GUIDELINES FOR
PREPARING AND SUBMITTING
MANUSCRIPTS FOR PUBLICATION
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MANUSCRIPTS FOR PUBLICATION

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The National Institute of Corrections values your feedback. Please follow the link below to complete a user feedback survey about this publication. Your responses will assist us in continuing to provide you with high-quality learning and information materials.
https://www.research.net/r/NICPublicationSurvey
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GENERAL CONDITIONS
The conditions in this guide apply to all National Institute of Corrections (NIC) cooperative agreements, contract awards, and technical assistance projects that involve the preparation of materials for publication and public dissemination. NIC documents are available in both print and electronic forms, including PDF, e-book, and mobile application. All manuscripts submitted for publication must meet the federal government’s requirements for plain language and Section 508 accessibility.

NIC funds may not be used to produce any publication or announcement unless—

- Such production is included specifically in the approved application and budget or a modification is made to the statement of work to include such production.
- The NIC director reviews and approves of the document for publication.
- The document adheres to the conditions described in these guidelines.

Any material to be published with NIC award funds must relate to the administrative aspects of the project. This means the publication is necessary to conduct activities associated with the greater project (e.g., printing of survey forms or handout materials). Awardees must submit the material to the NIC project manager and have it approved by NIC before preparing a final draft.

Documents, brochures, announcements, certificates, pamphlets, and other materials developed for public dissemination must adhere to the following general conditions.

**Funding**

- All documents prepared with NIC funds must include U.S. Department of Justice and NIC identification on the cover (unless they are for internal use only by NIC). The NIC technical writer/editor will advise the author(s) of any other applicable administrative requirements.
- Federal policy restricts the use of U.S. government funds for printing (or engraving) stationery, business cards, memo pads, etc., with the names of individuals. NIC prohibits the use of federal funds for the printing of these items with the names of projects or programs unless specific, written permission has been granted by NIC.
- NIC funds are not to be used for the preparation, printing, or reproduction of newsletters unless the newsletters are specifically described in the approved plan and budget.

**Acknowledgment**

- The brochure cover page or publication title page must include the date (month and year) of release for a publication.
- Names of authors and the logos of non-federal partners are not to appear on the covers of publications. They may appear on the title page or back page of a brochure.
- No advertising of any type is to be included in material produced with federal funds, nor is it to be implied that the government endorses or favors any commercial product, commodity, or service. Generic terms should be used instead of names of commercial products whenever possible.
Signed releases from any identifiable individuals appearing in a photograph must be provided before any materials containing that photograph are disseminated.

News releases announcing or reporting on NIC-funded activity must be approved by the NIC director prior to release.

**Copyright**

Authors using material(s) copyrighted by others in a product developed under NIC auspices must identify the source of the material, whether it is being used verbatim or paraphrased. This rule applies to both published and unpublished source material of any kind—text, tables, graphs, photographs, illustrations, etc.

Include a list of all copyrighted material used either in the acknowledgments, on the inside front cover, or in other front matter. When a document contains materials that did not originate in the performance of the NIC-funded activity and that are copyrighted by a person other than the author(s), a copyright notice is not included.

If the material being quoted or paraphrased in a manuscript is longer than a brief quotation, the author(s) must provide NIC with written permission of (1) any copyright holders (usually the publisher) and (2) of the author(s) of the material to publish and use it, to authorize others to do so, and to post the material on the Internet. A sample letter for requesting permission to use copyrighted material is included here. If the copyright holders do not want their material posted on the Internet, the author(s) must indicate this to NIC when submitting the final material for printing. Payment of any fees associated with using copyrighted material is the responsibility of the author(s).
Sample Copyright Permission Letter

[Date]

Dear ———:

I am writing to request permission to reprint the following material in a manuscript that I am submitting for publication to the National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice:

Requested Work
[Author, title, publisher, date of publication, ISBN or URL, location and number of pages to be used]

Proposed Manuscript
[Author, title, type of publication, number of print copies estimated, future website URL]

Appropriate credit will be given in the form of a complete citation. Thank you in advance for considering this request. For your convenience, a short signature block is provided below.

If you are not the copyright holder or worldwide rights must be obtained elsewhere, please let me know who I should contact.

Sincerely, [Applicant’s signature]

* * *

Permission is granted: ___ Yes ___ No

Signature:

Date:
Authors can avoid lengthy delays in the publication of their manuscripts by preparing their materials according to NIC guidelines. In general, authors should ensure they have included all required parts of a manuscript in their submission, that they have adhered to NIC’s formatting instructions, and that their submission is in an approved file format. Manuscripts that do not meet NIC guidelines will be returned to the author for correction or otherwise delayed during the editorial review process. Review of the manuscript will not begin until all parts of the manuscript are available for review.

**Parts of a Manuscript**

The following are core elements that most manuscripts are expected to have upon submission. Research briefs and similar documents of less than 10 pages are not required to include many of these items. At a minimum, all manuscripts must include the document title, cooperative agreement number, author name, disclaimer, and bibliography.

**Front Matter**

The part of a manuscript preceding the main text is called the front matter. It includes the abstract, title page, back of the title page, table of contents, foreword, preface, and acknowledgements. It is numbered with Roman numerals (e.g., i, ii, iii).

**Abstract**

Provide a brief abstract that summarizes the manuscript. It should convey the document’s purpose, outline its contents, and, if applicable, provide a preview of its research methods and findings or test results.

**Title**

There is no requirement regarding the length of titles, but it is best to be succinct while also accurately describing the manuscript. Whenever possible use common keywords in your title to help readers find it electronically.

**Subtitle**

Optional to the title is the subtitle. Use it only when it is not possible to succinctly describe the purpose of the manuscript by using a title alone.

**Cooperative Agreement Number**

Identify the cooperative agreement number used in developing a project. Contact your NIC project manager if you do not have the number.

**Author(s)**

Be sure to check the spelling of author name(s) and confirm the title(s) for each.
Table of Contents

Cross check the accuracy of chapter and section titles between the table of contents and the manuscript contents.

Foreword

Often provided for review and approval by the NIC director, the draft of a foreword should include mention of the purpose of the manuscript and why it is needed for the field. It takes the form of a lettersigned by the director.

Disclaimer

On the back of the title page or in the back matter of a brochure, include the following disclaimer:

This document was funded by the National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice under cooperative agreement number [insert number]. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice. The National Institute of Corrections reserves the right to reproduce, publish, translate, or otherwise use and to authorize others to publish and use all or any part of the copyrighted material contained in this publication.

Feedback Survey Statement

Below the disclaimer, add language highlighting NIC’s feedback survey:

The National Institute of Corrections values your feedback. Please follow the link below to complete a user feedback survey about this publication. Your responses will assist us in continuing to provide you with high-quality learning and information materials.

https://www.research.net/r/NICPublicationSurvey

NIC Accession Number

This number is used to identify the location of items in the NIC Information Center catalog. Information Center staff and the NIC Technical Writer/Editor can assign a number for you. Add this number to the back of the title page above the disclaimer.

Preface

Written as a letter from the author to the reader, the preface should provide background on why the manuscript was written and any additional information about the topic that the author would like to share with readers.

Acknowledgments

Written from the author’s perspective, the acknowledgments includes reference to those who aided in seeing the manuscript to fruition.
Text

The main body of a manuscript is the text. It includes chapters, headings, and notes. It is numbered with Hindu-Arabic numerals (e.g., 1, 2, 3).

Chapters

Include a unique title for each chapter and cross check it with the table of contents to ensure they are the same. Chapters should always begin with an introduction, whether it is a brief paragraph or a sentence.

Section Headings

Use level 1, level 2, and level 3 headings only. For each heading level, there may be either no subheading or at least two subheadings beneath the main heading. Never begin a section with another section. Always begin with text.

Notes

Use endnotes rather than footnotes. Consult the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style for information on how to format notes.

Back Matter

The rear of a manuscript is the back matter, and it consists of the appendix, bibliography, endnotes, glossary, and index as applicable. Number this section with Hindu-Arabic numerals following in sequence after the manuscript text.

Appendix

For multiple appendixes, label as appendix A, appendix B, etc. and give each a title.

Bibliography

Include full bibliographic information for all references cited in the endnotes.

Formatting and Graphic Design

Logo

The NIC logo must appear on all NIC materials, whether they are webpages, documents, presentation slides, or multimedia. On publications, the NIC logo is preceded on the front cover by a 4-point solid rule (see exhibit 1). The DOJ seal appears in the upper right corner and is followed by a 6-point solid rule and ½ -point solid rule with 3-point leading in between (see exhibit 2).

On the back cover, include a 4-point solid rule at the bottom with the NIC web address, DC office address, and DC toll free number set above it (see exhibit 3).

Logo Elements

The NIC logo consists of three elements—the “NIC” initials, the “National Institute of Corrections,” and the “square intersected by the path” icon. The NIC logo is designed to be used as a single unit.
DO NOT alter the proportions and relationship among the elements.

**Exhibit 1: Front Cover**

![Exhibit 1: Front Cover](image1)

**Exhibit 2: Front Cover with Seal**

![Exhibit 2: Front Cover with Seal](image2)

**Exhibit 3: Back Cover**

![Exhibit 3: Back Cover](image3)
Colors
The NIC logo may be printed either as a solid single color or in the standard two-color blue/green combination. No other color variation for the logo is permitted (see Exhibit 4).

One color
- Black
- PMS spot color

Two colors
- PMS 541 (blue) for NIC initials and spelled out
- PMS 368 (green) for square icon

CMYK
- Blue: (C:100, M:57, Y:0, K:38)
- Green: (C:57, M:0, Y:100, K:0)

RGB
- Blue: (R:0, G:70, B:127)
- Green: (R:122, G:193, B:66)

HEX
- Blue: 00467f
- Green: 7ac142

Sizing
AVOID use of the NIC logo at less than 1.5” in width.

Staging
Allow .5” clear space around the logo.

Exceptions
Only drop the National Institute of Corrections text beneath the initials and the icon if the logo is smaller than 1”. Use on smaller items (e.g., postcards, business cards).

Print Colors
Color is a fundamental component of the visual system. Appropriate use of color will enhance the presentation of communication materials and reinforce a recognizable brand presence. The National Institute of Corrections’ (NIC’s) color palette is designed to be flexible enough to address individual customer needs, while promoting a consistent look and feel.
The official agency colors are NIC Blue (Pantone® 541) and NIC Green (Pantone 368). In addition, there is a range of optional secondary and accent colors to give the system greater flexibility.

The secondary colors are for backgrounds, while the brighter accent colors provide contrast. Accent colors simulate the brightness of colors that appear in printed materials and on electronic screen displays. See exhibit 5.

*Exhibit 5: NIC Color Wheel*

*The colors shown on this page are not intended to match the Pantone color standards. Please refer to the official PMS color book for more accurate representation of color. Pantone® is a registered trademark of Pantone, Inc.*
Photography Guidelines

Overall theme: Make corrections professionals the center of attention. The main photo should be a portrait surrounded by subjects in action shots. The composition can vary, but there needs to be a central subject as the focal point. Justice-involved individuals should be peripheral to the image. Other background images can include cell doors and related facility imagery.

Gender: Use both male and female images.

Age: Subjects should generally reflect NIC’s primary audience, which range in age from 30 to 60 years old.

Diversity: A conscious effort to demonstrate diversity is encouraged. Include representation from all ethnic and racial groups.

Actors: Primary: (1) Corrections professionals in civilian clothing doing corrections work (e.g., cell search, patdown, administrative tasks such as fingerprinting and checking in newly incarcerated individuals) and (2) uniformed staff

Secondary: Support corrections staff, including psychologists, medical/dental workers, case managers, food service personnel

Tertiary: Justice-involved individuals

Type of photos: Full frontal view of subject (inactive portraits; profiles are also acceptable), direct eye contact with camera (not preferred), subjects in the center of the photo, subjects engaged in activity

Background: Include visual cues that indicate subjects are in a corrections, administrative office, or adult learning environment (e.g., classroom setting, people sitting in front of a computer).

Formatting the Manuscript for Submission

The following are general rules for formatting manuscripts for publication.

1. Manuscripts should be saved as a Microsoft Word file (save charts/graphs as Microsoft Excel files and images as PNG or JPEG files).
2. Apply heading styles to titles and sections. Apply headings using the Microsoft Word styles function.
3. Number all pages. Front matter should be numbered with lowercase roman numerals (e.g., i, ii, iii), while the text and back matter should be numbered with Hindu-Arabic numerals (e.g., 1, 2, 3).
4. Place all exhibits, charts, and figures in separate files. Then use placeholders in the text to show placement in the manuscript (e.g., in brackets write “[Insert exhibit 1 here.]”).
Electronic Files

Authors may submit manuscripts for publication via e-mail. If the file size is too large, you may request access to a secured file transfer option coordinated by the NIC Information Center. Please submit only the final version of your publication with the manuscript title, contents, software program/version, and your contact information included in a separate file.

Acceptable photograph or graphic submissions may be submitted as PNG or JPEG files. Photographs should have a resolution of at least 300 dpi.

Do not submit manuscripts in .epub, .mobi, .azw, .gif, .tif, or postscript formats. PDF, Excel, and PowerPoint submissions are acceptable only with prior permission from the project manager when it has been determined that it is not possible to otherwise submit materials in Word.

When a manuscript includes a presentation (such as one that would be delivered via PowerPoint), place the content of the slides in a Microsoft Word document as graphic images. Then add alternative text to the image metadata.
WRITING AND EDITING MANUSCRIPTS – GENERAL
Manuscripts prepared with NIC funds must be free of grammatical and typographical errors at the time of publication. Authors can facilitate the smooth production of manuscripts from draft to publication by applying the following suggested tips and resources.

**Style Guides**

NIC uses style guides for writing and editing as well as spelling and usage. Information on stylistic items not covered in the guides can be found by consulting the section below titled *Writing and Editing Manuscripts – NIC style*.

*For Writing and Editing (Print/E-Books)*

Edit NIC materials according to the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style: The Essential Guide for Writers, Editors, and Publishers*. Be sure that when citing resources, you apply the system of notes and bibliography (rather than author-date) to the manuscript.

*For Writing and Editing (Online/Mobile)*

When writing for an audience online, consult the latest edition of the *Yahoo! Style Guide: The Ultimate Sourcebook for Writing, Editing, and Creating Content for the Digital World* for writing tips. All chapters are relevant except for the those under section 4. Authors and editors should continue to consult the *Chicago Manual* for information on the mechanics of writing.

*For Spelling and Usage*

Consult the NIC [Terms and Spelling list](#) or a dictionary to ensure accurate spelling. NIC uses the latest edition of *Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary* for reference.

For questions about the proper use of words, consult *The Careful Writer: A Modern Guide to English Usage*.

**Laws and Mandates**

Legislative mandates require that government communications be clear, free of jargon, and accessible to the broadest range of audiences. Of primary importance for authors and editors are the Plain Writing Act and Section 508 legislations.

*Plain Language*

Through the Plain Writing Act of 2010, the U.S. Congress requires that federal documents be easy to use and that their language be easy to understand. Exceptions to this requirement are few and do not affect most manuscript submissions. Therefore, unless otherwise directed, authors and editors should assume that their manuscript is covered under Plain Writing Act requirements.

To comply with the Act, authors and editors generally need to apply best practices for organizing documents logically, improving document usability with structural aids like headings and bullets, and using plain language whenever possible. Plain language is the stating of concepts in a way that is easy for people to understand. Following are some general guidelines:
• Avoid lengthy, overly complex sentences. Sentences that are more than three lines long usually can benefit from being broken into two or more sentences.

• Use the active voice whenever possible.

• Avoid jargon. When using statistical or other technical terms, provide straightforward, easy-to-understand explanations of such terms.

• Maintain an objective, professional tone. Do not use words or phrases that sound demeaning or show personal opinion. For example, avoid “of course,” “naturally,” “needless to say,” “obviously,” etc.

• Avoid using personal pronouns.

• Avoid headings beyond the third level, because such an intricate level of detail can confuse readers. Try “upgrading” the heading levels or combining detail sections under a single heading.

• Use simple words and eliminate redundant words. For example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>rather than</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>some, several</td>
<td>a number of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>now, currently</td>
<td>at the present time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>improve</td>
<td>effect an improvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consider</td>
<td>give consideration to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>in order to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>if</td>
<td>in the event that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use</td>
<td>make use of,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>utilize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>before</td>
<td>prior to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>until</td>
<td>until such time as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>use of</td>
<td>utilize utilization of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 a.m.</td>
<td>3 a.m. in the morning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inmates</td>
<td>incarcerated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>offenders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>whether</td>
<td>whether or not</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Learn more about the Plain Writing Act and plain language through these online resources:
• NIC Plain Language webpage (http://www.nicic.gov/plainlanguage)
• PlainLanguage.gov (http://www.plainlanguage.gov/)
• Center for Plain Language (http://centerforplainlanguage.org/)
• Plain Language Association International (http://www.plainlanguagenetwork.org/)

Section 508

Section 508 of the Americans with Disabilities Act was created to ensure that the electronic information and technology that the federal government provides is accessible to people with disabilities. Generally, following the rules of plain language will go a long way in helping you to create a document that is Section 508 complaint. Additional tips include the following:

• For all visual items—such as photographs, infographics, charts, and tables—provide alt text or a brief written description that explains all the pertinent elements of the visual item.
• Include transcripts for all audio/visual material accompanying manuscript submissions.
• For hyperlinked text, tag it as a hyperlink. Then test the link to ensure the URL is correct.

Learn more about Section 508 through these online resources:
• NIC Section 508 webpage (http://www.nicic.gov/Section508)
• Section508.gov (http://www.section508.gov)
• U.S. Access Board (http://www.access-board.gov/)
WRITING AND EDITING MANUSCRIPTS — NIC STYLE
As technologies change and the English language evolves, it sometimes happens that among the many references used, none of them have information on how to style text for new types of references, spell new words, or provide guidance on the use of words that are specific to the field of corrections. It may also happen that the information presented in one of these resources will conflict with the other. In these instances, authors and editors should consult this section of the guide or contact the NIC technical writer/editor directly for guidance.

**Electronic Sources**

The following guidelines are based on styles for citing electronic sources used by the American Psychological Association (APA), the Modern Language Association (MLA), the Library of Congress, and the International Organisation for Standardization (ISO), whose style is supported by the *Chicago Manual*.

**Formal publication lodged on a website**

*Published document:*

*Unpublished document accessed from a database:*

**Sources available in electronic format only**

*Website or page on a website:*

*Database accessed via the Web:*

**Online Forum or Discussion Board Posting**

*Reference*

*Note*
John Miller, "As We Know It" [Msg 12]. Message posted to http://www.paperless.com/subpage_topics.html, accessed August 14, 2010. (Note: If the author's name is not available, use his or her screen name.)
Blog Post

Reference

Note
John S. Miller, "One Mission" [Blog Post].
http://www.e-missions.com/subpages_topical.html, accessed January 12, 2010. (Note: If the author's name is not available, use his or her screen name.)

Video Blog or Vlog

Reference

Note
http://www.youtube.com/onemissionvideo, accessed January 12, 2010. (Note: If the author's name is not available, use his or her screen name.)
SPELLING AND TERMS
This section addresses the misuse and misspellings of words commonly found in NIC publications. Every effort has been made to keep this document up to date. However, language is fluid. Acceptable words we use today may be provocative or offensive tomorrow. Therefore, regardless of what is written here, please remember to use your best judgement first when implementing these and other stylistic rules.

**PREA-Related Terms**

The sensitive nature of both sexual topics and the field of corrections requires that authors use discretion in their use of sexual terms and terms related to the Prison Rape Elimination Act. The guidelines below are intended to assist with that process and help authors avoid the pitfalls that result from the misuse of key terms, however unintentional.

For terms not listed below, authors should consult the proposed rules\(^1\) issued by the U.S. Department of Justice on National Standards to Prevent, Detect, and Respond to Prison Rape, released February 3, 2011.

**Sex vs. sexual:** Use “sex” as a noun and verb. As an adjective, use “sexual.”

*Examples:* The sex (noun) of the witness is female. The officer is accused of having sex (verb) with a subordinate. The facility is being sued for sexual (adjective) discrimination.

**Sexual abuse, sexual assault, sexual activity, and sexual behavior:** When only a general reference is required, use sexual behavior as an umbrella term that encompasses all the meaning combined in sexual abuse, sexual assault, and sexual activity. For precise definitions of related terms, refer to the PREA commission proposed standards.

**PREA:** use only in reference to the law or history of the work of the Prison Rape Elimination Act, not as a euphemism for staff sexual misconduct and its forms.

*Examples:* The officer is filing a complaint because he realized that a PREA violation may have occurred when he found a colleague engaged in sexual behavior with someone in custody.

**Staff Sexual Misconduct:** Use this umbrella term to describe staff relations with incarcerated individuals and staff relations with other staff.

**Inmate/Inmate sexual abuse:** Use this term to describe coercive, abusive, nonconsensual sexual behaviors among incarcerated individuals under supervision.

**Transsexual/Transsexual vs. transgender:** Use “transgender” as the appropriate term to describe someone whose gender identity does not correspond to his or her anatomical sex.

**Gay vs. LGBTI:** “Gay” should not be used an umbrella term to mean LGBTI or to denote members of that group. When referring to men or women, use the terms “gay,” “lesbian,” or “bisexual” depending on how someone may self identify.

**Terms Related to Women and Girls**

Authors should be mindful of the political and social implications of the words they use to describe
women and their experiences. The best choice is not always the one that is grammatically correct.

**Female vs. Woman (n.):** Avoid “female” except in reference to biological characteristics.

*Best:* The woman was relocated to another housing unit.
“Woman” is the best word to denote an adult female human being.

*Avoid:* The female was relocated to another housing unit.
Used here as a noun, “female” dismisses the personhood of the woman being discussed. “Female” could refer to any species (e.g., female cat, female dog, etc.)

**Female vs. Woman (adj.):** Emphasizing sex can suggest that it is somehow unnatural for a woman to hold a position (e.g., woman offender, female president). Use these adjectival forms only when distinguishing from male counterparts cannot be avoided. It is best, for example, when a female correctional officer can be referred to simply as a correctional officer without reference to her sex.

*Okay:* The female officer was relocated to another housing unit.
Used as an adjective, “female” is grammatically correct and distinguishes the officer from male colleagues. However, it is clinical, deriving its definition of “female” from biology.

*Okay:* The woman officer was relocated to another housing unit.
Used as an adjective, “woman” is acceptable.

**Females (pl. n.):** A group of people of various ages consisting exclusively of women and girls. Can be disparaging when used in some contexts. Use only when it is not feasible simply to say “women and girls.”

**Racial and Ethnic Terms**

Rules for writing about race change often over time. These highly sensitive and personal issues put writers in a no-win position, unable to satisfy the view of every reader that his or her way is the best and least offensive way to talk about race. The writer, who is ultimately charged with getting a message across, must choose a method of communicating that helps that message reach as many people as possible. These guidelines empower writers with a toolbox of inclusive approaches to talking about race.

**Black/White vs. black/white (adj.):** When used to describe someone by his or her race, use the lowercase form. Understand that the word used in this sense identifies a person by color only and not his or her ethnicity. Therefore, avoid referring to someone by race unless it is relevant and necessary.

*Okay:* The Black man filed a complaint against the white officer who removed property from his cell.
While the form shown here is not forbidden, it is preferred that both “black” and “white” receive the same lowercase typographical treatment.

*Best:* The black man filed a complaint against the white officer who removed property from his cell. Both “black” and “white” should be lowercase.

**Black vs. African-American (adj.):** When it is necessary to identify someone by his or her race or
ethnicity, use the word that the person prefers. If that person’s preference is unknown, use “black.” Do not use “African American” as a substitute for “black.” Someone who identifies as black may not have African descendants nor may he or she identify with American black culture. A black person may also be a citizen of another country who simply lives in America at the present time. When in doubt, ask people for their preference before labeling them.

**Black vs. African American (n.):** Avoid referring to people collectively as “blacks” or “whites.” However “African Americans” is acceptable.

*Avoid:* Blacks are incarcerated at nearly three times the rate of whites.

*Okay:* Black Americans are incarcerated at nearly three times the rate of white Americans.

*Okay:* African Americans are incarcerated at nearly three times the rate of white Americans.

**Terms Referring to Incarcerated People**

In general, it is best to avoid nominalizations (words formed by turning verbs and adjectives into nouns). However, many of the words we use today are nominalizations that have become part of our everyday language. Several words defining justice-involved individuals are examples of such words. Offender, parolee, and probationer are all rooted in verbs describing some type of criminal justice activity (offense, parole, and probation). The problem with using words like these is that they remove acknowledgement of the person behind the words. It robs them of their humanity. The alternative is to use people-first language.

People-first language is a more accurate way of describing how people are involved in various criminal justice activities. You implement people-first language simply by identifying a person first as you describe him or her. Then identify his or her criminal justice activity second. Thus, an “offender” becomes a person who has committed a criminal offense. A “parolee” becomes a person on parole. A “probationer” becomes a person on probation. Substitute “man,” “woman,” etc. for “person” as necessary to be more precise.

Of course, nominalizations describing people variously involved with the criminal justice system are not the only words to avoid. You should avoid all words with storied histories in criminal justice that are similarly dehumanizing. “Inmate” is one example. It derives from the words “inn” and “mate,” referring to someone living in a rented space. Because “inmate” has developed negative connotations over time, it should be avoided. Similar words include “captive,” “convict,” “detainee,” and “prisoner.”

The guidelines below offer a brief list of alternatives to dehumanizing language.

**Offender/Inmate/Parolee/Probationer/etc. (n.):** Avoid referring to people involved with the criminal justice system as offenders, inmates, etc. Consider substitutions like the following words and phrases:

**General**
- Person/People
- Individual(s)
- Adult(s)
- Man/Men
- Woman/Women
- Young adult(s)/person/people with criminal involvement or criminal histories
• Justice-involved individual/person/people/youth/senior adults
• People/Individuals with criminal justice involvement
• People/Individuals entangled in the criminal justice system

_Incarcerated_
• Incarcerated individual/person/people/youth/senior adults
• Person/People/Individuals in prison
• Incarcerated population
• Jail/Prison population
• Person/People/Individuals in custody
• Person/People/Individuals in housing units
• Person/People/Individuals with life sentences

_In the Community_
• Person/People/Individuals on parole/probation
• Person/People/Individuals with convictions
• Supervised population
• Person/People/Individuals who have been released from prison/jail
• Defendant
• Client
• Formerly incarcerated individual/person/people
• People/Individuals reentering the community

_Spelling of General Terms_

_A_

acknowledgment
Act (federal, state, or foreign)
ADAM (Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring) administration
     Clinton administration
Food and Drug Administration (capitalized as part of title)
adviser advisor
     (law)
African-American (v.)/African American (n.)
aftercare
Alaska Native
amendment
First Amendment 14th
Amendment
America (do not use as synonym for the United States)
anticrime
antidrug, but anti-drug-abuse (v.), Anti-Drug Abuse Act
antiviolenace
(Write words with the prefix “anti-” as a single word except when they are hyphenated in the title of a book, periodical, or statute.)
appendix A (text), Appendix A (title)
appendixes (not appendices)

ATF (Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives) [Note: No comma after “Firearms”] at-risk (v.) Attorney General (U.S.), but State attorney general

B

benefited

bill (but Bill of Rights)

binge

bisexual (no hyphen)

Border Research and Technology Center (BRTC)

broken windows (no quotation marks)

C

canceling

catalog (not catalogue)

CD-ROM (use a hyphen, not an en-dash; this is contrary to GPO rule 8.73)

civil rights (v. and noun)

cleanup (v. or noun; two words if a verb)

coaht

community-based (v.)

community corrections/community corrections agencies

community-oriented (v.)

Community Oriented Policing Services, [Office of] (COPS)

community planning (v./n.)

community policing (v./n.)

communitywide

correctional (adj.)

[In general, use as adjective instead of “corrections.” Examples: correctional agencies, correctional executives, correctional leaders, correctional staff, but community corrections agencies and corrections professionals.]

cost-effective (v.)/cost effective (predicate adjective)

cost effectively (adv.)

cost-effectiveness (n.)

cost-recovery (v.)

county, but Montgomery County, Prince George’s County (with apostrophe), Fairfax and Loudoun Counties

Court (U.S. Supreme Court); otherwise court:
The U.S. Supreme Court adjourned. The Court adjourned.

The New York Court of Appeals adjourned. The court adjourned.

crimefighter, crimefighting

Crime File

criminal justice-related

crossfire

curricula

D

D.A.R.E.® (Drug Abuse Resistance Education)
data (pl.)
database (v./n.)
dataset
decisionmaker, decisionmaking
desktop dialogue (not dialog)
discreet (using discretion); discrete (separate entities)
district attorney/district attorney’s office
do’s and don’ts
driveby (v.)
drug dealer, drug dealing (n.); drug-dealer, drug-dealing (v.)
drug-free
drug seller, drug selling (n.); drug-seller, drug-selling (v.)

E
e-book (but .epub as a file extension)
e-mail (within text; capitalize E-mail in an address/telephone list)
ensure (“insure” only when referring to insurance coverage)
epilogue (not epilog)
ex-convicts
exhibit 1 (text), Exhibit 1 (title)
ex-offenders

F
fact sheet
FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation)
federal, federally
female (adj., e.g., “female offender”; avoid use as noun, e.g., “the females in the jail)
flier vs flyer
   flier is a type of brochure
   flyer is a person or object that flies
followup (v./n.; two words if a verb)
for-profit (v.)
fundraiser, fundraising

G
gender (use instead of “sex” in tables)
government
Governor
graffito (sing.), graffiti (pl.)
grievable

H
hardcopy (v.); hard copy (n.)
health care (n.); health-care (v.)
highrise
high school (v./n.)
home page hotline
hotspot (n.) (no quotation marks)
impact/affect/effect
Use “impact” to describe the collision of items (e.g., a car and tree or a bat and ball).
Use “affect” to describe change.
Use “effect” to describe the result of an action.

indepth (v.)
indexes (not indices)
in-house (v.)
in-kind inner-city (v.)
inmate (avoid use except in quoted material)
inner city (n.) inpatient
inservice
intake
the Internet, but an internet or intranet

J
judgment just
deserts
JUSTINFO (NCJRS Internet listserv)
Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (JJC)
Juvenile Justice Resource Center (JJRC)

K
kidnaping, kidnaper

L
listserv

M
male (OK to use as adj., e.g., “male offender,” and noun, e.g., “the males in the jail”; also use noun “men”)
marshal (but U.S. Marshal)
mayor (l.c. unless used before a surname)
microsite, not micro-site
Metropolitan Washington (but Washington metropolitan area)
middle school (v./n.)
moneys (not monies)
multiagency
multicultural
multijurisdictional
multisite
microsite (not micro-site)

N
nation (U.S.) (in general use instead of country), national
nonprofit
NW (not NW. or N.W.)
### O

- offsite online
  - (v./n.) onsite
- outpatient
- offender (avoid use except in quoted material)

### P

- paralleling
- PAVNET (Partnerships Against Violence Network)
- policymaker, policymaking
- pre-incident
- private-sector (v.); private sector (n.)
- problem-solving (v.); problem solving (n.)
- proved (past participle: You have proved your point.) proven (adjective: A proven remedy.)
- public-sector (v.); public sector (n.)

### Q

- queer (not acceptable; instead use gay, lesbian, bisexual, or LGBTI)

### R

- RAND (all caps) Corporation re-
  - create (to create again)
- re-election
- Representative (preferred to Congressman or Congresswoman)
- résumé

### S

- sallyport
- screenwriter, screenwriting
- semiannual, semicolon (close up all others), but semi-independent, semi-automatic weaponsex
  - (use “gender” in tables and when referring to social constructs)
- Social Security number
- startup (v./n.)
- state
- state’s attorney, state attorney general, state’s attorney’s office
- statewide
- systemwide

### T

- timeframe
- toll-free (v.); toll free (Call toll free.)
- totaled
- toward (not towards)
- trafficking
- transgender (adj, not as a noun)
under way (adv.)
U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney’s Office (u.c.)
U.S. Marshal

versus (in text always write out except in court cases)
video cassette (v./n.)
videotape

website, but World Wide Web, the Web
white-collar crime
-wide (close up all words ending in “wide,” e.g., systemwide, communitywide)
workplace
workplan
work release (v./n.)
worldwide, but World Wide Web

x-ray (not x ray)

youth (sing./pl.)

ZIP Code (not Zip Code)