



Executive Correspondence Handbook

Office of the Executive Secretary

Version 3, January 2021



Homeland Security

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SECTION 1: THE DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY



LEADERSHIP

DHS is headed by a Presidentially-appointed and Senate-confirmed Secretary. The Secretary of Homeland Security (in coordination with federal, state, local, tribal, international, and private sector partners) oversees DHS efforts to counter terrorism and enhance security, secure and manage the Nation’s borders while facilitating trade and travel, enforce and administer the Nation’s immigration laws, safeguard and secure the Nation’s cyberspace, build resilience to disasters, and provide essential support for national and economic security.

This Handbook references the term “DHS Front Office,” which refers to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Chief of Staff, Deputy Chief of Staff, or the Front Office Counselors to the Secretary.

MISSION

“With honor and integrity, we will safeguard the American people, our homeland, and our values.”

VISION

DHS seeks to ensure our homeland is safe, secure, and resilient against terrorism and other hazards. Three key concepts — security, resilience, and customs and exchange — form the foundation of our national homeland security strategy designed to achieve this mission.

These key concepts drive five broad areas of activity that the Quadrennial Homeland Security Review process defines as homeland security missions.

Prevent Terrorism and Enhance Security

Protecting the American people from terrorist threats is our founding principle and our highest priority. DHS's counterterrorism responsibilities focus on three goals:

- Prevent terrorist attacks;
- Prevent the unauthorized acquisition, importation, movement, or use of chemical, biological, radiological, and nuclear materials and capabilities within the United States; and
- Reduce the vulnerability of critical infrastructure and key resources, essential leadership, and major events to terrorist attacks and other hazards.

Secure and Manage the Nation's Borders

DHS secures the Nation's air, land, and sea borders to prevent illegal activity while also facilitating lawful travel and trade. DHS's border security and management efforts focus on three interrelated goals:

- Effectively secure U.S. air, land, and sea points of entry;
- Safeguard and streamline lawful trade and travel; and
- Disrupt and dismantle transnational criminal and terrorist organizations.

Enforce and Administer Immigration Laws

DHS is focused on smart and effective enforcement of U.S. immigration laws while streamlining and facilitating the legal immigration process. The Department has fundamentally reformed immigration enforcement by prioritizing the identification and removal of criminal foreign nationals who pose a threat to public safety and targeting employers who knowingly and repeatedly break the law.

Safeguard and Secure Cyberspace

DHS has the lead for the Federal Government in securing civilian government computer systems, and works with federal, state, local, tribal, and private sector partners to secure critical infrastructure and information systems. The Department works to:

- Analyze and reduce cyber threats and vulnerabilities;
- Distribute threat warnings; and
- Coordinate the response to cyber incidents to ensure that our computers, networks, and cyber systems remain safe.

Strengthen National Preparedness and Resilience

DHS provides a coordinated, comprehensive federal response in the event of a terrorist attack, natural disaster, or other large-scale emergency while working with federal, state, local, tribal, and private sector partners to ensure a swift and effective recovery effort. The Department builds a ready and resilient Nation through efforts to:

- Bolster information sharing and collaboration;
- Provide grants, plans, and training to our homeland security, emergency management, law enforcement, and state, local, and tribal partners; and
- Facilitate rebuilding and recovery within the continental United States, its territories, and possessions.

THE SEAL

The Department of Homeland Security seal was created in June 2003 and is symbolic of the Department's mission.



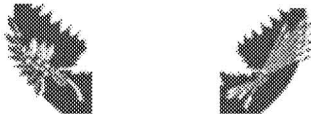
In the center of the seal, a graphically-styled white American eagle appears in a circular blue field. The eagle's outstretched wings break through an inner red ring into an outer white ring that contains the words

"U.S. DEPARTMENT OF" in the top half and "HOMELAND SECURITY" in the bottom half in a circular placement.

The eagle's wings break through the inner circle into the outer ring to suggest that the Department of Homeland Security will break through traditional bureaucracy and perform government functions differently.

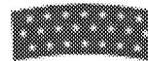


In the tradition of the Great Seal of the United States, the eagle's talon on the left holds an olive branch with 13 leaves and 13 seeds while the eagle's talon on the right grasps 13 arrows.



Centered on the eagle's breast is a shield divided into three sections containing elements that represent the American homeland - air, land, and sea.

The top element, air, is presented on a dark blue sky and contains 22 stars representing the original 22 entities that came together to form the Department.



The left shield element, land, contains white mountains behind a green plain underneath a light blue sky.

The right shield element contains four wave shapes representing the oceans alternating light and dark blue separated by white lines.



SECTION 1.1: OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY (ESEC)

LEADERSHIP

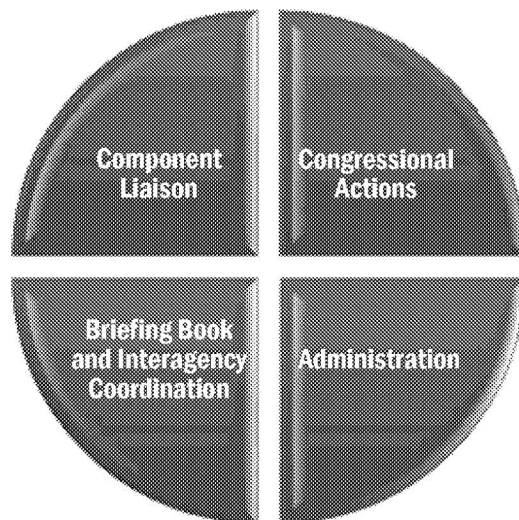
The Office of the Executive Secretary is led by the Executive Secretary and the Deputy Executive Secretary.

MISSION

ESEC is the coordinator of the DHS unity of effort. Given the sensitivity of homeland security issues, it is critical for the Department to effectively and efficiently articulate its policies and positions to target audiences. ESEC's audiences include the White House, Members of Congress, intergovernmental officials, state and local officials, the private sector, foreign officials, and the American public.

ORGANIZATION

ESEC consists of four principal sections.



Component Liaison

The Component Liaison is comprised of the Internal Liaison team and the External Liaison team, and are responsible for managing the DHS Front Office's written communications.

- External Liaison manages correspondence originating from outside the Department addressed to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary.
- Internal Liaison manages correspondence originating within DHS as well as action and information memos, awards, regulations, and delegations.

Briefing Books and Interagency Coordination (BBIC)

The BBIC team is responsible for providing the Secretary and Deputy Secretary with a daily briefing book that contains read-ahead material for scheduled meetings, events, and conferences. Working closely with the DHS Front Office schedulers, BBIC requests briefing materials from the subject matter experts, edits the materials as appropriate, and incorporates them into a comprehensive book the evening prior in preparation for the day ahead.

Within BBIC, the White House and Interagency Actions (WHIA) team manages DHS's relationship with intergovernmental partners, the National Security Council (NSC), and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The team works with NSC on the Principals Committee (PC), Deputies Committee (DC), and other NSC-led meetings.

Congressional Actions (CA)

The Congressional Actions team:

- Is responsible for tasking, editing, and clearing written statements and testimony intended for authorizing congressional committees and subcommittees.
- Manages the response processes for Questions for the Record (QFR) issued by authorizing congressional committees and subcommittees following a hearing.
- Manages the process associated with the Department's congressional reports to authorization committees.

Administration, Budget, and Logistics (ABL)

The ABL team provides overall support for the DHS Front Office and ESEC and manages the Front Office human capital, budget, and logistics functions to include:

- short- and long-term strategic planning;
- human resources and performance management;
- finance;
- travel;
- training;
- security;
- reconstitution;
- property asset management;
- facilities management; and
- customer service coordination.

The ABL team also acts as a liaison and primary point of contact for the Management Directorate (MGMT) and oversees the Records Management team, which is responsible for managing all records associated with Secretary and Deputy Secretary.

CONTACTING ESEC

Email

ESEC has multiple email addresses for various uses.

(b)(6)

Congressional offices use this email distribution list exclusively to transmit letters or other congressional materials from a Member of Congress to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs.

(b)(6)

Generic email box used to communicate with executive secretariats from government agencies outside of DHS. Please use this email address only if no other email address is appropriate.

DHSPlainWriting@hq.dhs.gov: Offers DHS employees and the general public the means to submit concerns or questions to ESEC with regard to the plain language initiative.

(b)(6)

Monitored by members of ESEC's Administration, Budget, and Logistics (ABL) team and is used for administrative matters within the Office of the Secretary.

(b)(6)

Connects to the members of the Briefing Books and Interagency Coordination (BBIC) staff and is used to communicate with DHS Components.

(b)(6)

Reaches the members of the Congressional Actions (CA) team and should be used for testimony and QFR-related matters.

(b)(6)

Reaches the External Liaison and is used primarily for matters relating to correspondence.

(b)(6)

Reaches the Internal Team and is primarily used for matters relating to decision or information memoranda, rules, awards, etc.

(b)(6)

Allows the White House a clear way to communicate with ESEC on matters related to Presidential correspondence with a DHS nexus.

(b)(6)

Used for inquiries related to Congressional Reports that ESEC is clearing or submitting to the DHS Front Office for review and signature.

On the Web

DHS Intranet:

(b)(6)

SECTION 2: CORRESPONDENCE

For the purposes of this Handbook, “correspondence” refers to any written form (hard copy or electronic) of communication. Every Component within DHS has designated an office or identified specific individuals who are responsible for managing their individual correspondence process. These individuals also act as points of contact for Department-wide coordination and clearance needs.

This section is a brief overview of the various and frequently-used forms of written communication within DHS. This includes:

- What to expect when preparing correspondence;
- Important tips; and
- Common terms/references.

In accordance with **Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** (29 U.S.C § 794 (d) as amended) Federal agencies are required to ensure their information and communications are accessible to people with disabilities. Each Component within DHS is responsible for ensuring their final documents (that fall into one or more of the below categories) are compliant with this regulation. Please refer to Appendix E for further information on Section 508 compliance.

- All public facing electronic content (web and non web)
- Non public facing electronic content that is “official business” (web and non web) and falls under at least one of nine categories.
 1. An emergency notification;
 2. An initial or final decision adjudicating an administrative claim or proceeding;
 3. An internal or external program or policy announcement;
 4. A notice of benefits, program eligibility, employment opportunity, or personnel action;
 5. A formal acknowledgement of receipt;
 6. A survey or questionnaire;
 7. A template or form;
 8. Educational or training materials; or
 9. Intranet content designed as a Webpage.

SECTION 2.1: CONTROLLED CORRESPONDENCE

IN SUPPORT OF THE SECRETARY'S COMMITMENT TO BEING RESPONSIVE, THE DEPARTMENT WIDE STANDARD IS TO TRANSMIT A TIMELY RESPONSE.

ESEC manages letters and other documents addressed to the Secretary and Deputy Secretary. Generally, these originate from:

- Members of Congress;
- Governors, mayors, and other state, local, and tribal officials;
- Ambassadors, foreign government ministers, and other international counterparts;
- Officials at other federal agencies;
- Private sector and non-governmental organizations; and
- Private citizens.

ESEC analyzes each incoming letter to determine:

- Which DHS Component will have the lead;
- Which DHS Components will need to contribute information;
- Which DHS Components will need to clear the response;
- The appropriate signing official; and
- The priority and urgency of the response.

LEAD COMPONENT

The Component with purview over all or most of the issues discussed in the incoming letter will be identified as the lead. Given the short turn-around on high-priority items, the lead Component must inform ESEC of lead transfers within 24 hours of the assignment.

THE LEAD COMPONENT MUST CONTACT ESEC TO REQUEST A TRANSFER IMMEDIATELY

NOT TO EXCEED 24 HOURS.

SIGNATURE LEVEL

ESEC determines the response signature level based on the originating official, what title they used (i.e., Chairman, CEO, etc.), and the subject matter addressed. Letters may be signed by the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Component Head, or other delegated officials.

COSIGNERS

Unless otherwise directed, when responding to letters addressed to the Secretary or Deputy Secretary with multiple signers, separate personalized responses should be prepared for each cosigner. Additionally, the closing paragraph should inform the recipient that “a separate, identical response was sent to the cosigner(s) of your letter.”

DUE DATES

ESEC weighs many factors when classifying the priority level of correspondence tasked for response. Similar to the signature level, ESEC assigns the priority of the response based on many factors:

- Who originated the letter and in what capacity (Chairman, Ranking Member, CEO, etc.).
- Upcoming meetings or hearings, with/before the originator or regarding the topic discussed in the letter.
- The issue in question requires a decision or immediate action.
- The issue in question has garnered media attention.
- The issue in question has significance to the DHS Front Office.

TIME ALLOTTED

High priority correspondence - 10 business days

Routine and citizen correspondence - 15 business days

In support of the DHS Front Office, ESEC reserves the right to decrease the number of days allotted or request that a response be expedited at any time.


SECTION 2.2: COORDINATION /CLEARANCE

COORDINATION

Coordination is the exchange of information between or among Components at a subject matter expert-level or higher. Through early coordination, cross-cutting intra-departmental issues are fully represented and any concerns that may exist can be resolved or forwarded for resolution at a higher level.

COORDINATING COMPONENTS

If the originating letter contains issues outside of the Lead Component's purview, they are responsible for working directly with the appropriate Component(s) to ensure the letter is fully responsive to all concerns.



COORDINATION
NO MATTER HOW THOROUGH
DOES NOT SUBSTITUTE THE NEED FOR CLEARANCE.

CLEARANCE

Clearance is the process by which relevant senior Component leadership, at the Chief of Staff level or above, reviews and concurs with materials intended for DHS Front Office review.

CLEARING COMPONENTS

Depending on the signing authority, responses prepared within DHS may require clearance from additional Components. As the requirements can differ, the lead Component should be sure to review the original tasking to ensure appropriate clearances are obtained prior to ESEC submission.

SECTION 2.3: PREPARING RESPONSES

DRAFT RESPONSES

Components are responsible for preparing an initial draft that is fully responsive and maintains an appropriate tone. Responses must be concise, in plain language, and in line with DHS formatting preferences.

Given DHS's broad responsibility and fluctuating priorities, the signature level or priority level may differ from previous letters on the same subject.

The assignment will clearly outline the priority of the draft, the corresponding due date, and response transmittal instructions. Departmental messaging guidance or other information intended to shape the response may be provided with the original task. The lead Component's Executive Secretariat should review the entire assignment before tasking it out for response.

BE SURE TO REVIEW THE ORIGINAL ASSIGNMENT FOR ANY ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE INTENDED TO SHAPE THE RESPONSE.

INTERIM RESPONSES

Components are periodically asked to provide an interim response to congressional letters if more time is required to prepare and clear a draft. The interim response is a succinct template letter that informs the originating Member(s) of Congress that their inquiry was received and a proper response is forthcoming.

Once personalized, Components will upload the interim response into the electronic tracking system and reassign it to ESEC. The Office of Legislative Affairs (OLA) will sign and transmit the response.

SENDING AN INTERIM RESPONSE SUPPORTS THE SECRETARY'S COMMITMENT TO BEING RESPONSIVE, BUT DOES NOT EXTEND THE DUE DATE.

ENCLOSURES

Incoming letters may include a list of detailed questions. For these responses, the lead Component should draft a concise response that summarizes the issue and informs the originator that their concerns are addressed in a corresponding enclosure.

As outlined on the enclosure template, the lead Component should write out each question exactly as it appears in the incoming document and respond to each question accordingly. Letters containing questions are often related to complex issues and generally require input from additional Components.

ENCLOSURES SHOULD BE TREATED AS A STANDALONE DOCUMENT.

REFERENCES TO A PROGRAM, PEOPLE, PLACES, OR ACRONYMS USED IN THE LETTER MUST BE EXPLAINED AND/OR DEFINED IN THE ENCLOSURE UPON FIRST USE.

THANK YOU NOTES

When appropriate, ESEC will task a lead Component to draft thank you notes for the Secretary or Deputy Secretary's signature in response to special acts or to express their gratitude for selfless duty to the Department. These notes must be accurate and timely to ensure worthiness to the recipient(s).

POST-ENGAGEMENT LETTERS:

For letters related to Secretary or Deputy Secretary engagements or travel, the Component responsible for drafting the briefing materials is also responsible for drafting the subsequent post-engagement letters and ensuring the letters are addressed to the recipients appropriately (complete names, titles, and addresses). All letters should be submitted to ESEC within one business day of end of the event or trip. To meet this requirement, the drafting Component is strongly encouraged to begin drafting an outline as soon as tasked, and to coordinate with the person who is expected to staff the Secretary or Deputy Secretary on the trip.

CONGRATULATORY AND EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION LETTERS

Employee retirement letters and other recognition letters are usually initiated by Components and submitted to ESEC. Once received, ESEC will clear recognition letters with the appropriate Components and submit them to the DHS Front Office for review and signature.

ESEC will generally submit retirement letters for employees who have at least 15 years of federal government service and 10 years of DHS service. The submitting Component should note whether or not the employee has ever been disciplined for misconduct.

SECTION 2.4: MEMORANDA

Memoranda (or memos) that are generated by a Component and intended for the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or Chief of Staff's review or approval generally fall into three categories.

ACTION MEMOS

COVER MEMOS

INFORMATION MEMOS

PREPARING MEMORANDA:

Use the Templates

ESEC created templates for each memo type containing important completion instructions and formatting requirements. These templates are available on ESEC's DHS Connect page, <http://dhsconnect.dhs.gov/org/offices/esec/Templates/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

Initiating/Lead Component

The lead Component is responsible for drafting the memo and ensuring the appropriate template is used. The lead Component should also ensure the memo is appropriately coordinated with Components or Offices who may have equities in the issue discussed or who may be affected by a decision or outcome.

Clearing Components

Prior to submitting a memo to ESEC for review, the lead Component should obtain the proper clearances. In addition to providing clearance from coordinating Components, additional Component review may be required. The lead Component should contact ESEC for additional guidance as necessary.

IF THE INITIATING COMPONENT NEEDS TO EXPEDITE A MEMO TO THE SECRETARY OR DEPUTY SECRETARY, THEY SHOULD CONTACT ESEC AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Action Memoranda

(SEEKING ACTION OR DECISION)

Action memos are initiated by a Component and are generally used to seek:

- Authorization to implement an initiative;
- A final decision based on recommendations provided by the requesting official; or
- Acknowledgement that the DHS Front Office reviewed the memo.

Action memos for the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or Chief of Staff must be straightforward and concise, but include enough information to make an informed decision, if needed. This memo is the only format that allows for the deciding official to approve, decline, request modification, or request discussion.

Action memos should include, as appropriate:

- Why a decision should be made.
- Any consequences that may result as an outcome of the decision.
- Other options or alternatives are available.
- A recommended or required-by signature date with an explanation for the deadline (statutory requirement, program expiring, etc.) must be in the memo's first paragraph.
- The requesting official's recommendation or a specific course of action.
- Noted attachments or pertinent background information.
- Potential impact to DHS or external stakeholders.
- Relevant background info as necessary.

PRE DECISIONAL/DELIBERATIVE

Action [or Decision] Memo Template

- To accommodate: Paper: New Business 12 pt font, margins are 1" top and left, 1/2" right and bottom. Single spaced and not double spaced between headings and lines. Between paragraphs: 100 lines and 12 or 13 pt. The date and the word "Action" or "Decision" are centered. Paragraphs are not indented nor right justified. The words "shall" and "will" are used by the writer. The "strong" phrase should also be used.
- Memo: For the Secretary or Deputy Secretary page to appear in the Congressional Week. Component Head may not delegate this authority to their Deputy or Chief of Staff.
- The signature block and recommendations will not be placed on this page. To both the signature page to the Action Decision memo, please use a header indicating the report (or title) and page number.
- **NOTE: THIS FORM IS NOT TO BE USED FOR THE PRELIMINARY AND FINAL COPY OF EVERY PAGE EXCEPT FOR THE SIGNATURE PAGE.**

Close

ACTION (or DECISION)

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY (OR THE DEPUTY SECRETARY)

THROUGH: (if applicable)

FROM: Component Head Name
Title (if not on the letterhead)

SUBJECT: **Subject: no acronym in subject; do not underline bold type**

Purpose: The first paragraph should state the purpose of the memorandum, or why the issue requires a decision, and is being brought to the attention of the recipient.

Background or Context: This is a brief summary of factors to be considered in making a decision, the issue's historical background, and its current status. Identify legislative or other underlying requirements.

Please present options for resolution and explain the implications of those options. Include potential impact, Component equities, and clearance, including any supporting and opposing information. If the issue is particularly complex, additional background may be provided as considered attachments.

Signature Level Justification: If the issue is regarding Secretary orders/decisions please explain why the decision must be made at this level (statutory/propositional requirements, consistency of policy directives, etc.) or indicate that the signature level may be delegated to another DHS official.

Effectiveness: Is there a key action that is awaiting that decision or required by a certain date (i.e., charters expiration/expiration of a statutory requirement)? If so, please include. Do not include this section if it is not relevant.

Subject
Page 2

Recommendation: Please provide a clear recommendation of specific action(s) requested of the Secretary or Deputy Secretary (i.e., "Approval of this initiative...") or a brief list of options. The recommendations should cover both.

Appointer: _____ Designate: _____

Initial Date: _____ Final Recommendation Date: _____

Attachment(s) (if applicable)

NOTE:
**THE PRE DECISIONAL /
DELIBERATIVE HEADER
AND FOOTER DOES NOT
APPEAR ON THE
SIGNATURE PAGE.**

COVER MEMORANDA

(SUMMARY OR BACKGROUND OF PRIMARY DOCUMENT)

Cover memoranda (or memos) are the Component leadership’s opportunity to offer background information on the subject in general or the proposed response.

These memos are primarily used for correspondence and are required to accompany proposed responses drafted by the lead Component for:

- the Secretary or Deputy Secretary’s signature. The “To:” line addresses the respective signing official.
- DHS Chief of Staff clearance prior to the lead Component Head’s signature. Memo should be directed “To:” the Chief of Staff, unless otherwise directed.

Cover memos may also be used for special actions, or whenever additional information is needed to support the primary document.

The body of the memo should summarize what coordination took place, and which Components reviewed and cleared the draft. Cover memos do not have an approval line or seek a decision.

Correspondence Cover Memo Template

- To be sent to ES&C with proposed responses or voluntary letters drafted for S1, S2, or Component Head signature. If the draft letter has been prepared for S1 or S2 signature, the cover memo is addressed to S1 or S2, requesting signature. If the draft letter is for Component Head signature, the cover memo should be addressed to the Chief of Staff.
- Memos for S1 or S2 must be signed by the Component Head. Component Heads may not delegate this authority to their Deputies or Chief of Staff.
- Components must provide a dated and signed cover memo with all draft letters for approval and/or signature.
- To accommodate Times New Roman 12 pt. font, margins are 1.0 top and left; 0.8 right and bottom. Single spaced text and double spaced between headings and text. Line spacing may be 10, 11, or 12 point. To the extent possible and reasonable, enclosures should be in Times New Roman 12 point, as well.

Date

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF STAFF

FROM: Component Head Name
Title (if not on the letterhead)

SUBJECT: Request for Signature [or Approval]; Response to [name of incoming sender(s)]’s [date of incoming] letter regarding [principal issue] (WF#)

Context: Provide a short summary of the response or clarify the current state of play. What might the Secretary/Deputy Secretary need to know to sign the response? If the response does not answer any of the incoming’s questions or requests, please explain.

OIG/Chief Counsel Coordination: This section should be completed by the Office of General Counsel and should read: “This document has been reviewed in its entirety for legal sufficiency by [name(s) of the attorney(s)/legal division with which the letter was coordinated], and it has not been substantially changed since his/her review.” If the attorney has coordinated only on specific portions of the document, please indicate which portions.

Clearance: Please list (1) all Components that ES&C assigned to clear, (2) the Chief of Staff level or above who cleared for that Component, (3) the date of clearance, and (4) any special notes.
 Component: COS, cleared, 3/18/17, w/commitment.
 Component: COS, cleared, 3/18/17.
 Component: COS, cleared 3/19/17, with edits.

Signature Level Justification: If the memo is requesting Secretary review/decision please explain why the decision must be made at this level (statutory/congressional requirement, condition of policy directive, etc.) or indicate that the signature level may be delegated to another DHS official.

Timeliness: Please use this section to identify any time sensitivity or deadline for completion (i.e., charter expiration/upcoming meeting/statutory requirement?). Otherwise, please indicate: “There are no timeliness concerns related to this letter.”

INFORMATION MEMORANDA: (COMPONENT-TO-DHS FRONT OFFICE COMMUNICATION TOOL)

An information (or info) memo does not require action or seek a decision. Rather, it is an important mode of communication used to relay information from a Component official to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or Chief of Staff. Information memos can be prompted or voluntary.

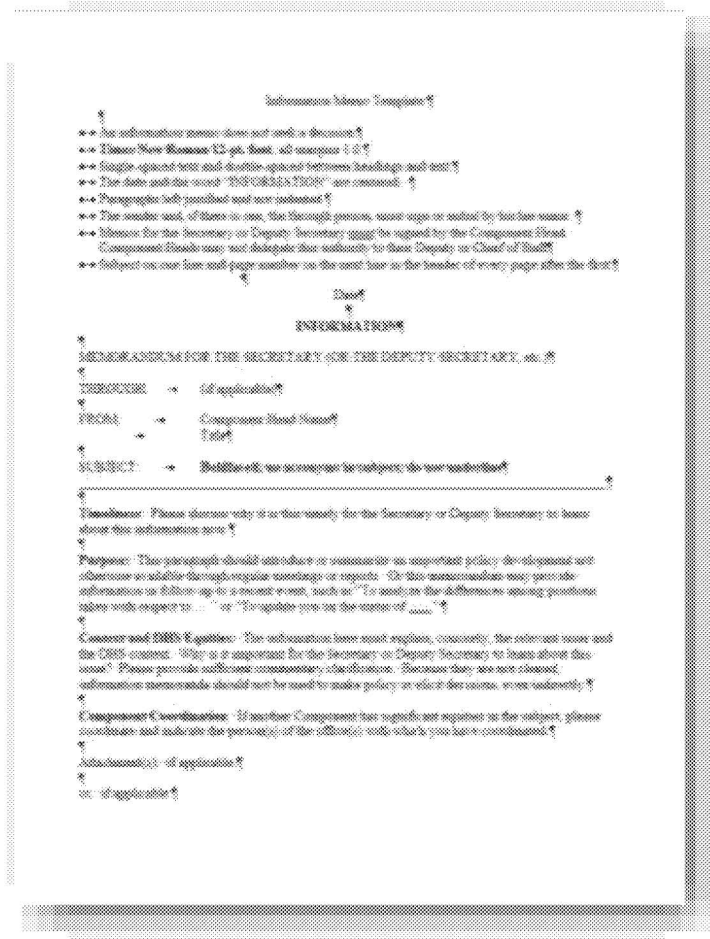
REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION FROM THE DHS FRONT OFFICE SHOULD BE TREATED AS A PRIORITY.

Prompted Information Memos

ESEC will often task requests for information to the Component identified as the lead. The lead Component will develop a draft by the deadline and submit to ESEC who will obtain Component clearances and handle the remainder of the process.

Voluntary Information Memos

To provide unprompted information to the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, or Chief of Staff for review, Components should use the Information Memo template and ensure the memo is dated and signed by an appropriate Component official. Once signed, Components should submit the scanned copy of the signed and dated memo to ESEC along with any attachments or additional information.



SECTION 2.5: REPORTS

AUTHORIZATION COMMITTEE REPORTS

Most DHS Components are required by statute to submit authorization reports to the authorizing congressional committees (such as the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee and the House Committee on Homeland Security). ESEC-Congressional Actions is responsible for tracking and managing these congressional reports through DHS Component, DHS Front Office, and OMB clearance and final approval.

Once a report has received final clearance from OMB, ESEC will alert the drafting Component to obtain signature. Once signed, the Component will reassign the report to OLA, who will transmit the final signed copy of the report to the Hill.

As ESEC maintains an authorization report tracking schedule, new authorization reporting requirements should be reported immediately to ensure the schedule is current. The frequency of these reports vary and may be required monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually, as outlined in the statute.

ESEC monitors the schedule and will alert Components about their upcoming reports.

ESEC ONLY MANAGES THE AUTHORIZATION REPORTS PROCESS.

OTHER REPORTS ARE PROVIDED TO ESEC TO PREPARE FOR FRONT OFFICE CLEARANCE OR FOR APPROPRIATE DOCUMENTATION AND STORAGE.

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE REPORTS

The MGMT/OCFO manages the review, clearance, approval, signature, and submission of appropriations reports, which are required of DHS Components. MGMT/OCFO only submits appropriations reports to ESEC when they require Front Office signature.

When the report is ready for the Front Office signature, MGMT Executive Secretariat forwards the report to ESEC. Following any necessary minor edits or formatting changes, ESEC then packages the report for final review and signature. After the Secretary reviews and signs the report, ESEC returns the report to MGMT/OCFO for distribution.

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE REPORTS

Government Accountability Office (GAO) reports are provided to ESEC by the GAO Managing Director for Homeland Security and Justice. ESEC stores the reports and files them in accordance with records management retention and storage policies.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORTS

Office of Inspector General (OIG) reports are emailed to ESEC by the OIG Office of Public Affairs. ESEC stores the reports and files them in accordance with records management retention and storage policies.

SECTION 2.6: CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY AND QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD

CONGRESSIONAL TESTIMONY

The ESEC Congressional Actions team is responsible for tasking and clearing written statements for DHS witnesses scheduled to testify before an authorizing congressional committee or subcommittee.

Testimony Tasking

Once notified of an upcoming hearing by either OLA or a Component's Congressional team, ESEC tasks the lead Component to draft a 5-7 page written statement, clear it through their leadership, and provide it to ESEC to obtain the required clearances at least 10 business days before the hearing.

DHS Component Clearance

ESEC reviews the draft and sends it out for Department-wide component review (one business day turn-around). Comments and edits are consolidated by ESEC and returned to the drafting component to adjudicate. Review is mandatory for OGC, OLA, and PLCY.

DHS Front Office Counselor Clearance

The reconciled version is then sent to the appropriate Front Office Counselor based on the testimony subject matter (one business day turn-around). Any comments or edits are returned to the lead Component for a thorough and expedited adjudication. Once reconciled, the updated version is returned to the Counselor(s) for final clearance to move to OMB.

The Secretary's testimony will receive DCOS and COS review subsequent Counselor clearance.

OMB Clearance

Following Front Office Counselor approval, ESEC will send the testimony to OMB for a mandatory 48-hour review. OMB passback (edits and/or comments) is provided to the lead Component for immediate reconciliation. Once OMB clears the authorizing testimony on behalf of the Administration, ESEC will notify the drafting Component and submit the testimony to the OLA point of contact for final submission to the congressional committee or subcommittee.



**MOST TESTIMONY
IS DUE TO
CONGRESSIONAL
COMMITTEES
48 HOURS PRIOR TO
THE HEARING DATE.**

QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD (QFRs)

After a DHS witness has testified in a hearing before a congressional committee or subcommittee, Congress will send a list of QFRs to DHS. ESEC Congressional Actions manages (tasks, edits, and clears) QFRs issued by authorizing congressional committees and subcommittees. MGMT/OCFO manages QFRs from appropriations hearings. QFRs should be considered a priority and require the drafting Component's leadership review prior to submitting to ESEC.

QFR Tasking

Following receipt, ESEC reviews the QFR sets and distributes the questions to the appropriate Component(s) for response. If a question has been assigned in error, the tasked Component must request reassignment within 24 hours. Draft responses are due in 8 business days.

DHS Component Clearance

Once received, ESEC compiles and sends the draft QFR responses to the required DHS Components for review. Comments received are provided to the lead Component(s) for adjudication. The final draft is then packaged for DHS Front Office review. In the case of the Secretary's QFRs, DCOS and COS clearance is required.

OMB Clearance

Once approved by the DHS Front Office (and DCOS and COS if a Secretary set), ESEC will send the QFR set to OMB in a single, clean draft for its review. Comments from OMB review will be sent to the lead Component for reconciliation. Once OMB clears the QFR set on behalf of the Administration, ESEC submits the cleared and final QFR responses to the Clerk of the Committee who issued the QFRs, OLA, and all Components who authored responses.

SECTION 2.7: BRIEFING BOOKS

ESEC is responsible for compiling daily briefing books for the Secretary and Deputy Secretary. These books are produced the day before and contain briefing material for the next day's meetings, phone calls, and other appointments. ESEC has a firm deadline for briefing books and Components should not ask ESEC to "hold the book" for a late submission.

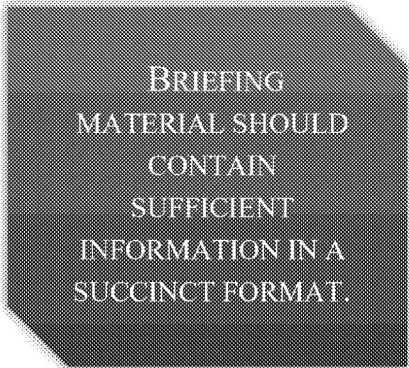
BRIEFING MATERIALS

Tasking a Briefing Memorandum

ESEC tasks Components to prepare briefing materials via the Briefing Book Tracking System (BBTS). Meeting taskers list crucial details of the meeting (if available): the date of the meeting, subject, location, supplemental information, and due date for briefing materials. ESEC determines the lead Component for preparing briefing materials based on the subject matter.

Preparing Briefing Materials

Briefing materials should be tailored to each specific meeting and contain sufficient information to adequately prepare senior leadership, while balancing the need to limit the level of detail provided. The briefing materials should clearly state the objectives and desired outcome of the meeting. Briefing materials are formatted so the Secretary and Deputy Secretary can easily access the information they need. Using the templates provided ensures that key information is quickly accessible and easily understood. Refer to Appendix A to ensure the materials are in line with the Department's preferences.



BRIEFING
MATERIAL SHOULD
CONTAIN
SUFFICIENT
INFORMATION IN A
SUCCINCT FORMAT.

Submission

Once Components have drafted materials and have fulfilled the coordination requirements, Component leadership must approve the materials at the COS-level or above before submitting them to ESEC.

ESEC will ensure that the materials are in the correct format, grammatically correct, and responsive to any questions the Secretary or Deputy Secretary may have.

Briefing material is important. If a Component is unable to provide the material in a timely manner, ESEC will insert a placeholder stating that the Component failed to provide materials in advance of the meeting.

DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL

When ESEC is notified of upcoming travel, the briefing book coordinator will work with the trip director to identify events that require briefing material. The coordinator will task the meetings associated with the trip. The format and the due date for the materials depend on the requirements of the Secretary or Deputy Secretary and may vary depending on the goals of the trip.

SECTION 2.8: WHITE HOUSE INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

WHITE HOUSE POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEES

A Policy Coordinating Committee (PCC) is an under/assistant secretary-level meeting held by the NSC to discuss interagency issues that should/could be raised to the Deputies-level. There is an under/assistant secretary-level lead for each PCC and this person represents DHS's views in the interagency process. To ensure the most coordinated and effective policy discussions among DHS, the NSC, and all interagency partners, the Office of Policy serves as the DHS lead for PCC designation, coordination, and reporting in close coordination with Executive Leadership.

WAVES information includes:

- Full name (first, middle, last);
- Gender;
- Date of birth;
- Social Security number;
- U.S. citizen information;
- Country of birth; and
- Current city/state of residence.

WHITE HOUSE PRINCIPALS COMMITTEE/DEPUTIES COMMITTEE

A DC is a Deputy Secretary-level meeting held by the NSC to approve and/or discuss issues that have come up through the PCC process. A Principals Committee (PC) is a Secretary-level meeting held by the NSC to approve or discuss issues before they are presented to the President. ESEC serves as the DHS lead for PCs and DCs.

Notification of the Meeting

The White House and Interagency Actions (WHIA) team receives a weekly look-ahead schedule from the NSC via the Joint Worldwide Intelligence Communications System (JWICS) noting potential PC and DC meetings. A PC or DC meeting is considered confirmed when the NSC Executive Secretariat notifies the WHIA team for action. The NSC will inform WHIA if the invitation includes a "plus-one" (+1) or if the invitation is principal only.

Once a meeting is confirmed (and, under some circumstances, before it is confirmed) the WHIA team tasks the meeting to a lead Component.

Identify Participant and RSVP

The WHIA team will work with the schedulers to determine who is attending the meeting. If the Secretary or Deputy Secretary cannot attend the meeting, ESEC will work with the Executive Leadership's staff to identify an appropriate surrogate and contact the Component schedulers to confirm availability. WHIA will need the surrogate's key information, also referred to as WAVES, for clearance into the White House complex.

Summary of Conclusions

The NSC will provide a summary of conclusions (SOC) following the PC or DC. The SOC covers the discussion held at the meeting and often has actions that the participants agreed to execute. SOC's are distributed in the same manner as read-ahead material – depending on classification level, ESEC sends them to the lead Component and required coordinators on either A-LAN or JWICS.

SECTION 2.9: SERVICES/SPECIAL ACTIONS

ESEC also facilitates special requests or documents. Many of these are unique or follow a specific format.

DELEGATIONS

Delegations are formal documentation for granting authority and responsibility to another person. Delegations do not relieve the Executive Leadership of responsibility, rather, they empower designees to act on their behalf.

DHS delegations can be located on DHS Connect at: (b)(6)

DIRECTIVES

Directives are authoritative direction for how operations will occur.

DHS directives can be located on DHS Connect at: (b)(6)
instructions.

DISASTER DECLARATIONS

Following a disaster, the governor of a state or the chief executive of an Indian tribal government may request federal assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The Administrator of FEMA reviews these requests and makes recommendations to the President regarding major disaster or emergency declarations, cost share adjustments, appeals, and add-ons. ESEC facilitates in the completion of the package and submits it to the Executive Leadership for review. ESEC-Internal Team maintains record of these actions.

The disaster declaration process is detailed on FEMA's Website at:
<https://www.fema.gov/disaster-declaration-process>.

EMPLOYEE AWARDS

Components generally submit these actions to MGMT for review. If MGMT agrees with the proposed award, Components submit the package containing a memorandum and appropriate signature documents to ESEC. ESEC clears these actions with appropriate Components and seeks further clearance through the action memo process.

Information regarding the Departmental Awards and Recognition can be located on
DHSConnect at: (b)(6)

FEDERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ACT

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) formalized a process for establishing, operating, overseeing, and terminating advisory committees. Components submit charters (establishments, amendments, renewals, terminations, appointments etc.) to ESEC for appropriate Component clearance and Executive Leadership's review.

The timing of a charter renewal is a predictable requirement. Components should provide a FACA charter renewal to ESEC for clearance at least one month before the scheduled termination of the charter.

Reference material and additional information can be accessed on DHS Connect at:
(b)(6)

Interagency Details

- **National Security Council (NSC)** - These highly competitive details must be approved by the Executive Leadership prior to confirmation. Traditionally, the details are non-reimbursable and last for one year with the option to extend for an additional year. The ESEC WHIA team confirms details and extension requests with the NSC in consultation with the Executive Leadership.
- **White House Situation Room (WHSR)** - The ESEC WHIA team solicits candidates from DHS Components for 2-year rotational assignments. Once a list of candidates is assembled and ranked, the Office of Operations Coordination (OPS), ESEC, and the manager of the WHSR participate in an interview panel. The WHSR makes the final selection.
- **Capitol Hill** - Members of Congress sometimes request DHS detailees to work with congressional committee staff. These details normally last less than a year and are non-reimbursable.

All details outside of the Department must be approved by the Executive Leadership. Contact BBIC with questions regarding interagency details.

NATIONAL SPECIAL SECURITY EVENT

National Special Security Event (NSSE) designations are made by the Secretary for events of national significance (i.e., the annual State of the Union address).

Requests for NSSE designation generally come from the Governor of the state hosting the event. When a request is received, the NSSE Working Group (which includes co-chairs from the United States Secret Service (USSS), FEMA, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation) reviews the request and associated factors (i.e., threat assessments, media coverage, and state and local resources and provides their assessment and recommendation to the Secretary.

PRESIDENTIAL PERMITS

The Secretary of State has the authority to receive applications and issue Presidential permits for border crossings, liquid pipelines, and other cross-border infrastructure. In considering these applications, the State Department will solicit the views of affected agencies. After receiving the application, WHIA assigns it to the appropriate lead Component.

ESEC asks the Component to work with the required coordinators to submit comments. If clearance of the permit is recommended, the action memorandum should be addressed to the Executive Secretary.

If the Component believes that DHS should non-concur on the permit, the action memorandum must be addressed to the Secretary for review and approval. WHIA will finalize the memorandum, obtain leadership clearance, and transmit the response to the State Department. Questions about the Presidential permits process may be directed to BBIC.

REGULATORY ACTIONS

Regulatory actions are issued to implement Departmental policies in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Office of General Counsel's (OGC) Regulatory Affairs Law Division handles regulatory actions and is responsible for obtaining clearance from the appropriate Components based on the issue and type of regulation. Once the Deputy General Counsel approves the regulation, OGC sends the regulation to ESEC to be packaged for the Secretary or Deputy Secretary's signature. The regulatory action then goes to OMB for approval by the White House or publication in the Federal Register.

WIDELY ATTENDED GATHERING REQUEST

Component ethics officials submit widely attended gathering (WAG) requests to the designated agency ethics official in OGC for review. OGC has a specific form for WAG requests available online at:

(b)(6)

When necessary, OGC provides the request and proposed action to ESEC for Executive Leadership review and decision. Components should submit WAG requests one week before the date of the event, or as soon as possible, in the event of last-minute invitations.

CONFERENCE APPROVALS

The Management Directorate manages the conference request process. Please refer to the "Travel and Conferences" site for requirements and points of contact at:

(b)(6)

SECTION 3: CLASSIFIED MATERIALS

ESEC handles a variety of classified materials for the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Executive Leadership. Whether you are submitting classified briefing materials or have a classified supplement to a letter or information memorandum, please follow these guidelines.

TRANSMISSION

Identify the correct classified system to transmit the information:

- B-LAN, also referred to as HSDN or SIPR, is for classified information up to the Secret level.
- C-LAN, also referred to as JWICS, is for classified information up to the TS/SCI level.

Transmit the documents to the ESEC points of contact and follow up with an unclassified email informing recipients of their classified email. All Components should have a generic executive secretariat mailbox on both B-LAN and C-LAN accessible to staff members with the appropriate clearances.

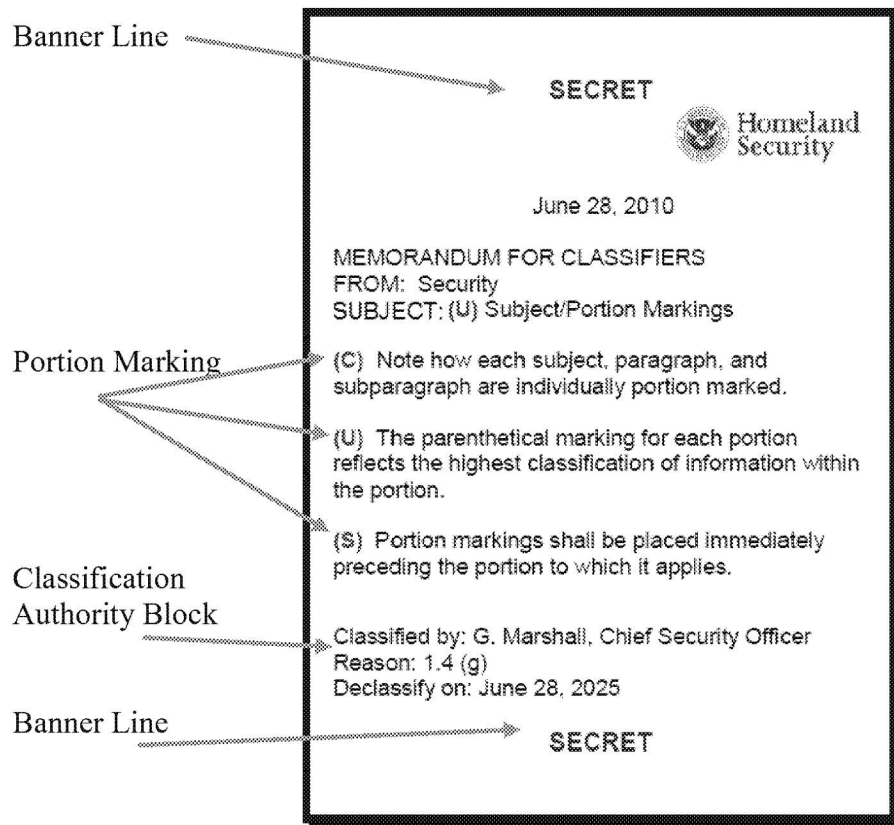
MARKING

Refer to DHS Instruction 121-01-011 “The Department of Homeland Security Administrative Security Program” to ensure documents are marked and formatted correctly:

- Overall markings in the header and footer on every page (known as a banner line) that identifies the highest classification of information contained in the document.
Banner line example: SECRET//SI//NOFORN
- Consistent and correct use of portion markings (this includes headings, paragraphs, bullets, graphics, tables, etc.). Portion marking should be in the same font as the text to which it applies and be followed by two spaces.
Portion marking example: (S//SI//NF)
- Classification authority block on the first page that includes classified by or derived from, reason (if necessary), and declassification date.

Classification//control markings should be spelled out, centered, and in capital letters. Make sure to include the CLASSIFICATION//CAVEAT in the header/footer on every page, including the first page.

CLASSIFIED MARKING OVERVIEW



HANDLING

Package and store classified materials according to the classification level. Cover sheets are required and should reflect the highest level of information contained within the documents.

When removed from storage, classified materials should not be left unattended.

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

The Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) category covers information that is unclassified but may require special handling and certain dissemination controls.

The term "For Official Use Only (FOUO)" identifies unclassified information of a sensitive nature that is not otherwise categorized by statute or regulation. Law Enforcement Sensitive (LES) is a further marking of FOUO and alerts the reader to the type of information conveyed. FOUO and LES do not require the use of cover sheets.

Other categories of SBU, such as Sensitive Security Information and Protected Critical Infrastructure Information, are governed by statute and regulation and are not considered or treated as FOUO. Take caution to safeguard and store this information in the appropriate manner. Make sure to password protect these materials when storing or transmitting them electronically and use cover sheets for hard copies and store them in a locked file drawer or cabinet.

SECTION 4: PRIVACY

PRIVACY RELEASES ARE REQUIRED TO RELEASE AN INDIVIDUAL'S PERSONAL INFORMATION TO A THIRD PARTY UNLESS THE CHAIRPERSON OF A CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE IS REQUESTING THE INFORMATION IN THEIR OFFICIAL CAPACITY.

On April 27, 2017, the DHS Chief Privacy Officer (CPO) released the Privacy Policy Guidance Memorandum 2017-01, *DHS Privacy Policy Regarding Collection, Use, Retention, and Dissemination of Personally Identifiable Information*. The issuance of this new policy cancels the previous Privacy Policy Guidance Memorandum 2007-01/Privacy Policy Directive 262-12, *DHS Privacy Policy Regarding Collection, Use, Retention, and Dissemination of Information on Non-U.S. Persons*.

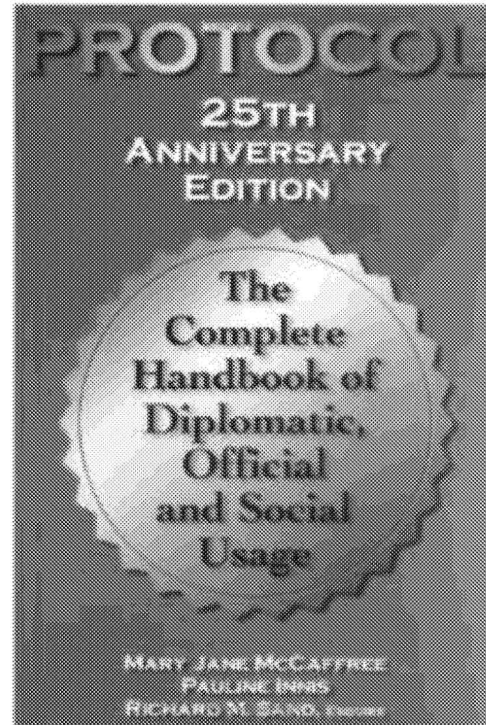
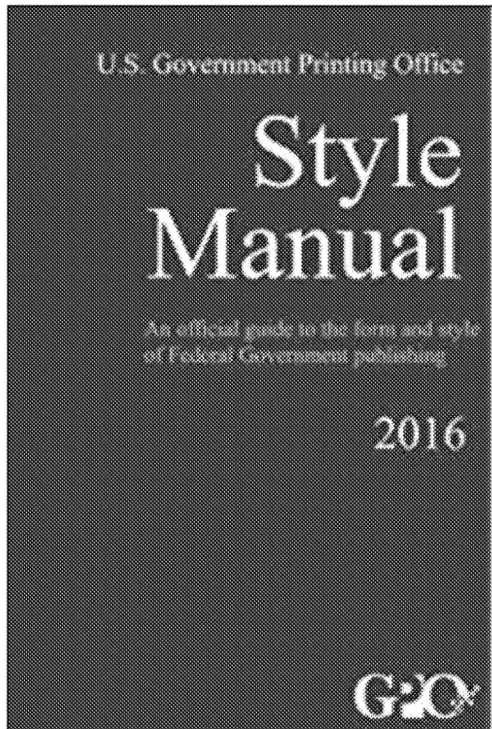
The January 25, 2017 Executive Order (EO) No. 13,768, *Enhancing Public Safety in the Interior of the United States*, limits the rights and protections of the Privacy Act to U.S. citizens and lawful permanent residents. However, the CPO determined that the Fair Information Practice Principles (FIPPs) are the foundation to the Department's privacy policy and therefore govern decisions regarding the collection, maintenance, use, disclosure, retention, and disposal of information being held by DHS.

Under the new policy:

- Immigrants and non-immigrants may only obtain access to their records through the Freedom of Information Act and may not be granted an amendment of their records upon request.
- U.S. citizens, immigrants, and non-immigrants may still apply for redress through the DHS Traveler Redress Inquiry Program (TRIP).
- Sharing information in response to a request from the Chairperson of a Congressional Committee requesting information without a privacy release is permitted. Responses of this nature are considered confidential for the Committee's business only and are not for public disclosure.
- Sharing information pertaining to an individual with a Member of Congress (who is not writing in the capacity of a Committee Chair) without consent from the individual in question is prohibited.
- Sharing information pertaining to an individual with a third party without consent from the individual in question is prohibited.

SECTION 5: DHS STYLE AND USAGE GUIDELINES

DHS uses the Federal Government's Government Printing Office (GPO) Style Manual as a reference for internal and external correspondence and other written materials. Exceptions to the GPO Style Manual are outlined in this Handbook as comprehensively as possible. The Protocol Book is also a valuable guide for addresses and salutations. Additional reference material can be found in Section 8.



SECTION 5.1: LETTER SET-UP

Alignment

Documents should be left justified with a jagged right margin. In a letter, the first line of each paragraph should be indented one-tab stop (0.5") in keeping with the style used by the Secretary.

Attachment/Enclosure

“Attachment” is used for memoranda. “Enclosure” is used for letters.

If an attachment or enclosure is included, it should be referenced in the body of the memo or letter. The applicable term is placed two lines (three hard returns) below the signature block of the letter or final paragraph of the memorandum.

If the letter/memorandum has a “cc” line, “attachment/enclosure” will appear below the “cc” line(s) and distribution list.

Block Addresses (in the body of a letter)

When a full address is provided in the body of the letter, it is blocked from the remainder of the text. The address should be aligned left and indented two inches.

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
123 Main Street
Anytown, California 99999

Carbon or Courtesy Copy (cc)

When including a carbon or courtesy copy recipient on a letter, place a “cc” two lines (three hard returns) below the signature block.

The “cc” is followed by a colon and two spaces or, in the case of multiple carbon copy recipients, the “cc” is followed by a colon and one-tab stop to individually align subsequent names.

Closing

The final paragraph of the Secretary’s letters usually closes with appreciation for the letter and an indication of interest in working together, “Thank you for your interest on this and future homeland security issues” (or other language to that effect). The final line is generally: “Should you wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact me.” This is especially true for congressional correspondence. When responding to letters with multiple signers, include, “A separate, identical response was sent to the cosigner(s) of your letter.” If offering a briefing, provide the point of contact’s name, title, and telephone number.

Date

ESEC will date the letter after it has been signed by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary.

Font

The Department standard is Times New Roman 12-point font.

Inside Address (also see Models of Address and Salutation)

Use Mr. or Ms. and honorifics (“The Honorable”) within the address block. The state should be spelled out, with the exception of DC – with no periods.

Ms. Jane Smith
123 Meadow Court
Silver Spring, Maryland 20773

The Honorable Joe Brown
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20000

For names containing a suffix, a comma should be used preceding “Jr.” or “Sr.” or a roman numeral following the individual’s name.

Mr. Joe Smith, Sr.
123 Meadow Court
Somewhere, Maryland 20773

In the body of a document, always spell out the name of a U.S. state. “I visited West Virginia.” Do not use periods when writing “DC” or when referring to the quadrants in DC (e.g., NW).

Letterhead

Always use DHS letterhead designated for the appropriate signatory. Components preparing draft responses for Executive Leadership signature are not required to submit them on letterhead. ESEC will print the cleared response on the appropriate letterhead.

Joint memoranda and letters prepared for two or more Component Head signatures should use DHS letterhead and the original should be signed by each Component Head, if possible.

When a letter or memorandum is being prepared for a joint signature by principals from separate departments or agencies, both seals must appear in the header on the first page.

Line Breaks

While permissible in a report, please do not break dates across two lines in a letter.

Correct: The Secretary had a meeting with DHS Components on June 19, 2009.

Incorrect: The Secretary had a meeting with the DHS Components on June 19, 2009.

Similarly, do not break names or proper nouns across two lines. To the extent that it reads well and does not leave a huge gap at the end of the line, names should be kept on the same line.

Correct: The Secretary had several meetings about security with Robert Example.

Incorrect: The Secretary had several meetings about security with Robert Example.

Correct: The Secretary had meetings about safeguarding the United States.

Incorrect: The Secretary had meetings about safeguarding the United States.

Telephone numbers, dollar amounts, and legal citations should be on the same line.

Correct: For further assistance, please contact me at 202-555-5555.

Incorrect: For further assistance, please contact me at 202-555-5555.

Correct: The Secretary of Homeland Security's authority to designate a country for TPS and extend or terminate a country's existing designation is based upon specific criteria. See Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) § 244(b).

Incorrect: See Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) § 244(b).

Margins

Format document to 1" margins (left, right, top, and bottom).

A right and bottom margin of 0.9" is acceptable.

The inside address should begin eight hard returns below the top margin but should be adjusted based on the length of the letter. For a shorter letter, the distance from the top margin can be increased in an effort to center the letter on the page.

Page Numbers

Documents longer than one page must include page numbers. Do not include a page number on the first page. For letters, the header should be aligned left and should include the name of the addressee, followed by the page number:

The Honorable John Smith
Page 2

For memoranda, the header should be aligned left and should include the subject of the memorandum, followed by the page number:

Guidance on Coordination Procedures
Page 2

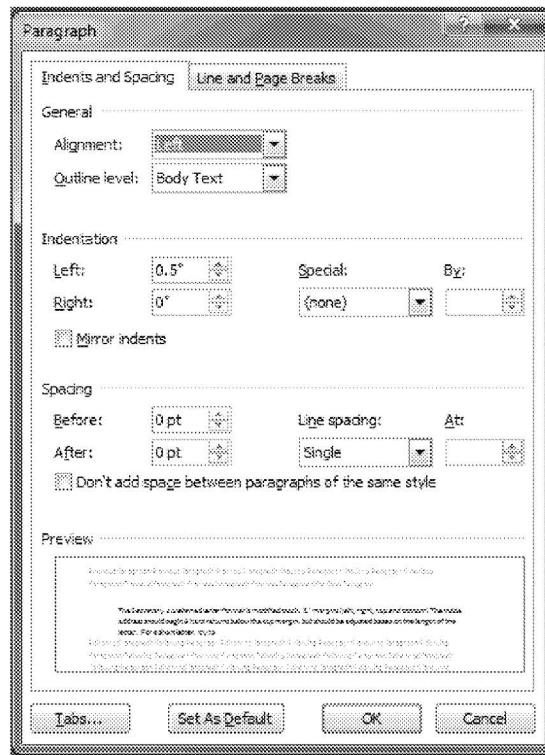
For attachments, the page number should be in the footer and aligned right:

Page 2

In general, please keep letters to no more than two pages. If the sender has included a list of questions, respond to the questions in a separate enclosure mentioned in the body of a short response.

Paragraphs

Paragraphs should be single-spaced and indented with double spacing between paragraphs. Paragraph line spacing should be single-spaced with 0.0 pt. before and after.



Salutation (also see Models of Address and Salutation)

Use “Mr.” or “Ms.” for most salutations. Unless a woman specifically refers to herself as “Mrs.” use “Ms.” for women over the age of 12. “Ms.” or “Miss” may be used to address girls under the age of 12 and “Mr.” should be used to address boys under the age of 12. Upon first usage of a name, the individual should be addressed as Mr./Ms. first-name last-name. Subsequent mentions should be Mr./Ms. last-name.

Ms. Jane Smith
123 Meadow Court
Somewhere, DC 20773

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you for your May 1, 2014 letter on behalf of your husband, Mr. Joe Smith, regarding his employment. The Department has investigated the allegations made against Mr. Smith in 2013.

For Members of Congress who chair a committee, use Chairman [name]. We do not use Mr. or Ms. Chairman/Chairwoman. If the Member signed acting in the capacity of the Committee Chair or Ranking Member, we address them as follows:

The Honorable Joe Brown
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20000

Dear Chairman Brown:

Signature Block

There should be four lines (five hard returns) between the valediction and the signatory’s name. The signature block should be indented 2.5” or 5-tab stops. For example:

Sincerely,

(Secretary’s Name)

Widows and Orphans

If only one line of a paragraph is displayed on a page, begin the new paragraph on the next page.

SECTION 5.2: MODELS OF ADDRESS AND SALUTATION

Addressee	Letter and Envelope	Salutation
The President	The President The White House Washington, DC 20500	Dear Mr. President:
The Vice President	The Honorable (Full Name) The Vice President of the United States Washington, DC 20500	Dear Mr. Vice President:
Former President	The Honorable (Full Name) (Local Address)	Dear President (Last Name):
Cabinet Member	The Honorable (Name) Secretary of (Agency) Washington, DC (ZIP Code)	Dear Secretary (Last Name):
Ambassador (American)	The Honorable (Name) American Ambassador (City, Country)	Dear Mr. Ambassador: OR Dear Madam Ambassador:
Ambassador (Foreign)	His/Her Excellency (Name) Ambassador of (Country) Washington, DC (ZIP Code)	Dear Mr. Ambassador: OR Dear Madam Ambassador:
United States Representative to the United Nations (or Organization of American States)	The Honorable (Full Name) United States Representative to the United Nations (or Organization of American States) (City), (State) (Zip Code)	Dear Mr. Ambassador: OR Dear Madam Ambassador:
Minister (Foreign)	His/Her Excellency (Name) Minister of (Department) of (Country)* (City)	Dear Mr. Minister: OR Dear Madam Minister:
General, Lieutenant General, Major General, Brigadier General	Full grade, name, and abbreviation of service designation (title) (post office address of organization and station) 00000	Dear General (Last Name):
Retired Officer	(full grade) (full name) (abbreviation of service Sincerely, designation), Retired (local address) 00000	Dear(rank) (surname)
Business/Organization	Mr./Ms./Mrs. (Name) (Title) (Name of Company) (Street) (City, State, ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Ms./Mrs. (Name):
General Public	Mr./Ms./Mrs. (Name) (Street) (City, State, ZIP Code)	Dear Mr./Ms./Mrs. (Name):

UNITED STATES SENATE

Addressee	Letter and Envelope	Salutation
Committee Chairman	The Honorable (Name) Chairman Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Chairman (Last Name): **The salutation for female Committee Chairs is based on their preference. Contact the Committee for the proper greeting.**
Subcommittee Chairman	The Honorable (Name) Chairman Subcommittee on Foreign Commerce and Tourism Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Chairman (Last Name): **The salutation for female Committee Chairs is based on their preference. Contact the Committee for the proper greeting.**
United States Senator	The Honorable (Name) United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	Dear Senator (Last Name):
United States Senator District Office	The Honorable (Name) United States Senate (Originating District Office address) (City, State, ZIP Code)	Dear Senator (Last Name):

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Addressee	Letter and Envelope	Salutation
Speaker of the House	The Honorable (Name) Speaker of the House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr. or Ms. Speaker:
Committee Chairman	The Honorable (Name) Chairman Committee on Government Operations U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr. Chairman: **The salutation for female Committee Chairs is based on their preference. Contact the Committee for the proper greeting.**
Subcommittee Chairman	The Honorable (Name) Chairman Subcommittee on Commerce, Consumer, and Monetary Affairs Committee on Government Operations U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr. Chairman: **The salutation for female Committee Chairs is based on their preference. Contact the Committee for the proper greeting.**
Joint Committee Chairman	The Honorable (Name) Chairman Joint Economic Committee U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Mr. Chairman: **The salutation for female Committee Chairs is based on their preference. Contact the Committee for the proper greeting.**

Addressee	Letter and Envelope	Salutation
U.S. Representative DC Office	The Honorable (Name) U.S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515	Dear Representative (Last Name):
U.S. Representative District Office	The Honorable (Name) U.S. House of Representatives (Originating District Office address) (City, State, ZIP Code)	Dear Representative (Last Name):

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Addressee	Letter and Envelope	Salutation
Governor	The Honorable (Name) Governor of (State) (City, State, ZIP Code)	Dear Governor (Name):
Lieutenant Governor	The Honorable (Name) Lieutenant Governor of (State) (City, State, ZIP Code)	Dear Lieutenant Governor (Name):
Mayor	The Honorable (Name) Mayor of (City) (City, State, ZIP Code)	Dear Mayor (Name):
State Senator	The Honorable (full name) (name of State) Senate (local address) 00000	Dear Mr. or Ms. (surname):
State Representative, Assemblyman, or Delegate	The Honorable (full name) (name of State) House of Representatives (or Assembly or House of Delegates) (local address) 00000	Dear Mr. or Ms. (surname):

SECTION 5.3: FORMATTING/PUNCTUATION

Acronyms

Acronyms must be defined upon first use. In letters that are acronym-heavy, do not use an acronym if the term is used only two or three times; instead, simply write out the terms each time.

Possessive of DHS is DHS's (the "S's" stands for "Security's").
However, the possessive of USCIS is USCIS' (the final S stands for "Services," the possessive of which is Services').

The plural of an acronym is with a lower case "s," example PEDs (not PEDS).

When an acronym is possessive, an apostrophe is appropriate:

Law Enforcement Officer (LEO) - He looked at the LEO's badge.

Bold, Italics, Underlining

Do not use bold, italics, underlining, or all capitals in the body of a letter to emphasize a point. Bold, italics, and underlining can be used appropriately in documents as subject headings or in style-specific context (e.g., publication titles, legal references).

Bullets

Format consistently: if bullets are indented 0.5" in one section, indent bullets 0.5" throughout the document. When using multiple levels of bullets, first use a solid circle then, in descending order, an arrow, a solid square, and an open circle.

Ensure proper alignment of bullets, not just within a list but throughout the entire document. If each bullet constitutes a complete sentence, capitalize the first word and place a period at the end of each line.

If the bullet is a fragment, you may capitalize the first word of each item and should place a semicolon at the end of each line. In this circumstance, the penultimate line should end with "; and" / "; or". The last line should end with a period, not a semicolon.

In general, try to avoid the use of bullets in a letter (but there will be some cases where it will be appropriate).

Capitalization

Capitalize: Federal Government; U.S. Government; Government of Canada (but Canadian government); the word "State" only when referring to a specific state or states (State of Ohio) or a nation (United Nations Member States); Congress; Nation (when referring to the United States); Southwest Border, and Member of Congress.

Do not capitalize congressional, national, or federal (except as noted above).

Capitalize titles: Legislative Director Joan Smith, Assistant Secretary Robert Example.

Capitalize names of specific programs: Temporary Protected Status, Global Entry.

Capitalize proper nouns: Department of Homeland Security, United States.

Capitalize well-known short forms of a proper nouns: the Department, Headquarters.

Capitalize: Executive Branch, Judicial Branch, and Legislative Branch.

Columns/Tables

Keep columns of numbers in a straight line with each number right-aligned. If there is a total, always double-check the math.

In a table, cells should be centered vertically.

Em- and En-Dashes

An em-dash is the length of two hyphens and is used:

To show a break in thought and is almost always used in pairs.

My sister Megan—who is two years younger—is taller than my father.

Instead of commas or parentheses if it helps to clarify the meaning.

These are deposits—gravel, sand, and clay—but sediments underlie them.

Before a final clause that summarizes a series of ideas.

Clarity, transparency, and the Department’s responsiveness to Congress—these are the Secretary’s priorities.

An en-dash is used:

In a combination of:

Figures

202-282-1000 (telephone numbers)

111-22-1234 (Social Security numbers)

Capital letters

C-SPAN, CBS-TV

Figures and capital letters

I-95 (highway), DC-14 (airplane).

To mean through or to:

The temperature was 70-80 degrees.

Hyphens

Hyphens can be used when adding a prefix creates confusion:

re-sign vs. resign.

When addressing more than one originator, use “cosigners” not co-signers.

Use hyphens to separate words containing double a’s and double i’s.

Double e’s do not require a hyphen:

preeminent.

Or in the case of modifiers:

Leaf-eating dinosaur (as opposed to leaf eating dinosaur, which could be interpreted as a leaf eating the dinosaur).

Do not use a hyphen in conjunction with a modifier that ends in “ly”:

Badly behaved.

Hyphens (Numbers)

Use hyphens between the elements of compound numbers from twenty-one to ninety-nine:

thirty-nine.

In adjective compounds with a numerical element:

13-week vacation, 24-hour day.

Between the elements of a fraction:

two-thirds, one-thousandth.

Do NOT use a hyphen when using a modifier consisting of a possessive noun preceded by a numeral:

12 weeks' pay.

Quotation Marks

Always place commas and periods inside quotation marks. The placement of other punctuation is dictated by context. If the quoted material contains a question, the question mark would be placed inside the quotation marks.

She always asks “where are we going?”.

If the quoted material does not contain a question, but the sentence in which it is placed is a question, the question mark would be placed outside the quotation marks.

Did you hear her say, “I’m coming!”?

Serial Comma

In a list of three or more items, a comma separates each item, including the item immediately preceding the conjunction.

The colors were blue, purple, and orange.

In a list of items that contain commas, use semicolons to separate the items.

He traveled to San Diego, California; New Orleans, Louisiana; and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Spacing

Ensure that there are two spaces following a period at the end of a sentence or a colon. Only one space follows a semicolon.

In an address, there should be two spaces between the state and ZIP code.

Time

For consistency, always show time in 12-hour (clock) time. Do not place spaces before or after the colon. Use periods and lowercase for “a.m., p.m.” with a space between the time and “a.m. or p.m.” The “:00” may be omitted when indicating the top of an hour:

8:25 p.m., 11 a.m.

Use noon or midnight instead of 12 p.m. and 12 a.m. to make clear the part of the day being referenced. Do not use the word “o’clock” with abbreviations of time:

Incorrect - 10 o’clock p.m.

Do not write redundancies such as “10 a.m. this morning” and “10 p.m. tonight.”

Range of Time

Hyphenate if both times are a.m. or p.m. Otherwise place “to” between the times:

e.g., 8:30-11 a.m. or 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

SECTION 5.4: GENERAL SYNTAX/HELPFUL TIPS

“A” and “an”

The decision to use “a” or “an” is based upon the beginning sound of the following word, not the beginning letter.

“A” is used before words beginning with consonant sounds, including the pronounced “H.”

e.g., a historic event, a one-year term, a united stand.

“An” is used before words beginning with vowel sounds.

e.g., an egg, an honor, an NPPD record.

Date

Do not use a comma after the year when writing out a date, unless it is a natural break.

Thank you for your February 12, 2013 letter to President Obama regarding expediting the visa issuance process.

On December 19, 2013, your office sent an email to the White House.

e.g. and i.e.

These terms are not interchangeable:

“e.g.” (exempli gratia) means “for example”

“i.e.” (id est) means “that is.”

These terms are not italicized, and a comma should follow the last period.

e.g., i.e.,

Fiscal Year

When accompanied by the year, the term “fiscal year” should always be capitalized (e.g., Fiscal Year 2011). It should not be capitalized when used generally.

If the term is used multiple times throughout the document, it should be written out in full on first usage, followed by (FY). Subsequent mentions should use FY followed by one space and the four digit year (e.g., FY 2011).

Phrases to Avoid

Whenever possible, do not use the phrase “as you know/as you are aware.” If the recipient already knows the information, there is no need to include it in the response.

Plurals and Possessives

Pay particular attention to plurals and possessives, making certain not to confuse the two. Possessives call for an apostrophe; plurals do not.

Similar Words

Always double check usage.

Accept/except – accept means to receive; except means to exclude.

Advice/advise – advice is a noun; advise is a verb.

Affect/effect – generally, affect will be used as a verb meaning “to influence.”

Effect is generally a noun, meaning “result.”

Council/counsel – council is a noun referring to a body of people; counsel is often a verb meaning to give advice. Counsel can also be a noun referring to a person who gives advice (e.g., legal counsel).

Capitol/capital – capitol refers to the building where the legislative body meets (e.g., U.S. Capitol, Capitol Hill); capital refers to the seat of government (e.g., the capital of Virginia is Richmond).

Ensure/insure – ensure means to make certain; insure should only be used in the context of insurance (car, fire, health, etc.).

United States

When used as a noun, always spell out “United States.”

These individuals are seeking to enter the United States.

When used as an adjective, “U.S.” may be used, even on first usage.

They are now U.S. citizens.

Words to Avoid

Moreover, furthermore, etc. – avoid using filler words like this.

Congressman/Congresswoman/Congressperson – DHS uses the term “Representative.”

Concerns, regarding, expressing, in regard to – avoid using redundant words, especially in the opening of the letter. Only one is necessary.

Correct - Thank you for your letter regarding...

Incorrect - Thank you for your letter expressing concerns regarding...

Impact – this word should never be used as a verb

Correct - The decision will have an impact on the organization.

Incorrect - The decision impacts the organization.

Post Script – Do not include a Post Script (P.S.) at the end of correspondence.

SECTION 6: PLAIN WRITING

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

DHS has a vast mission and a dedicated responsibility to secure the safety of the American people. In light of our responsibility to national priorities such as emergency preparedness, cyber security, immigration, travel, and international trade, it is paramount that DHS present information effectively and efficiently.

PLAIN WRITING CHECKLIST

Does your document:

Address the average reader?

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

Serve the reader’s needs?

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

Have useful headings?

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

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

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

Use active voice?

Using active voice clarifies who is doing what; passive obscures it. Active voice is generally shorter, as well as clearer. Changing our writing to prefer active voice is the single most powerful change we can make in government writing. Active sentences are structured with the actor first (as the subject), then the verb, then the object of the action.

Use short sections and sentences?

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

Use the simplest tense possible?

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

Use base verbs?

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

Omit excess words?

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

Use concrete, familiar words?

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

Use “must” to express requirements.

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

Place words carefully?

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

Use lists and tables to simplify complex material?

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

Use no more than two or three subordinate levels?

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

WORD SUBSTITUTION

INSTEAD OF	TRY
a and/or b	a or b or both
accompany	go with
accomplish	carry out, do
accorded	given
accordingly	so
accrue	add, gain
accurate	correct, exact, right
additional	added, more, other
address	discuss
addressees	you
addressees are requested	(omit), please
adjacent to	next to
advantageous	helpful
adversely impact on	hurt, set back
advise	recommend, tell
afford an opportunity	allow, let
aircraft	plane
allocate	divide
anticipate	expect
a number of	some
apparent	clear, plain
appreciable	many
appropriate	(omit), proper, right
approximate	about
arrive onboard	arrive
as a means of	to
ascertain	find out, learn
as prescribed by	in, under
assist, assistance	aid, help
attain	meet
attempt	try
at the present time	at present, now
be advised	(omit)
benefit	help
by means of	by, with
capability	ability
caveat	warning
close proximity	near
combat environment	combat
combined	joint

INSTEAD OF	TRY
commence	begin, start
comply with	follow
component	part
comprise	form, include, make up
concerning	about, on
consequently	so
consolidate	combine, join, merge
constitutes	is, forms, makes up
contains	has
convene	meet
currently	(omit), now
deem	believe, consider, think
delete	cut, drop
demonstrate	prove, show
depart	leave
designate	appoint, choose, name
desire	want, wish
determine	decide, figure, find
disclose	show
discontinuc	drop, stop
disseminate	give, issue, pass, send
due to the fact that	due to, since
during the period	during
effect modifications	make changes
elect	choose, pick
eliminate	cut, drop, end
employ	use
encounter	meet
endeavor	try
ensure	make sure
enumerate	count
equipments	equipment
equitable	fair
establish	set up, prove, show
evidenced	showed
evident	clear
exhibit	show
expedite	hasten, speed up
expeditious	fast, quick
expend	spend
expertise	ability

INSTEAD OF	TRY
expiration	end
facilitate	ease, help
failed to	didn't
feasible	can be done, workable
females	women
finalize	complete, finish
for a period of	for
forfeit	give up, lose
forward	send
frequently	often
function	act, role, work
furnish	give, send
has a requirement for	needs
herein	here
heretofore	until now
herewith	below, here
however	but
identical	same
identify	find, name, show
immediately	at once
impacted	affected, changed
implement	carry out, start
in accordance with	by, following, per, under
in addition	also, besides, too
in an effort to	to
inasmuch as	since
in a timely manner	on time, promptly
inception	start
incumbent upon	must
indicate	show, write down
indication	sign
initial	first
initiate	start
in lieu of	instead
in order that	for, so
in order to	to
in regard to	about, concerning, on
in relation to	about, with, to
inter alia	(omit)

INSTEAD OF	TRY
interface	meet, work with
interpose no objection	don't object
in the amount of	for
in the event of	if
in the near future	shortly, soon
in the process of	(omit)
in view of	since
in view of the above	so
is applicable to	applies to
is authorized to	may
is in consonance with	agrees with, follows
is responsible for	(omit) handles
it appears	seems
it is	(omit)
it is essential	must, need to
it is requested	we request, I request
liaison	discussion
limited number	limits
magnitude	size
maintain	keep, support
maximum	greatest, largest, most
methodology	method
minimize	decrease, method
minimum	least, smallest
modify	change
monitor	check, watch
necessitate	cause, need
notify	let know, tell
not later than 10 May	by 10 May, before 11 May
not later than 1600	by 1600
notwithstanding	in spite of, still
numerous	many
objective	aim, goal
obligate	bind, compel
observe	see
on a _____ basis	(omit)
operate	run, use, work
optimum	best, greatest, most
option	choice, way
parameters	limits

INSTEAD OF	TRY
participate	take part
perform	do
permit	let
pertaining to	about, of, on
portion	part
possess	have, own
practicable	practical
preclude	prevent
previous	earlier
previously	before
prioritize	rank
prior to	before
proceed	do, go ahead, try
procure	(omit)
proficiency	skill
promulgate	issue, publish
provide	give, offer, say
provided that	if
provides guidance for	guides
purchase	buy
pursuant to	by, following, per
reflect	say, show
regarding	about, of, on
relative to	about, on
relocate	move
remain	stay
remain	stay
remainder	rest
remuneration	pay, payment
render	give, make
represents	is
request	ask
require	must, need
requirement	need
reside	live
retain	keep
said, some, such	the, this, that
selection	choice
set forth in	in

INSTEAD OF	TRY
similar to	like
solicit	ask for, request
state-of-the-art	latest
subject	the, this, your
submit	give, send
subsequent	later, next
subsequently	after, later, then
substantial	large, much
successfully complete	complete, pass
sufficient	enough
take action to	(omit)
terminate	end, stop
the month of	(omit)
there are	(omit)
therefore	so
therein	there
there is	(omit)
thereof	its, their
the undersigned	I
the use of	(omit)
this activity, command	us, we
timely	prompt
time period	(either one)
transmit	send
type	(omit)
under the provisions of	under
until such time as	until
utilize, utilization	use
validate	confirm
viable	practical, workable
vice	instead of, versus
warrant	call for, permit
whereas	because, since
with reference to	about
with the exception of	except for
witnessed	saw
your office	you
/ (slash)	and, or

SECTION 7: RESOURCES & REFERENCES

Below are some helpful resources that may be utilized for the preparation of documents within DHS:

Books

- GPO Style Guide
- The Protocol Book
- Elements of Style
- The Bluebook, A Uniform System of Citation

Websites

- DHS Connect
- DHS.gov
- CenterforPlainLanguage.org
- plainlanguage.gov
- Online dictionaries:
 - merriam-webster.com
 - dictionary.com

Grammar websites
<http://www.usingenglish.com/glossary/>

Thomas – <http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php>
This is the website of the Library of Congress. It helps you search all legislation and has links to all congressional committees and all Members' personal websites.

SECTION 8: APPENDIX LIST

- A. DHS Philosophy and Preferences**
- B. Templates**
- C. Component List**
- D. Congressional Report Guidance**
- E. Section 8 Compliance**

Appendix A: DHS Philosophy and Preferences

Overall Philosophy for Written Correspondence:

Unity of Effort

In support of the unity of effort, responses must be consistent in formatting and reflect the Department's stance on issues. Clear, consistent messaging will further our unity and eliminate unnecessary confusion.

Never Apologize for Doing Your Job

The Secretary values you, the employees who support the DHS mission, and will not tolerate negativity aimed at employees who are doing their jobs by enforcing our nation's laws. If lawmakers identify injustice within the laws they pass, they are encouraged to update the regulations as appropriate and DHS will adjust operations accordingly.

Prioritize Significant Correspondence

Every letter, particularly those originating from a Member of Congress, warrants a response.

Components should adhere to the deadlines assigned by the DHS Front Office/ESEC. When inquiries can be resolved through a phone call or briefing, Components should work closely with ESEC and OLA to determine the best approach and ensure all action is documented in the electronic tracking system.

Some incoming letters may request a response by a certain date. If this date is unreasonable given the topic discussed or details requested, contact the originator or send an interim reply outlining the realistic timeline required for a thorough response.

Be Responsive

Respond to every question in the incoming letter and be sure to defend any untrue accusation, misstatement, or inflammatory comment. The tone of the response should mirror that of the incoming. Be bold in defending DHS.

Accuracy is Absolute

It is vital that responses contain the most up to date and accurate information. If metrics are cited, it is important to include the source of the data so that it can be verified by clearing parties. Metrics will only be used if the information can be verified and should accompany a point of contact and the date the metrics were produced, if available.

Preferences

- The Department of Homeland Security’s organizational acronym is DHS. Each Component of DHS has its own organizational acronym.
- The Secretary’s title is Secretary of Homeland Security, not Secretary, Department of Homeland Security (similar to Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, and Secretary of the Treasury).
- “Component” (always capitalized) is the term used for organizational elements in the Department whose head reports directly to the Executive Leadership. It does not matter whether they are offices, directorates, or agencies.
OGC, I&A, MGMT, ESEC, ICE, etc. are referred to as “Components.”
- Use a slash to show Component/subcomponent relationships, e.g., ICE/ERO for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement’s Enforcement and Removal Operations.
- Always capitalize proper nouns. When using a noun that is a well-known short form of a proper noun it should also be capitalized.
e.g., the Department, Headquarters.
- Opening Paragraph
Responses written for signature by the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs should begin with:
“Thank you for your February 1, 2014 letter.”

If the originating letter is written to the Secretary, but the response has been delegated to another signing authority:

“Thank you for your February 1, 2014 letter. Secretary (last name) asked that I respond on his behalf.”

Specific Words

DHS uses this spelling of: Email/email, Website/website.

Do not use: e-mail, Web site, web site, web-site.

DHS uses the term ISIS, not ISIL.

DHS uses al Qaeda or Al Qaeda.

Write out the word percent. Use a percent sign (%) only within a table or chart.

Appendix B: Component List

Appendix C: Templates

Appendix D: Congressional Report Guidance

Guidelines for Preparing Congressional Reports

(b)(6)

CISA Congressional Report Template

(b)(6)

Appendix E: Section 8 Compliance

In 1998, Congress amended the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to require Federal agencies to ensure their Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is accessible and functional for people with disabilities.

Section 508 was enacted to eliminate barriers to information technology, open new opportunities for people with disabilities, and encourage development of technologies that will help achieve these goals. Under 29 U.S.C. 794 d, agencies must give employees with disabilities and members of the public access to information that is comparable to the access available to others without disabilities.

Within the DHS Management Directorate, the Office of Accessible Systems & Technology (OAST) is dedicated to providing all DHS Components with the tools needed to ensure individuals with disabilities have equal access to information.

OAST offers a range of accessibility services from training to technical assistance. Please visit the OAST Intranet site to learn more:

(b)(6)