. If the page has too many subtopics, consider breaking the page into more sections, or adding additional pages.

Use Plain Language

All NIJ webpages must be written in plain language. Writing in plain language is not the same as "dumbing down" the content. It means writing so the intended audience can:

- Understand the first time they read or hear it
- Find what they need
- Understand what they find
- Use what they find to meet their needs

Consider the intended audience of the page — language that is plain to one set of readers may not be plain to others. If your reader needs specific technical or legal details, put them in, but think carefully about what's really necessary. Make sure you're not including information just because you always include it.[1]

Consider the guidance below from PlainLanguage.gov regarding plain language and the sciences and technical content:

"It is important for scientists to use plain language not only to reach the public; but also to reach one another. Indeed, scientific information conveyed in plain language invariably reaches bigger scientific audiences than information conveyed in technical language."[2]

"What do we mean by jargon? Jargon is unnecessarily complicated, technical language used to impress, rather than to inform, your audience.

"When we say not to use jargon [unnecessarily complicated, technical language used to impress, rather than to inform, your audience], we're not advocating leaving out necessary technical terms; we are saying to make sure your other language is as clear as possible. For example, there may not be another correct way to refer to a brinulator valve control ring. But that doesn't prevent you from saying 'tighten the brinulator valve control ring securely' instead of 'Apply sufficient torque to the brinulator valve control ring to ensure that the control ring assembly is securely attached to the terminal such that loosening cannot occur under normal conditions.' The first is a necessary use of a technical term. The second is jargon."[3]

Use Familiar Words

Use words that are familiar to, and used frequently by, the target audience for the page. Words that are more frequently seen and heard are better and more quickly recognized.[4]

Use Active Voice

In general, NIJ prefers using active voice over passive voice. Active voice means the subject is doing the action of the verb. Passive voice means the object is doing the action.[5] For example:

- **Active voice**
  NIJ funded the study.

- **Passive voice**
  The study was funded by NIJ.

Create Web Pages for Scanning, Not Heavy Reading

Use descriptive headings, links, and lists to easily inform and grab the reader's attention while scanning. Users who scan generally read headings and scan the first couple of sentences of the paragraph — not the full text — and may miss information when a page contains dense text. Summarize the main point of your paragraph in the first couple of sentences.[6]

Organize Content by "Chunking"

"Chunking" is the process of dividing information into small, clearly written paragraphs. Summarize the primary theme of the paragraph in the first sentence. Remember:

- Sentences should not have more than 20 words.
- Paragraphs should be no longer than six sentences,[7] and it is acceptable to have a paragraph of only one or two sentences.

  A well-organized page should:

  - Focus on a main idea.
  - Be self-contained because pages may be read out of order.
  - Flow logically from one chunk to another.

After Writing: The Delivery

Questions To Ensure a Web-Friendly Document

After finishing the first draft, ask yourself the following questions before submitting the draft for review:

- Did your content achieve its main purpose?
- Did you target your content to your audience?
- Does your lead tell users what your content is about?
- Is your message clear?
- Does each paragraph present one idea?
- Will the page title of your document remind users of the document's contents?
- Do headings and subheadings communicate your message?
- Have you used active verbs?
- Did you overdo links within the text?
- Do your links tell users what to expect?
- Did you delete the "click here" links?
- Did you cut excess words and sentences?
- Is there a good flow between the chunks of your document?
- Did you create vivid pictures in the reader's mind?
- Did you test your writing by reading your copy out loud?
- Will bullets get your message across faster than sentences?

[NEW] Appendix A: Person-First Language

NIJ is committed to advancing criminal justice policies that promote public safety. This commitment entails ensuring that people with criminal records, including people who were previously incarcerated, are able to successfully and productively reintegrate into their communities and lead successful, law-abiding lives.[8] The language used in NIJ documents should align with and advance this commitment by putting individuals first and decoupling traits, conditions, or actions from the people being described.

Person-first language often depends on context, but the table below illustrates ways that commonly used criminal justice terms can be adapted, rephrased, or expanded to more fully encompass the humanity of the people being discussed.

Exceptions to person-first language include: terms appearing in document titles or within direct quotes; "offense," "offending," and "criminal" when used as adjectives not describing a person; and terms used as variable labels in research, when discussing those variables directly.

Person-First Alternatives for Common Criminal Justice Terms

Labelling Term	Person-First Alternatives
Abuser	Person who abused
Alien	Respondent, applicant, petitioner, beneficiary, migrant, noncitizen, or non-U.S. citizen
Chronic offender	Person who chronically offends/offended
Convict, ex-convict	Person convicted of a crime
Defendant	Person charged with a crime
Desister	Person who desisted
Felon, ex-felon	Person convicted of a felony
High-risk offender	Person at high risk of offending
Inmate	Person incarcerated, person incarcerated for [name of offense], incarcerated person
Juvenile delinquent/offender	Youth who has committed [name of offense], youth involved in the juvenile justice system, youth adjudicated in juvenile court
Life-course persistent offender	Person who offends throughout their life course

Labelling Term	Person-First Alternatives
Minority/minorities	Persons belonging to racial and/or ethnic minority groups
Nonoffender	Person not committing a crime, person who has never committed/been convicted of a crime
Offender, ex-offender	Person convicted of a crime, person committing a crime, person convicted of crime who has completed any court-ordered punishment
Parolee	Person on parole
Pedophile	Person with pedophilia
Perpetrator	*See guidance on "offender"*
Prisoner	*See guidance on "inmate"*
Probationer	Person on probation
Recidivist	Person who recidivates, person recommitting a crime after incarceration or correction, person arrested for/committing/convicted of [crime type] who has recidivated
Reentrant	Person reentering the community
Serious juvenile offender	Youth committing serious crimes
Serious offender	Person committing serious crimes
Unaccompanied alien child	Unaccompanied noncitizen child, unaccompanied non-U.S. citizen child
Undocumented alien or illegal alien	Undocumented noncitizen, undocumented non-U.S. citizen, or undocumented individual

1 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services [HHS], "The Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines — Chapter 15," https://www.usability.gov/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines_book.pdf, December 17, 2009; PlainLanguage.gov, "What Is Plain Language?," http://www.plainlanguage.gov/whatisPL/index.cfm, February 23, 2010; PlainLanguage.gov, "How To Comply With the President's Memo on Plain Language," https://www.plainlanguage.gov/about/history/memo-guidelines, February 23, 2010; and PlainLanguage.gov, "President Clinton's Memorandum on Plain Language in Government Writing," https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/WCPD-1998-06-08/pdf/WCPD-1998-06-08-Pg1010.pdf, February 23, 2010.

2 HHS, "The Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines — Chapter 15"; and PlainLanguage.gov, "Scientists Need Plain Language," https://www.plainlanguage.gov/resources/articles/scientists-need-plain-language, February 23, 2010.

3 PlainLanguage.gov, "Federal Plain Language Guidelines," https://www.plainlanguage.gov/guidelines, March 2011.

4 HHS, "The Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines — Chapter 15"; PlainLanguage.gov, "What Is Plain Language?"; PlainLanguage.gov, "How To Comply With the President's Memo"; and PlainLanguage.gov, "President Clinton's Memorandum."

5 HHS, "The Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines — Chapter 15"; PlainLanguage.gov, "What Is Plain Language?"; PlainLanguage.gov, "How To Comply With the President's Memo"; and PlainLanguage.gov, "President Clinton's Memorandum."

6 HHS, "The Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines — Chapter 15"; and PlainLanguage.gov, "Scientists Need Plain Language."

7 HHS, "The Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines — Chapter 15."

8 Karol V. Mason, "Policy Memorandum: OJP Terminology to Describe Justice-Involved Individuals," Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of the Assistant Attorney General, April 2016.