Government of Yukon
Style Guide



Table of contents

About the Government of Yukon Style Guide 6
Tone of voice 6
The style guide online 6
Three steps to government style 6
Just ask 7
Where can I get these books? 7
Canadian Press online subscription 7
What if I'm writing scientific and technical documents? 7
What if I'm working on legislation? 8
Do you provide style guide information sessions or training? 8
Get in touch 8
The main things you need to know about Government of Yukon style 9
Accessible language 9
Government of Yukon 9
The Yukon 9
Spellings 10
Visual identity 10
Other bits and pieces 10
A to Z of government style 12
A 12
Abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms 12
Aboriginal Peoples 13
Acts and regulations 13
Addresses 15
And (ampersand) 16
Appendices 16
B 16
Bills 16

Boards and committees 17
Branch 17
Bullet point lists 17
C 19
Cabinet 19
Capital letters (case) 19
Commas 19
Commitment 20
Consultation 20
Crown 20
D 21
Dates 21
Departments and corporations 21
Design 24
Design services 24
Division 24
E 24
Emails 24
Engagement 24
25
F 25
First Nations 25
Flag 25
Formal titles 25
Forms 27
French 27
G 27
Gender 27
Government of Canada 28
Government of Yukon 28

29
H 29
Headings 29
Find guidance on writing titles. 29
He/she 29
Hyphens and dashes 29
I 30
Indigenous Peoples 30
The basics 30
Internet and digital terms 39
ISBNs and ISSNs 39
J 40
Job titles 40
L 41
Latin names 41
Legislative assembly, Legislature 41
Lists 41
M 41
Management Board 41
Members 42
Ministers 42
Ministerial Order 42
N 42
Northwest Territories 42
Numbers 42
Public materials 43
O 46
Order-in-Council 46
Outside 46
P 46

Page numbers ... 46
Periods ... 47
Platform ... 47
Precedence ... 47
Public engagement ... 48
Q ... 48
Quotation marks ... 48
R ... 49
Regulations ... 49
S ... 49
Scientific reports ... 49
Slashes ... 49
Spacing ... 50
Spelling ... 50
T ... 59
Telephone numbers ... 59
Territory ... 60
Technical and scientific reports ... 60
Time ... 60
Titles ... 60
2SLGBTQIA+ ... 65
U ... 65
Units, branches, divisions ... 65
Y ... 66
Yukon and the Yukon ... 66
(the) Yukon government ... 66
Grammar and punctuation ... 66
Apostrophes ... 66
Dashes and hyphens ... 67
Using dashes in sentences ... 67

Writing number spans 68
e.g., and i.e., ... 68
Who 69
Writing in plain language 70
Active voice 71
Address the user as 'you' 71
Using ‘we’ 71
Writing for Yukon.ca 71
Writing inclusively 72
Names 73
Objects 74
Parallel treatment 74
Personal pronouns 74
Places 76
Put the person first 76
Sexual identity 76
Writing about disabilities 77
Queries and comments 79

About the Government of Yukon Style Guide

The Government of Yukon style guide helps government staff provide information that meets the public's needs by being clear, accessible and consistent. We refer to this way of writing as our tone of voice.

Tone of voice

Our role as a government is to serve the public, so we need our writing to be clear and easy to understand and have a friendly, inclusive and open style. This is our tone of voice.

There are three main ways we create our tone of voice. We use:

- plain language;
- inclusive language; and
- a consistent style.

As we say in our brand standards, the tone of voice of our communications helps reflect our unified brand. Staff should adopt a clear and consistent approach to all our written materials. We want to leave Yukoners feeling confident, assured, heard, included and empowered.

The style guide online

We provide this PDF version of the style guide as a handy resource you can keep on your desktop or print as a hard copy. We keep it up to date, so for the most current version always visit https://guide.yukon.ca/style-guide.

Three steps to government style

There are three steps to Government of Yukon style.

1. Take a look at the main things you need to know about Government of Yukon style to see if what you need is there.
2. If it isn't, look for it in the online style guide or in this PDF version.

3. We base our style on existing reference books as much as possible, so if what you need isn't in the style guide, take a look at these books:
    - *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*
    - *The Canadian Style: A Guide to Writing and Editing*
    - *The Canadian Press Stylebook*
    - *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling*

Just ask

If you can't find what you're looking for, just ask. Talk to your department's Communications Branch or email the Executive Council Office at ecoinfo@yukon.ca.

We're always happy to help.

Where can I get these books?

Your communications colleagues probably have copies you can look at or you can buy these books in all the usual places. You can go to The Canadian Press site for hard copies of the the Stylebook and Caps and Spelling or for online subscriptions.

Canadian Press online subscription

If you're a Government of Yukon communications practitioner contact the Executive Council Office at ecoinfo@yukon.ca to ask for access to the online Canadian Press style guide and we'll set you up with an account.

What if I'm writing scientific and technical documents?

If you're writing a scientific report or working on some other type of technical document, follow government style where possible as well as the guidance in *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*. CSE is the Council of Science Editors.

What if I'm working on legislation?

Legislation is drafted by the Government of Yukon's Department of Justice who follow a standardized style.

Do you provide style guide information sessions or training?

Yes, we offer shorter information sessions as well as longer workshops. We can provide a general overview or a tailored session. Get in touch with us at ecoinfo@yukon.ca to discuss your team's needs.

Get in touch

If you have any queries or comments about Government of Yukon style, email the Communications Branch in the Executive Council Office at ecoinfo@yukon.ca.

The main things you need to know about Government of Yukon style

Our role as a government is to serve the public, so our writing needs to be clear, accessible and inclusive and have a friendly and open tone. We also want to all write to the same standard. These are the reasons we have a style guide. We've committed to these things on page eight of the brand standards.

Accessible language

- Use conversational language and active, shorter sentences.
- Write respectfully and make sure information is accessible.
- Avoid acronyms, abbreviations and initialisms.

Government of Yukon

- Our formal name is the Government of Yukon. Our informal name is the Yukon government.
- Note the small "g" for government and always use "the" in a sentence.
- We're never Yukon Government, Yukon Territorial Government or YTG.

The Yukon

- Use "the Yukon" not "Yukon" for internal and public-focused products such as reports, flyers, advertisements, speaking notes, news releases, letters, digital content and briefing notes.
- For formal products such as agreements and legislative documents use "Yukon" not "the Yukon."

Spellings

- We use Canadian Oxford Dictionary and Canadian Press spellings rather than American spellings. This means we include the extra vowels (colour) and use two “l”s (traveller).
- Write counsellor, traveller, panellist, colour, neighbour, favour, labour, behaviour and centre.
- Write licence and practice for the noun and licensed and practise for the verb. For example, I renewed my driver’s licence; the bar is licensed; the doctor’s practice; I’m practising the Safe 6.

Visual identity

- Use templates for documents such as PowerPoint presentations, letters and reports.
- Follow the quick guide to the visual identity for all external products – use the four elements of the fonts, colours, logo and a supporting graphic.
- Use Arial or the design fonts for day-to-day internal documents but always use the design fonts for public materials – the design fonts are Monserrat, Nunito Sans and Aleo.
- Use Arial for external emails – not everyone has our design fonts installed on their computer.

Other bits and pieces

- one space after a period, not two
- sentence case for headings (only the first word needs a capital letter)
- First Nation, First Nations governments, Traditional Territory, Settlement Land, Indigenous, Aboriginal, Elder, Citizen, Self-Government Agreement, self-governing
- the Department of Justice, not the Justice Department or Justice department or Justice Yukon
- “the Act” and “the Regulation” when you’re referring to specific legislation
- Communications Unit, Land Management Branch, Motor Vehicles Division

- 2017–18 not 2017/18 (use dashes not hyphens)
- Tuesday, June 29, 2021, not Tuesday June 29th 2019 (note the commas)

A to Z of government style

A

Abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms

Avoid using abbreviations, acronyms and initialisms if you possibly can. Don't use them in public information materials. Your readers don't want to keep having to check what an abbreviation stands for, plus capital letters are always harder to read.

The exceptions are abbreviations that have become part of the culture, such as RCMP, CBC and MLA.

- For internal documents, abbreviations and acronyms are allowed, as long as they are spelled out at least once with the acronym or abbreviation in brackets next to it.
- For public communications and key messages (including internal key messages), abbreviations and acronyms cannot be used.

There are different types of abbreviations. For example:

- acronyms are abbreviations that we form from the first letters of a name or phrase and can say as a word, such as NASA (National Aeronautics and Space Administration); and
- initialisms are abbreviations that we form from the first letters of a name or phrase and say each letter, such as CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Company).

Rather than use an abbreviation for a program, department or branch, use the name in full, such as "the Yukon Mineral Exploration Program" or "Health and Social Services" and then after that just write "the program" or "the department."

am and pm

Do not include periods in the abbreviations a.m. and p.m., which are short for the Latin "ante meridiem" and "post meridiem".

Not: The meeting will take place at 9 p.m., The meeting will take place at 9pm
But: The meeting will take place at 9 pm.

If you have to use an abbreviation

If you feel you must use an abbreviation, make sure you write the name in full first and then immediately write the abbreviation in brackets afterwards. For example, “the Communications Review Committee (CRC)…”

If you find you need to use several abbreviations, include them in a glossary and put the glossary at the beginning of your document, not at the end. Make it as easy as possible for your readers to understand what you’ve written.

i.e., and e.g.,

See the guidance on i.e., and e.g., in Grammar and punctuation.

Measurements

Write measurements in full.

Not: 90 kg, two ml, 100 m
But: 90 kilograms, two millilitres, 100 metres

Aboriginal Peoples

See Indigenous Peoples

Acts and regulations

For the proper name of an act or a bill, follow how it's written on the Yukon Legislative Assembly site or on the Government of Yukon's list of legislation.

Once an act has been assented to or a regulation has been passed, write the full name in italics. If the act or regulation has been passed but not yet proclaimed, still use italics.

Not: the Motor Vehicles Regulation has been passed
But: the *Motor Vehicles Regulation* has been passed

Only put acts and regulations in italics once they have been passed.

If you're referring to both an act and its regulations and they have been passed, use italics for their titles but not the connecting "and.”

Not: the Dental Profession Act and Dental Profession Regulations

But: the *Dental Profession Act* and *Dental Profession Regulations*

However, if you're referring to an act that has more than one regulation and those regulations have different names, don't put the reference to regulations in italics.

Not: The *Societies Act* and its *Regulations*, the *Societies Act* and *Regulations*

But: The *Societies Act* and its Regulations

As new regulations are being drafted, our style is to use the singular, so when you're referring to a new regulation, use the singular, not the plural. However, if you are citing an existing regulation and it uses the plural, use the plural. The Department of Justice can help you if you need guidance.

Not: Regulations
But: Regulation

Until an act has been passed, it should be referred to as a bill.

Not: the Archives and Public Records Management Act
But: the Archives and Public Records Management Bill

If an act has yet to be passed but for some reason you need to refer to it as an act rather than a bill, don't write it in italics.

Not: The Government of Yukon is committed to creating a *Cupcake Act* soon.
But: The Government of Yukon is committed to creating a Cupcake Act soon.

Use uppercase, not lowercase, when you are referring to a specific act, regulation or bill, or a schedule in an act.

Not: act, regulation, bill, schedule
But: Act, Regulation, Bill, Schedule

If you're writing about a bill in a news release:

Not: Bill number 123, Bill #123 or Bill 123
But: Bill No. 123

Once you've used the full name of the act or regulation, you can just refer to it as "the Act" or "the Regulation."

Use lowercase, however, when you're writing about acts and regulations generally.

Whenever a Minister's quotation, for example in a news release, refers to an act or to a regulation, write the name in full.

Don't italicize act acronyms. Only use an acronym for an act if your audience will know what it means.

Not: *YESAA*
But: YESAA

If you want to refer to a bill formally, write:

the Bill: *An Act to Amend the Cupcake Act*

Check you're using the correct name of the act you're referring to. Many act and regulation names, for example, don't have "Yukon" in them. If it does, it's because it relates to something that has Yukon in its name, such as Yukon University or Yukon Development Corporation. If you're unsure, check the Government of Yukon Legislation web page.

Not: *Yukon Agricultural Products Act*
But: Yukon's *Agricultural Products Act*, the Yukon *Agricultural Products Act*

Citations

In Yukon, when we refer to (or "cite") legislation in legal documents, we cite statutes as statutes of Yukon (SY) with the year, followed by the chapter number. For example, SY 2016, c.8. Statutes from the 2002 revision follow the same formula but with RSY 2002. Citations in acts do not include act names. When we cite a regulation, we use its Order-in-Council number. For more information about citations, talk to the Department of Justice.

Addresses

Follow Canada Post's guidelines.

Government of Yukon
Main Administration Building
2071 Second Avenue
Whitehorse, YT Y1A 1B2

And (ampersand)

Not: &
But: and

Appendices

Use appendix sections (appendices) for more detailed information that may be needed by some readers but which would interrupt the flow for most readers.

B

Bills

Until an act has been passed, refer to it as a bill.

Not: the Archives and Public Records Management Act
But: the Archives and Public Records Management Bill

If an act has yet to be passed but for some reason you need to refer to it as an act rather than a bill, do not write it in italics.

Not: The Government of Yukon is committed to creating a *Cupcake Act* soon.
But: The Government of Yukon is committed to creating a Cupcake Act soon.

If you want to refer to a bill formally, write "the Bill: An Act to Amend the Cupcake Act".

If you're writing about a bill in a news release:

Not: Bill number 123, Bill #123 or Bill 123
But: Bill No. 123

Boards and committees

We treat boards and committees as proper nouns so they should be capitalized.

Not: Accessibility Advisory committee, Mayo Housing Advisory board
But: Accessibility Advisory Committee, Mayo Housing Advisory Board

Once you have used the full name, avoid then referring to the board or committee by its acronym. Instead, just write “the board” or “the committee.”

Branch

See unit, branch, division.

Bullet point lists

We follow the Plain English Campaign’s guidance when we format bullet point lists. There are two main types of list.

- A list that is a continuous sentence with several points picked out.
- A list of separate points with an introductory statement.

With a list that’s part of a continuous sentence, put semicolons (;) after each point and start each point with a lowercase letter. Make sure each point follows logically and grammatically from the introduction.

Jean needed to take:

- a penknife;
- some string;
- a pad of paper; and
- a pen.

Here’s an example of a list where each point is separate and not part of one continuous sentence.

Jean needed to take the following.

- A penknife
- Some string
- A pad of paper

- A blue pen

Note that a colon after "following" isn't necessary in the above example.

Here's an example of a longer list which is a continuous sentence (this example is based on text from a 2014 document called A Northern Vision: Building a Better North).

The territories continue to work together on a number of fronts, including:

- monitoring our shared renewable resources, such as caribou and polar bears;
- researching the cumulative effects of development projects on the environment and wildlife species;
- researching the effects of climate change on permafrost;
- collaborating on social issues; and
- speaking with a common voice about the infrastructure needs of the North.

Here's an example of a longer list where the points are complete sentences (also based on wording in A Northern Vision: Building a Better North), which means there doesn't need to be a colon to introduce the list.

Recent changes in the North include the following.

- The Northwest Territories has negotiated a devolution agreement with the federal government to take on responsibilities related to land and water, similar to that in Yukon.
- Canada's term as Arctic Council chair has brought international partners and projects to the nation's northern regions, enhancing our relationships and profile across the circumpolar world, as well as with non-Arctic states.
- The federal government's Statement on Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy delineates many issues in common with the territories, including promoting economic and social development, protecting the Arctic environment and empowering the people of the North through devolution of political power.

It's often better to use bullet points rather than numbers or letters in a list, as bullet points draw your attention to each point without giving you extra information to take in.

C

Cabinet

Not: cabinet, cabinet submission, Cabinet Submission

But: Cabinet, Cabinet submission

Capital letters (case)

Put nouns in lowercase as much as possible because this makes text easier to read. General names of things such as driver's licences and occupancy permits are easier to read when we don't give them capital letters. We also write seasons in lowercase: spring, summer, fall, winter.

Also see spelling and capitalization and Indigenous Peoples.

Commas

When you list items in a series, don't put a comma before the "and." We base our style for commas on The Canadian Press Stylebook.

Not: There were seniors, Elders, and committee members at the meeting.

But: There were seniors, Elders and committee members at the meeting.

Sometimes, however, we write lists where one of the items in the list has an "and" in it, such as "Health and Social Services" in this list:

The departments of Justice, Health and Social Services and Community Services

In some cases, it might be clearer for the reader if you add a comma before the final "and". This is called a serial comma or an Oxford comma. We do not follow this style as a rule, only when it's necessary for clarity. It's often easier to simply rearrange a sentence.

Not: Justice, Health and Social Services and Community Services all worked on the project.

But: Justice, Health and Social Services, and Community Services all worked on the project.

Commitment

When you write about government commitments, don't refer to them as platform commitments. Once the government is elected they are the government so their commitments then become government priorities.

Not: platform commitments

But: government priorities

Consultation

We use the term consultation when the Government of Yukon has a legal obligation to consult, such as consultation requirements established in Yukon statutes and in treaties signed with Indigenous governments and groups.

We do not use the term "consultation" to refer to engagement with individuals or the public, or when engaging with Indigenous governments or groups when there is no legal obligation to consult.

Not: consulting with Indigenous people, consulting with First Nations people, consulting First Nations

But: consulting with Indigenous governments and groups, consulting with First Nations governments, engaging with Indigenous people, engaging First Nations

Crown

When referring to public Yukon land, use "public land" rather than "Crown land" and "government corporations" rather than "Crown corporations."

Not: Crown land, Crown Land, crown land

But: public land

Not: Crown corporation, Crown Corporation, crown corporation

But: government corporation

D

Dates

Use a dash (not a hyphen) for overlapping, two-year spans.

See dashes and hyphens under Grammar and punctuation.

Not: 2022/23

But: 2022–23

Also use a dash for multiple year spans.

Not: 2022/25

But: 2022–25

See how to find dashes on your keyboard.

Write months in full wherever you can and write "to" rather than using a dash between dates.

Monday, August 14, 2022

December 4 to 6

December 2022

When dates – including the month, day and year – appear in a sentence, put a comma after the year.

January 1, 2022, was the first day the agreement came into effect.

Departments and corporations

When you're communicating with the public, think from the public's point of view. They're likely to be more interested in the service or program you're writing about,

rather than the name of your department. You might not need to mention the department at all.

Also, we want people to know that we're one government working together to serve Yukoners. Therefore, always try to write "the Government of Yukon" rather than your department's name.

If you need to refer to a specific department:

Not: Economy, Tourism and Culture department
But: Department of Economy, Tourism and Culture, or Economy, Tourism and Culture

Not: Yukon Health and Social Services, Yukon Department of Highways and Public Works, Energy, Mines and Resources department

But: Health and Social Services, Department of Health and Social Services, Highways and Public Works, Department of Highways and Public Works, Energy, Mines and Resources, Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

After the first full mention, just put “the department”.

Using just “the Government of Yukon” is particularly handy when you’d otherwise have to list several departments. But if you need to refer to more than one department:

Not: the Departments of Environment, Justice, and Energy Mines and Resources

But: the departments of Environment, Justice, and Energy, Mines and Resources

Don't use other names for departments, such as Environment Yukon or Yukon Education.

If you’re writing about departments, use the same name consistently so your reader does not get confused and think there might be two different organizations.

Not: Energy Mines and Resources, Energy, Mines & Resources
But: Energy, Mines and Resources

Not: Health & Social Services
But: Health and Social Services

Not: Highways & Public Works
But: Highways and Public Works

Not: the Yukon Housing Corporation
But: Yukon Housing Corporation

If you're writing internal government documents and can't use the full names of departments and corporations for any reason, or can't write "the department" or "the corporation," use the following abbreviations. Never use these abbreviations in public materials. (Always avoid using any abbreviations in public materials unless they're very well-known by your readers.)

- Community Services (CS)
- Economy, Tourism and Culture (ETC)
- Education (EDU)
- Energy, Mines and Resources (EMR)
- Environment (ENV)
- Executive Council Office (ECO)
- Finance (FIN)
- French Language Services Directorate (FLS)
- Health and Social Services (HSS)
- Highways and Public Works (HPW)
- Justice (JUS)
- Public Service Commission (PSC)
- Women and Gender Equity Directorate (WGED)
- Yukon Energy Corporation (YEC)
- Yukon Development Corporation (YDC)
- Yukon Housing Corporation (YHC – but avoid confusion with the Yukon Hospital Corporation)
- Yukon Liquor Corporation (YLC)
- Workers' Safety and Compensation Board (WSCB)
- Yukon Lottery Commission, Lotteries Yukon (LY)

School authorities

In the Yukon there are three school authorities that between them oversee all Yukon public schools. The three school authorities are:

- First Nation School Board;
- Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon; and
- Yukon Education.

Yukon Education is under the Government of Yukon's Department of Education and oversees the schools the department manages.

Design

All public, designed materials must follow the Government of Yukon brand standards

Design services

For design services contact visual.design@yukon.ca.

Division

See unit, branch, division.

E

Emails

Write email addresses in lowercase. This applies even if there's a name or an acronym or abbreviation in the email address.

For example:

abc-service@yukon.ca

jane.doe@yukon.ca

Formatting your email signature

Find out how to format your Government of Yukon email signature in brand applications.

Engagement

Email engageyukon@yukon.ca for guidance on involving the public and stakeholders in your project. If you have a legal obligation to consult First Nations, email aboriginal.relations@yukon.ca for advice.

F

First Nations

See Indigenous Peoples

Flag

There are restrictions on how you can use the Yukon flag.

Email visual.design@yukon.ca to find out about these standards.

Formal titles

For formal titles of office or rank, rather than ordinary job titles, use capitals (uppercase). If you're writing about a Minister, also use capitals for their portfolio.

You might also find useful guidance under titles in our online style guide.

Not: premier Jane Doe, minister Jane Doe, Justice Minister Jane Doe, minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate Jane Doe

But: Premier Jane Doe, Minister Jane Doe, Minister of Justice Jane Doe, Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate Jane Doe

Not: chief Jane Doe, mayor Jane Doe, dr. Jane Doe

But: Chief Jane Doe, Mayor Jane Doe, Dr. Jane Doe

If you're writing about Premiers and Ministers in a generic way without referring to specific individuals, use uppercase.

Not: The premiers, ministers and chiefs will meet tomorrow with the prime minister

But: The Premiers, Ministers and Chiefs will meet tomorrow with the Prime Minister

Not: A prime minister, premier and a commissioner have very different roles

But: A Prime Minister, Premier and a Commissioner have very different roles

Write "former" and "acting" and so on in lowercase.

Not: Acting Deputy Minister Jane Doe, Former Mayor John Doe, Former Commissioner Jane Doe

But: acting Deputy Minister Jane Doe, former Mayor John Doe, former Commissioner Jane Doe

When you're referring to a Minister's portfolio or a Chief's First Nation, put the portfolio or First Nation first and don't use a comma.

Not: Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Jane Doe, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations chief, Jane Doe
But: Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources Jane Doe, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Chief Jane Doe

If you're referring to a Minister who has more than one department and one or more of the departments have "and" in their name, use a comma to separate the departments.

Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, and Highways and Public Works Jane Doe.

Letters and messages

The format for writing the Premier's or a Minister's name at the end of a message or letter is to put their name on the first line and their title on the second line with no commas.

For example:
Jane Doe
Premier

Jane Doe
Minister of Environment

Honourable

The title "Honourable" isn't generally used in the Government of Yukon as our tone of voice is more inclusive and informal.

An exception is when the Premier and Ministers address the Speaker in tributes and ministerial statements in the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Not: Mr. Speaker
But: Honourable Speaker

Also, "Honourable" may sometimes be used in joint news releases, if it's another government's preference.

Not: Hon. Minister, honorable minister

But: the Honourable Jane Brown, Minister of Justice

When federal Ministers are referred to as "the Honourable," extend the same courtesy to territorial and provincial Ministers. For example, "Minister of Education the Honourable Jane Doe said today..."

If you'd like more guidance about formal titles than we've included here, refer to The Canadian Style. (However, note that the guidance here takes priority over what you'll find in The Canadian Style so make sure you read this first.)

You might also find useful guidance under job titles.

Forms

Visit the Digital Services Delivery Guide to find out more about forms and to request a new form.

French

Visit the Digital Services Delivery Guide to find out how to translate your service or website. Contact french.translation@yukon.ca and french.web@yukon.ca for all your French translation needs.

There are some variations in style between English and French because the two languages have different rules and approaches.

G

Gender

See How to write inclusively.

Government of Canada

Not: the government of Canada, the Federal Government

But: the Government of Canada, the federal government

Government of Yukon

Our preferred, formal name is the Government of Yukon and our informal name is the Yukon government (with a small “g”). Use “the” when you are writing our name in a sentence. Use our formal name for public materials.

Not: the Yukon Government, Yukon Government, the Government of the Yukon, Yukon government, Yukon Territorial Government, the government of Yukon

But: the Government of Yukon, the Yukon government

Avoid using just “Yukon” or "the Yukon" when you mean the Yukon government. There are many governments in the Yukon so you can’t assume your reader will know whether you’re talking about the Government of Yukon specifically or all governments in the Yukon collectively.

Only write “the Yukon” when you’re referring to the territory itself.

Lists of governments

When you’re referring to more than one government or municipality, give them parallel treatment. For example:

"The Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon and the City of Whitehorse signed the memorandum of understanding."

"The governments of Yukon, Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Carcross/Tagish First Nation are developing a local area plan."

Abbreviation

Never use an abbreviation for the Government of Yukon in public materials. Write the full name or, for example, just write “the government” or “we.” If you want to use an acronym internally, many staff use YG.

Not: YTG, Yg

But: YG (internally only)

Also see territory.

H

Headings

Use lowercase for all headings. This applies to all materials, including web page titles and web page headings and subheadings.

Only capitalize:

- the 1st letter of the 1st word in the heading; and
- proper nouns.

This is called sentence case.

Not: Where to Buy an Emergency Kit, apply for the community development fund

But: Where to buy an emergency kit, Apply for the Community Development Fund

Find guidance on writing titles.

He/she

Not: he/she

But: they

Also see How to write clearly and inclusively.

Hyphens and dashes

Hyphens

Dashes and hyphens are easy to get mixed up. Dashes are longer than hyphens and have different uses. Hyphens are mostly used to connect two words that come before and describe a noun.

Not: She worked for a non–profit organization

But: She worked for a non-profit organization

Dashes

We use dashes instead of commas and parentheses when we want to provide more emphasis.

When the committee discovered the errors – all nine of them – they asked for a new draft.

We use en dashes, not em dashes. En dashes are shorter than em dashes and have a space either side of them.

When you're writing about a span or range of numbers, dates or time, use "to" rather than a dash.

Not: Read pages 11–17 in the report; from 10 am – 2 pm

But: Read pages 11 to 17 in the report; from 10 am to 2 pm

I

Indigenous Peoples

Terminology matters. In Canada's history, terminology has been used in hurtful and derogatory ways that have caused harm to Indigenous individuals and communities. The Yukon government strives to be respectful and accurate in our language. Using appropriate terminology conveys recognition of these harms and respect and is an important aspect of reconciliation.

The basics

Use the terminology that's preferred by the Indigenous government or group. If you aren't sure about their preferences, ask them.

Avoid possessive language that implies ownership. For example, “Yukon’s First Nations”.

- Pay attention to capitalization. Many terms are proper nouns or legal terms. Capitalization also indicates respect.
- Be specific. Use the most specific term, rather than a generic term, whenever you can.
- Acknowledge diversity. Use plurals to indicate you are aware of diversity. For example, peoples, nations, cultures, histories, perspectives.
- Use present tense. Indigenous Peoples exist right now. Only use past tense for things that are historical.
- Emphasize strength. Use language that resonates with strength and empowerment, rather than need and deficiency.
- Avoid stereotypes and outdated language.

Indigenous or Aboriginal

The terms "Indigenous" and "Aboriginal" both refer collectively to the three groups (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) recognized in the Constitution of Canada. "Indigenous" is emerging as a preferred term, but you may use "Aboriginal" if:

- it's the preference of a group;
- you're quoting a document that uses the term;
- you've received legal advice to use the term; or
- it's part of a proper name.

Use the term "Indigenous" or "Aboriginal" only when you're referring to groups that could include a mixture of First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments or Citizens, otherwise use the more specific term. For example, First Nations, Yukon First Nations, Inuvialuit, Selkirk First Nation.

First Nations

First Nations collectively make up the largest category of Indigenous Peoples in Canada. First Nation and First Nations is a term that came into common use in the 1970s to replace the word "Indian" which many people found offensive. The people covered by this term include “Status” and “non-Status” individuals which refer to whether the person is entitled to register under the federal Indian Act. There are 14

Yukon First Nations and several transboundary First Nations who have traditional territory in the Yukon.

Not: Indian, Native

But: First Nations

The term First Nations can refer to the governments or the individuals. Make sure it's clear which meaning you intend when you use the term.

Pluralization

The term First Nations is plural when we use it as an adjective and singular or plural when we use it as a noun. Use the plural form to indicate that there are many separate nations in the Yukon and across Canada. Some First Nations use pluralization in their names to indicate more than one nation within their government.

Not: First Nation governments, First Nation languages, Indigenous government, Champagne and Aishihik First Nation

But: First Nations governments, First Nations languages, Indigenous governments, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations

Inuit

Inuit are the Indigenous Peoples of the Inuvialuit Settlement Region (the Northwest Territories, Yukon), Nunavut, Nunavik (Northern Quebec) and Nunatsiavut (Northern Labrador). The Inuvialuit are an Inuit group with treaty rights in northern Yukon.

Use "Inuit" (plural) or "Inuk" (singular). Use "Inuvialuit" (plural) or "Inuvialuk" (singular).

The translation of Inuit is "the people." Therefore it's redundant to add "people" after "Inuit."

Métis

The Métis emerged as a distinct Indigenous group in the late 18th century, in fur-trade linked communities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan Alberta and parts of Ontario, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories. First Nations women and European fur traders had children together and then that population of mixed ancestry individuals intermarried and formed culturally unique communities, resulting in a new and distinct Indigenous group. There are people of Métis heritage living in the Yukon, but there's no record of historic Métis communities here, except the Dene Métis people of the Acho Dene Koe First Nation who assert traditional territory in Southern Yukon.

Use "Métis" to refer to people who identify as Métis, are of historic Métis Nation ancestry and who are accepted by the Métis Nation. Do not use the term Métis as a generic term for individuals of mixed Indigenous and non-Indigenous descent.

Governance

Indigenous people are rights-holders with constitutionally protected Indigenous rights. Most often they're represented by an elected government (for example, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation), but in some cases, they choose to be represented by a not-for-profit corporation (for example, Gwich'in Tribal Council, Tetlit Gwich'in Council and Inuvialuit Regional Corporation). This is why we sometimes use the inclusive term "Indigenous governments and groups". We refer to all Indigenous governments as "governments" whether they have a treaty or not.

Some Indigenous organizations we work with are advocacy organizations rather than governments or rights-holder representative groups. Some examples include the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Kaska Dena Council. Engaging with these organizations does not replace direct government-to-government consultation unless the Indigenous governments formally agree to be represented by the organization for the purpose of consultation.

Modern treaties and comprehensive land claim agreements

Comprehensive land claim agreements and modern treaties are different phrases that mean the same thing.

- 11 of 14 Yukon First Nations have signed Final and Self-Government Agreements.
- Yukon First Nation Final Agreements are constitutionally protected modern treaties, or comprehensive land claim agreements, that are based on the Umbrella Final Agreement. The Self-Government Agreements are an additional agreement that define First Nations' self-government powers including law-making, taxation, and programs and services.
- The Inuvialuit and Tetlit Gwich'in, who are based in the Northwest Territories, also have modern treaties that provide for rights (and for the Tetlit Gwich'in land) in the Yukon.

Not: non-self-governing First Nations, unsettled First Nations, non-settled First Nations, settled First Nations

But: First Nations with or without treaties, First Nations with or without Final Agreements, treaty First Nations, non-treaty First Nations

Spelling and pronunciation

If a First Nation requests a different spelling, follow their wishes. Use the full name or write "the First Nation" once you've established which First Nation you're referring to.

Some First Nations:

- use a plural for "Nations" in their name and others do not;
- do not use "First Nation" in their name because their name can be translated as "the people" or "the nation", which makes adding "First Nation" or "people" redundant; or
- use a different name when referring to their government versus their people.

The abbreviations are included for reference, but do not use them in public communications materials.

We have also included the pronunciation for each Yukon First Nation and transboundary group.

Yukon First Nations governments

The abbreviations are included for reference, but do not use them in public materials.

We also include the pronunciation for each First Nation.

First Nation and abbreviation	Pronunciation	Community
Carcross/Tagish First Nation (C/TFN)	CAR-cross TAG-ish	Carcross
Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN)	SHAM-pain and EH-she-ack	Haines Junction
Kluane First Nation (KFN)	clue-AH-nee	Burwash Landing
Kwanlin Dün First Nation (KDFN)	QUAN-lin done	Whitehorse
Liard First Nation (LFN)	lee-ARD	• Watson Lake • Lower Post (BC)

Little Salmon/Carmacks First Nation (LSCFN)	little salmon CAR-max	Carmacks
First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun (FNNND)	NA-cho nye-ack DONE	Mayo
First Nation of Na-Cho Nyäk Dun refers to the government; Na-Cho Nyäk Dun or Nacho Nyak Dun refers to the nation of people, when referencing Final and Self-Government Agreement use First Nation of Nacho Nyak Dun.		
Ross River Dena Council (RRDC)	ross River DEN-a	Ross River
Selkirk First Nation (SFN)	SELL-kirk	Pelly Crossing
Ta'an Kwäch'än Council (TKC)	ta-on QUAA-chaan	Whitehorse
Teslin Tlingit Council (TTC)	tes-lin KLING-kit	Teslin
Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in (TH)	tron-DEK WITCH-in	Dawson
Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in Government refers to the government; Tr’ondëk Hwëch’in refers to the people.		
Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation (VGFN)	vun-TUT GWITCH-in	Old Crow
Gwitchin (when writing about people from Old Crow, Yukon) Gwich’in language Gwich’in, Gwich’in Peoples (when writing about the whole nation or Gwich’in Peoples) Gwich'in, Gwich'in Peoples (when writing about the whole nation or Gwich'in Peoples)		
White River First Nation (WRFN)	White river	Beaver Creek
Transboundary Indigenous groups		
Acho Dene Koe First Nation	Aa-CHO DEN-eh Co	Fort Liard, NT

Gwich'in of the Northwest Territories Gwich'in Tribal Council (GTC)	GWITCH-in	Inuvik, NT
Tetlit Gwich'in Council (TGC)	TET-lit GWITCH-in	Fort McPherson, NT
Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC)	In-OO-via-LOO-it	Inuvik, NT
Kaska of British Columbia		
Daylu Dena Council (DDC)	DAY-loo DEN-a	Lower Post, BC
DDC is part of the Liard First Nation		
Dease River First Nation (DRFN)	Dease River	Good Hope Lake, BC
Kwadacha Nation (KN)	KWA-da-CHA	Fort Ware, BC
Kaska Dena Council (KDC)	kas-KA DEN-a	
Tahltan Central Government (TCG)	TALL-tan	• Dease Lake • Telegraph Creek • Iskut, BC
Taku River Tlingit First Nation (TRTFN)	Ta-KU River KLING-kit	Atlin, BC

Shäw Kwä'ą health authority

- Write out the full name, Shäw Kwä'ą / Health and Wellness Yukon / Sante et mieux-être Yukon, the first time it appears in a document or on a website.
- After the first mention, shorten the name to Shäw Kwä'ą.
- When you are giving a speech, say the full name first then use the shorter version.
- On a website or in a digital product, you can use Shäw Kwä'ą for titles or headings. The full name should then be written out the first time it appears in the body of the text, followed by the shorter name for subsequent mentions.
- The word "health authority" is not capitalized when you are referring to the organization.
- Shäw Kwä'ą is Show Kwah Aw, where the Aw rhymes with ‘saw’.

Capitalization

Capitalize names of governments, groups and languages:

- Indigenous, Aboriginal
- Indigenous Peoples
- First Nations, Métis, Inuit
- Northern Tutchone, Athabaskan

Capitalize legally defined terms:

- Final Agreement
- Self-Government Agreement
- Traditional Territory (when you're referring to specific, legally defined territories)
- Settlement Land
- Citizen (of a First Nation)
- Inuvialuit Settlement Region
- Umbrella Final Agreement
- Formal titles such as Chief, Elder, Grand Chief

Do not capitalize general terms:

- self-government
- Aboriginal rights
- treaty rights
- transboundary First Nation
- traditional territory (when you're using it generally and not referring to a specific, legally defined territory)

Capitalize:

- Survivor (when you're referring to someone impacted by the residential school system in Canada, whether directly or through intergenerational trauma)
- Traditional Knowledge
- “Peoples” but not “people” (“Peoples” indicates multiple distinct communities or nations, whereas “people” indicates a group of individuals – for example, “Indigenous Peoples have constitutionally protected rights in Canada” and “there were a number of Indigenous people at the meeting”)

Terms to avoid

Consider the historical connotations of the words you use and the way that language can empower or disempower the communities they refer to.

- "Stakeholder" is a common term for those who could be impacted by a project. This term can offend Indigenous governments as they are more than "stakeholders". They are "rights holders" whose rights are protected in the Canadian Constitution. It's more appropriate to:
    - refer to Indigenous governments as partners or rights holders; or
    - name them specifically when they're a group that will be engaged or consulted.
- "Yukon's First Nations", "our First Nations" and "our First Nations partners" are commonly used, but this is possessive language that indicates ownership. Instead write "Yukon First Nations", "First Nations partners" or "in partnership with First Nations governments".

Acknowledgements

Events and speaking notes:

Include a traditional territory acknowledgement if you're hosting an event or writing speaking notes. Acknowledge the First Nation whose home community you're in. Remember that Whitehorse is the home community of both Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.

Examples of common acknowledgments:

- I gratefully acknowledge that we are on the Traditional Territory of [First Nation].
- I thank [First Nation] for welcoming us to their community.
- I thank the community of [First Nation] for hosting us on their Traditional Territory.

Email signatures:

Government of Yukon employees may want to acknowledge the traditional territory where they work in email signatures. If you choose to do this, some wording options include:

- I respectfully acknowledge that I work within the Traditional Territory of [First Nation].

- I respectfully acknowledge that I work within the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples. (if you work throughout the territory)

Words with symbols

Some First Nations' names contain umlauts. To access these symbols go to "insert" then "symbol" in Word.

Internet and digital terms

- cyberspace
- cyber-bullying
- e-commerce
- email
- e-waste
- hashtag
- home page
- Instagram
- internet
- intranet
- livestream
- open data
- selfie
- SharePoint
- the web
- tweet
- web
- web page
- website

ISBNs and ISSNs

International Standard Book Numbers (ISBNs) are used to identify one-off, text-based products such as books, DVDs and maps.

International Standard Serial Numbers (ISSNs) are used to identify text-based serial publications such as annual reports and newsletters.

At the Government of Yukon, you are more likely to need an ISSN than an ISBN. Sometimes a publication you are working on will already have an ISSN number from previous editions.

On printed materials, the preferred place to put an ISSN is the upper right-hand corner of the cover. Always put the letters ISSN before the number.

Other good locations for the ISSN are the masthead area, the copyright page or in the publishing statement.

On non-printed materials, such as a DVD, try to put the ISSN on the packaging as well on an electronic page.

If a publication has both an ISSN and an ISBN, then print both numbers.

Find out more about **ISSNs** and **ISBNs**.

J

Job titles

All positions from Deputy Ministers and “above”, such as Ministers and the Premier, must be in uppercase.

For ordinary job titles “below” Deputy Ministers, such as directors, analysts, officers and assistants, always use lowercase in public materials. This is because capital letters are harder to read.

We recommend that all job titles "below" Deputy Ministers in the government hierarchy are in lowercase in all government materials whether they’re public or internal. However, we recognize that in reports and internal documents you may prefer to use uppercase for all job titles.

Whatever you decide, you must use a consistent style within one document and related documents.

You might also find useful guidance under formal titles.

L

Latin names

See Spelling/Department-specific spellings/Environment.

Legislative assembly, Legislature

Not: Yukon legislative assembly, legislative assembly

But: Yukon Legislative Assembly, Legislative Assembly

Not: legislature

But: Legislature

The Legislature is not another word for Legislative Assembly. The Legislative Assembly comprises the elected MLAs, while the Legislature comprises the elected MLAs and the commissioner.

For more information about Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary procedures, visit Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Not: members of the legislative assembly

But: Members of the Legislative Assembly, MLAs

Lists

See bullet point lists.

M

Management Board

Not: Management board, management board, Management Board Submission

But: Management Board, Management Board submission

Members

Not: members of the legislative assembly, member of parliament, member of the senate

But: Members of the Legislative Assembly, MLAs, Member of Parliament, MP, Member of the Senate

Ministers

See formal titles

Ministerial Order

Not: ministerial order (except when you're referring to ministerial orders generally)

But: Ministerial Order (when you're referring to a specific Ministerial Order)

N

Northwest Territories

Not: Northwest Territories, N.W.T.

But: the Northwest Territories, the NWT

Numbers

The Government of Yukon takes a flexible approach to writing numbers. The style you use depends on what you're writing and who's reading it. Be consistent within a document or group of products.

The four main types of products and content are:

- public materials;
- digital content:
- internal government materials; and

- technical, scientific and financial documents.

Public materials

For materials such as news releases, flyers, brochures, strategies and annual reports, write:

- numbers one to nine in letters; and
- numbers 10 and above in digits.

If you cannot rearrange a sentence to avoid starting with a number, write the number as a word.

Not: 19 organizations responded to the survey.

But: Nineteen organizations responded to the survey.

The only exception is when you're writing a news release heading that starts with a number. Write that number as a digit, not a word.

Digital content

In digital content write all numbers as digits. This includes using a digit at the start of a sentence or heading.

Not: Three ways to take part

But: 3 ways to take part

The only exception is when you're using a number as part of a phrase or expression or more casually.

Not: 1 of the ways to take part is to attend a focus group, It's 1 of the highest scores, 100s of people were at the meeting

But: One of the ways to take part is to attend a focus group, It's one of the highest scores, Hundreds of people were at the meeting

Also see the guidance on Ordinals.

Internal government materials

Write numbers one to nine in letters, and write 10 and above in digits in materials including briefing notes and Cabinet submissions.

Technical, scientific and financial documents

Write numbers in technical, scientific and financial reports as digits. This is so they're visible, distinct, clear and precise.

Commas in numbers

Include a comma in numbers of 1,000 and above.

Not: 2000

But: 2,000

Money

This guidance applies to writing about money in materials such as web pages, news releases, speeches, social media content and annual reports. It does not apply to documents such as spreadsheets and financial reports.

You can include ".00" in money amounts if it helps to make formatting consistent.

For millions, round amounts down to 1 or 2 digits after the decimal point.

Not: $110.553 million, $1.643 million

But: $110.5 million, "more than $110 million", $1.6 million

For billions, you can round amounts down to up to 3 digits after the decimal point.

Do not use "k" to mean thousands. Use zeroes.

Not: $100k, $100 k

But: $100,000

Be cautious about any rounding up.

Ordinals

Ordinals describe the position of things in a list, such as 1st, 2nd, 3rd and so on.

In everything except digital content, write out first to ninth as words. For numbers 10 and above write 10th, 15th, 20th and so on.

Not: They came 3rd in the race, It was their fiftieth anniversary

But: They came third in the race, It was their 50th anniversary

Ordinals in addresses and directions

Use ordinals for street names and floors in addresses and directions.

Not: Second Avenue, Third Street, fourth floor

But: 2nd Avenue, 3rd Street, 4th floor

View the guidance on writing addresses and contact information.

Ordinals in digital content

Use numbers for ordinals in digital content, except when you're using an ordinal as a regular word in a phrase.

Use ordinals for positions, ranks and sequences:

Not: Follow the first, second and third steps, The developer is working on the first of the subdivision's 3 phases

But: Follow the 1st, 2nd and 3rd steps, The developer is working on the 1st of the subdivision's 3 phases

Avoid using ordinals as regular words:

Not: 1st aid kit, They were the 1st to arrive

But: first-aid kit, They were the first to arrive

Ordinal sizes

Never use superscript for ordinals in digital or any other content. This is because:

- superscript is harder to read; and
- screen readers often do not read them out correctly.

Not: 2nd place, 10th floor, 100th Street

But: 2nd place, 10th floor, 100th Street

Per cent

Write per cent as 2 words in all cases except in financial reports and documents. Use per cent for the Budget address.

Tables

Use digits in tables, not words.

911

Not: 9-1-1
But: 911

O

Order-in-Council

Write in full and don't use the abbreviation (OIC) in any public materials.

Outside

Yukoners tend to use the word "outside" when referring to anywhere that's not within the Yukon. This can come across as insular, depending on your reader.

Not: Outside

But: outside

P

Page numbers

Keep page numbers as simple as possible.

Not: p4, p.4
But: 4, page four, page 4

Consider helping your reader find their way around a document by including section or chapter headings in the footer.

Periods

Put one space after a period, not two.

Always put a period at the end of a sentence when it ends with an email or web address (but not when it isn't a sentence).

Not: Learn more at www.yukon.ca
But: Learn more at www.yukon.ca.

Not: For more information: www.yukon.ca.
But: For more information: www.yukon.ca

Platform

See commitment

Precedence

The Government of Yukon table of precedence sets the order, by position, for people who are:

- attending ceremonies, functions and events; or
- being included in official documents.

Use the following order when you're writing news releases or speaking notes or organizing events.

- Governor General of Canada
- Prime Minister of Canada
- Commissioner of Yukon
- Premier of the Yukon
- federal Cabinet members
- Speaker of the Yukon Legislative Assembly
- Yukon First Nations Chiefs
- Grand Chief of the Executive of the Council of Yukon First Nations
- Ambassador or High Commissioner (Foreign) accredited to Canada
- Justice of the Supreme Court of Yukon
- Members of the Government of Yukon Executive Council (Cabinet)
- Leader of the Official Opposition
- Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly

- Member of Parliament for Yukon
- Member of the Senate for Yukon
- RCMP Divisional Commander
- Armed Forces Commander
- Judge or Justice of the Territorial Court
- Heads of Consular Posts (Foreign)
- Mayors
- Government of Yukon Deputy Ministers and senior officials with the status of Deputy Ministers
- presidents or executive directors of non-governmental organizations
- Courtesy: Other dignified positions (such as former Commissioners or government leaders, current councillors, Elders)

Public engagement

Public engagement is a planned process that gathers input from the public to use in decision making. The process evolves over time. It gathers input that cannot be obtained from other government interactions with the public. Public engagement is all about helping the government with decision making and should not happen in the absence of a decision.

When the Government of Yukon has a legal obligation to consult with an Indigenous government or group, this is referred to as a consultation, not a public engagement.

Find out more about our approach to public engagement by emailing ecoinfo@yukon.ca.

Q

Quotation marks

Headings

Use double quotation marks in text and single quotation marks in headings.

Quotations

Place punctuation such as commas and periods outside quotation marks unless the punctuation is part of the text you're quoting or you're quoting a complete sentence.

Not: Some people take part in activities to “get away.”

But: Some people take part in activities to “get away”.

Not: The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms says everyone has “freedom of conscience and religion.”

But: The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms says everyone has “freedom of conscience and religion”.

Not: The focus group participant said: "I've had type 1 diabetes since I was 29".

But: The focus group participant said: "I've had type 1 diabetes since I was 29."

Premier and ministerial statements

Start each paragraph of the statement with double quotation marks. Close the quotation marks only at the end of the final paragraph of the statement.

View a good example.

R

Regulations

See acts and regulations.

S

Scientific reports

See technical and scientific reports.

Slashes

Do not use slashes. They're often unclear and ambiguous.

Screen readers read web text out loud for people who are visually impaired. It can be confusing when they say the word "slash".

Instead of writing "and/or" choose whether "and" or "or" is accurate and use that. Sometimes you may mean both. If so, write "both" or "either".

Not: and/or

But: and, or, both, either

Not: 24/7

But: 24 hours a day, seven days a week

Use a hyphen to connect equal terms or words rather than a slash.

Not: federal/provincial/territorial

But: federal-provincial-territorial

Spacing

See periods.

Spelling

Use Canadian spellings, based on:

- *The Canadian Press Stylebook*;
- *The Canadian Press Caps and Spelling*; and
- *Canadian Oxford Dictionary*

Here are some examples, with several others below in the bullet point list.

Not: color, neighbor, favor, counselor, traveler, panelist, focussed
But: colour, neighbour, favour, counsellor, traveller, panellist, focused

Not: license (noun), defense, organise
But: licence (noun), license (verb), defence, organize

You can set your computer to Canadian spellings. If you work at the Government of Yukon and are not sure how to do this you can get help from the ICT support team, email service.desk@yukon.ca.

A list of words and terms we often use follows. You might also find these links useful:

- Capitalization
- Departments and corporations
- First Nations spellings and references
- Internet and digital terms

Common words and terms

- 1-bedroom home, 3-bedroom home
- advisor (but use "adviser" when you're referring to someone who has the necessary credentials under the Securities Act to advise people on investments and buying or selling securities)
- artists- and writers-in-residence
- barrier-free
- B&B
- Yukon Bureau of Statistics (not the Yukon Bureau of Statistics)
- busing (not bussing)
- campgrounds (campgrounds have individual campsites)
- can-can
- CBC Yukon
- child care (not childcare), avoid daycare and day care
- Colourful Five Percent (use “percent” only when referring to Jim Robb's work, otherwise use “per cent”)
- communications strategy (not communication strategy)
- Community Development Fund
- communities, in Yukon communities
- comprised, comprising (not comprised of)
- coordinate (not co-ordinate)
- cooperate (not co-operate)
- Cultural Industries Training Fund (this fund is currently paused)

- decision making, decision makers, decision-making process, decision-making body
- driver’s licence
- Film & Sound Commission (not Film and Sound Commission)
- follow up (verb) or follow-up (adjective), (not followup)
- French First Language and French Second Language
- French Language Services Directorate (not Bureau of French Language Services)
- frontline (adjective), front line (noun)
- gold rush (generic term), Klondike Gold Rush (specific)
- groundwater (not ground water)
- health care (not healthcare)
- health care card
- health care provider (not health care professional or allied health professional)
- Klondike, Klondikers
- Klondike Gold Rush
- licence (noun), motor vehicle licence
- license (verb), licensed to operate
- long-term care home
- memorandum of understanding
- metre (meter if you’re referring to a machine)
- Métis
- mould not mold
- neighbourhood (when you’re referring to or creating a sense of community or where there’s the potential for the availability of services beyond just residential lots – also remember to add where the neighbourhood is, for example, Dawson or Whitehorse, rather than assume everyone will know)
- north (direction)
- North (region)
- northerner (not Northerner)
- north of 60
- oil and gas, as in "oil and gas wells" and "oil and gas companies" ("oil and gas" is the industry standard for "oil well or company", "gas well or company", "oil or gas well" or "oil or gas company")

- outside not Outside (as in outside Yukon)
- period products (not feminine hygiene products)
- practice (noun), doctor’s practice
- practise (verb), licensed to practise
- request for proposal
- roundtable
- Shäw Kwä’ą/Health and Wellness Yukon/Santé et mieux-être Yukon
- include all three names with slashes the first time the healthy authority is used in the body of a document
- afterwards use Shäw Kwä'ą
- only use the term "health authority" sparingly
- More details under Indigenous Peoples
- silviculture
- State of Emergency (always capitalized)
- subdivision (when you’re referring specifically to the process of subdividing land)
- Substance Use Health Emergency (always capitalized)
- toll-free
- UK or United Kingdom, not U.K.
- U.S., U.S.A. or United States, not US or USA
- wastewater (not waste water)
- wellbeing (not well-being)
- Yukon.ca (not yukon.ca or www.yukon.ca but Yukon.ca/wild-discoveries)
- Yukon Education for the school authority but Department of Education for the department
- Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act
- Yukoner

Events

- Kids Kreate
- Spruce Bog
- Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous

Facilities and buildings

- Canada Games Centre
- Copper Ridge Place
- Da Kų Cultural Centre
- Dredge No. 4
- École Émilie-Tremblay
- École Whitehorse Elementary School
- Guild Hall
- Jim Smith Building (formerly Government of Yukon Main Administration Building)
- Lion's Aquatic Centre
- Norman D. Macaulay Lodge
- Mae Bachur Animal Shelter
- Odd Gallery, Odd Fellows Hall
- S.S. Klondike
- Swan Haven Interpretation Centre
- Takhini Hot Springs
- The Old Fire Hall
- Thomson Centre
- Tombstone Interpretive Centre
- Yukon Arts Centre
- Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre
- Yukon University, YukonU, Ayamdigut Campus in Whitehorse, formerly Yukon College

Jurisdictions and countries

Follow the common practice or preference of the jurisdiction, region or country you're writing about. For example:

- B.C. not BC
- the Northwest Territories, the NWT, not Northwest Territories, NWT
- UK not U.K.
- U.S. not US

Municipalities

- City of Whitehorse (use uppercase when you're writing just "City" and referring to the municipality informally, for instance, "the Yukon government and the City agreed today…")
- Dawson (official geographical name, City of Dawson for the municipality)
- Town of Watson Lake
- Village of Carmacks

Non-governmental organizations and associations

- Association franco-yukonnaise (l'AFY)
- Boys and Girls Club
- Empowering Youth Society (BYTE), formerly Bringing Youth Towards Equality
- Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS)
- Committee on Abuse in Residential Schools (CAIRS)
- Dawson City Arts Society
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon (FASSY)
- Gwaandak Theatre Society
- Kaushee's Place
- KIAC School of Visual Arts now Yukon School of Visual Arts
- Klondike Institute of Art and Culture, KIAC
- Klondike Visitors Association (KVA) (note no apostrophe on the s)
- Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon (LDAY)
- Leaping Feats Creative Danceworks studio, Leaping Feats
- Les EssentiElles
- Liard Aboriginal Women's Society (LAWS)
- MacBride Museum
- Nakai Theatre
- Northern Lights School of Dance (NLSD)
- Society of Yukon Artists of Native Ancestry (SYANA)
- Teegatha'Oh Zheh
- TIA Yukon (Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon)
- Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre

- Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council
- Yukon Arts Fund
- Yukon Art Society (YAS), Yukon Art Society Gallery (Arts Underground)
- Yukon Artists @ Work (YAAW)
- Yukon First Nation Education Directorate
- Yukon Historical & Museums Association
- Yukon Outfitters' Association
- Yukon Women's Transition Home Society (an entity of Kaushee's)
- Yukon Writers' Festival

Place names

- ANWR (Arctic National Wildlife Refuge)
- Arctic Circle, the Arctic, but arctic wildflowers
- Bonnet Plume River (Tsaih Tl'ak Njik)
- Dempster Highway
- Dawson (official geographical name, City of Dawson for the municipality)
- Dezadeash Lake
- Eagle Plain (basin for oil and gas development)
- Eagle Plains Hotel (on the Dempster Highway)
- Ethel Lake (Takwánt'ye)
- Frances Lake
- Canyon Mountain (locally known as Grey Mountain)
- Hot Springs Road
- Lake Laberge
- Macmillan River
- M'Clintock River
- MacRae Industrial Area (known locally as McCrae Industrial Area)
- Mount McIntyre
- Nałasìn River (Nisutlin River)
- Peel watershed
- Tetl'ámān (Tatlmain Lake)

- Wellesley Lake
- Whistle Bend subdivision

National and territorial parks and protected areas

- Agay Mene Territorial Park (awaiting designation)
- Asi Keyi Territorial Park (awaiting designation)
- Coal River Springs Territorial Park
- Ddhaw Ghro Habitat Protection Area (awaiting designation)
- Devil's Elbow and Big Island Habitat Protection Areas
- Herschel Island - Qikiqtaruk Territorial Park
- Horseshoe Slough Habitat Protection Area
- Ivvavik National Park
- Kluane National Park and Reserve
- Kusawa Territorial Park (awaiting designation)
- Lewes Marsh Habitat Protection Area
- Łútsäw Wetland Habitat Protection Area
- Ni'iinlii Njik (Fishing Branch) Habitat Protection Area
- Ni'iinlii Njik (Fishing Branch) Territorial Park
- Nisutlin River Delta National Wildlife Area
- Tsâwnjik Chu (Nordenskiold) Habitat Protection Area
- Old Crow Flats Habitat Protection Area
- Pickhandle Lakes Habitat Protection Area (awaiting designation)
- Ta'Tla Mun Habitat Protection Area
- Tagish Narrows Habitat Protection Area
- Tombstone Territorial Park
- Vuntut National Park
- Whitefish Wetland Habitat Protection Area (awaiting designation)

Species

When you use Latin names, include both the genus and species name, such as *Ursus americanus* and italicize both words. Only put the first word (the genus name) in capitals.

When you write species' names, write them in lowercase, unless a proper noun forms part of their name, such as Dall's sheep.

For more detailed advice, talk to Environment's communications team.

- black bear, black bears (plural)
- collared pika, collared pikas (plural)
- Dall's sheep
- grizzly bear, grizzly bears (plural)
- tundra swan, tundra swans (plural)
- lake trout (singular and plural)
- human-wildlife conflict
- Leave No Trace (but no-trace practices)
- Porcupine caribou herd but Porcupine Caribou Harvest Management Plan
- RV dump station
- Ursus americanus

Note that we may capitalize species' names in materials intended for educating people about wildlife. For example, the Wildlife Viewing Program capitalizes species' names in a number of their educational publications to help readers distinguish between species, such as Black Bear, so that it's clear that a Black Bear is a species of bear, not necessarily a bear that is black. These materials are published with a small note providing this explanation.

Words to avoid misspelling

Here are some words to avoid spelling incorrectly.

- council (as in city, or the Executive Council Office) and counsel (as in Crown, or the Legislative Counsel Office)
- councillor (as in city)
- counsellor (a person who gives guidance)
- palette as in "colour palette" (not "pallet" unless you mean a portable platform)
- practice (noun), doctor's practice
- practise (verb), licensed to practise
- publicly (not publically)

Words to avoid misusing

Here are some words we sometimes use incorrectly. For more information about these common errors and other guidance, visit Grammar Girl. (It's a United States site but much of the guidance still applies.)

- among and between (generally speaking, use "between" for specific, one-to-one relationships and "among" for less defined, collective relationships)
- cement and concrete (concrete is the mixture; cement is an ingredient of concrete)
- comprised (don't add "of" to "comprised", e.g., "the committee comprises six members")
- English and French (always write them with capital letters at the beginning, in all instances)
- fewer and less (use "fewer" for things you can count one by one, "less" for things you can't count individually)
- fulsome ("fulsome" means expressing too much praise, thanks or admiration and not sounding sincere; it doesn't have positive connotations)
- linkages and links (keep things simple and use "links" unless you specifically mean a system of links or linking different issues in political negotiations)
- usage and utilize (all you probably need to use is "use")
- podium and lectern (a podium is what you stand on and a lectern is what you stand behind)
- reactionary ("reactionary" means extremely conservative, resisting change; it doesn't mean "reactive")
- unveil (only use "unveil" when something is literally going to be unveiled, for example, at an event)

T

Telephone numbers

Use hyphens and no brackets.

Not: (867) 633-2949

But: 867-633-7949, call toll-free 1-800-661-0408, extension 7949

Territory

While Yukon is a territory constitutionally, our preference is to refer to simply “the Yukon” (or "Yukon" in agreements and legislative documents) rather than “the Yukon territory.” This helps to reflect the devolution process that took place in 2003 when the Government of Yukon gained direct control over a much wider variety of provincial-type programs, responsibilities and powers.

Not: Yukon Territory, the Territory
But: Yukon, the territory

Also see Yukon and the Yukon.

Technical and scientific reports

If you’re writing a scientific report or working on some other type of technical document, follow government style where possible as well as the guidance in *Scientific Style and Format: The CSE Manual for Authors, Editors, and Publishers*. CSE is the Council of Science Editors.

Time

In 2020, new regulations took effect in Yukon that ended the practice of "falling back" an hour in November and "springing forward" an hour in March. Yukon now observes Pacific Daylight Time year-round. It's called Yukon Standard Time.

Not: Yukon Time, Yukon time, UTC -7

But: Yukon Standard Time, UTC-7

Write "to" between times rather than a dash or hyphen.

Not: 10:00 am, 10:00 am – 11:00 am

But: 10 am, 10:15 am, 10 to 11 am

Titles

Also see job titles and formal titles.

Reports

Capitalize the titles of Government of Yukon reports, strategies and plans once they have been approved and published (whether publicly or internally). Only capitalize the nouns and verbs (this style is called title case). Don't use italics or quotation marks.

Climate Change Action Plan

Energy Strategy for Yukon

If "Government of Yukon" forms part of the title, remember to write the "Government of Yukon", not the "Yukon government" or the "Yukon Government."

If a publication is in the planning phase and hasn't yet been published or given a definite title, put it in lowercase. Once it is published, you can write it in title case.

Not: We will publish a Poverty Reduction Strategy in the spring

But: We will publish a poverty reduction strategy in the spring

What We Heard reports

When you write the full title of a What We Heard report, use title case and omit the word "report":

What We Heard: Sewage Lagoon Engagement

What We Heard: Internet Connectivity Engagement

What We Heard: Design of Community Garden Engagement

If you're referring to the report in text, use "What We Heard report":

The What We Heard report was first published in May 2021.

We have captured the comments we received at community meetings and in the online survey in the What We Heard report.

Headings

View the guidance on writing headings in documents and other materials, including on web pages.

Campaigns and slogans

Use title case for campaign titles and slogans but not italics or quotation marks.

Not: stop pushing or *Stop Pushing* or 'Stop Pushing' or "Stop Pushing"

But: Stop Pushing

Books, song and plays

Capitalize the nouns and verbs in titles of books, songs and theatre productions. Also put these titles in italics.

Gone with the Wind

The Taming of the Shrew

If the words in a title are hyphenated, capitalize both words.

The Well-Brought Up Child

The Six-Fingered Ape

Headings

See headings.

Formal titles

For titles of office or rank, use capitals (uppercase) for someone's position as well as for their portfolio.

Not: premier Jane Doe, minister Jane Doe, Justice Minister Jane Doe, minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate Jane Doe

But: Premier Jane Doe, Minister Jane Doe, Minister of Justice Jane Doe, Minister responsible for the Women and Gender Equity Directorate Jane Doe

Not: chief Jane Doe, mayor Jane Doe, dr. Jane Doe

But: Chief Jane Doe, Mayor Jane Doe, Dr. Jane Doe

If you're writing about Premiers and Ministers in a generic way without referring to specific individuals, use uppercase.

Not: The premiers, ministers and chiefs will meet tomorrow with the prime minister

But: The Premiers, Ministers and Chiefs will meet tomorrow with the Prime Minister

Not: A prime minister, premier and a commissioner have very different roles

But: A Prime Minister, Premier and a Commissioner have very different roles

Write “former” and “acting” and so on in lowercase.

Not: Acting Deputy Minister Jane Doe, Former Mayor John Doe, Former Commissioner Jane Doe

But: acting Deputy Minister Jane Doe, former Mayor John Doe, former Commissioner Jane Doe

When you’re referring to a Minister’s portfolio or a Chief’s First Nation, put the portfolio or First Nation first and do not use a comma.

Not: Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, Jane Doe, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations chief, Jane Doe

But: Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources Jane Doe, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Chief Jane Doe

If you’re referring to a Minister who has more than one department and one or more of the departments have “and” in their name, use a comma to separate the departments.

Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, and Highways and Public Works Jane Doe.

Letters and messages

The format for writing the Premier's or a Minister's name at the end of a message or letter is to put their name on the 1st line and their title on the 2nd line with no commas.

For example:

Jane Doe

Premier

Jane Doe
Minister of Environment

Honourable

The title “Honourable” is not generally used in the Government of Yukon as our tone of voice is more inclusive and informal.

Not: Hon. Minister, honourable minister

But: the Honourable Jane Brown, Minister of Justice

An exception is when the Premier and Ministers address the Speaker in tributes and ministerial statements in the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Not: Mr. Speaker

But: Honourable Speaker

Also, "honourable" may sometimes be used in joint news releases, if it's another government's preference. When federal Ministers are referred to as "the Honourable", extend the same courtesy to territorial and provincial Ministers. For example, "Minister of Education the Honourable Jane Doe said today..."

For more guidance about formal titles refer to The Canadian Style. But note that the Government of Yukon's style guide includes unique preferences specific for the Yukon.

Job titles

All positions from Deputy Ministers and "above", such as Ministers and the Premier, must be in uppercase.

For ordinary job titles "below" Deputy Ministers, such as directors, analysts, officers and assistants, always use lowercase in public materials. This is because capital letters are harder to read.

We recommend that all job titles "below" Deputy Ministers in the government hierarchy are in lowercase in all government materials whether they're public or internal. However, we recognize that in reports and internal documents you may prefer to use uppercase for all job titles.

Whatever you decide, you must use a consistent style within one document and related documents.

News releases and statements

Statement headings

For statement headings, write full sentences.

Not: *Statement from Premier Jane Brown on call with western Premiers*

But: Statement from the Premier on a call with western Premiers

News release headings

For news release headings, use an abbreviated style.

Not: *The Premier and the business delegation conclude their Asia mission*

But: *Premier* and business delegation conclude Asia mission

Portfolios

In news release and statement headings write portfolios rather than names.

Not: Minister of Environment Jane Brown announces new funding

But: Minister of Environment announces new funding

In the body of a news release, write the portfolio in the first instance and then just "Minister [Minister's last name]" for any following references.

- First use of the Minister's name: Minister of Justice Jane Brown
- Second and consecutive uses of the Minister's name: Minister Brown

2SLGBTQIA+

Use 2SLGBTQIA+ unless you're referring to the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.

When you're formally communicating with the Government of Canada, match their style.

2SLGBTQIA+ stands for Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer or questioning, intersex and asexual.

See "gender" in How to write clearly and inclusively.

U

Units, branches, divisions

Use uppercase when you write the full name of a unit, branch or division.

Not: Communications unit, Land Management branch, Motor Vehicles division
But: Communications Unit, Land Management Branch, Motor Vehicles Division

Use lowercase when you are not using the full name of a unit, branch, division or department.

Not: the Unit, the Branch, the Division
But: the unit, the branch, the division

Try to refer to the Government of Yukon rather than to a department or unit, branch or division. But if you need to refer to a department and its structure, write "Highways and Public Works' Motor Vehicles Division".

Y

Yukon and the Yukon

"The Yukon" is the recommended language to use in government materials. This is to recognize that for many people referring to "the Yukon" is part of the territory's unique culture. We want Yukoners to feel represented by the public service that serves them.

Also see territory.

(the) Yukon government

See Government of Yukon.

Grammar and punctuation

There are plenty of resources online to help you check grammar and punctuation, such as Grammar Girl and the Plain English Campaign's grammar guides. Here are a few areas we often need reminding about.

Apostrophes

For guidance on how to use apostrophes, see *The Canadian Press Stylebook* (page 378 in the 17th edition). If you don't have a copy, this from The Oatmeal might help

or Grammar Girl.

Apostrophes aren't needed for plural words or acronyms or for dates.
Not: PDF's, Q's and A's, First Nation's
But: PDFs, Qs and As, First Nations

Not: 1950's, 1960's, 1970's
But: '50s, '60s, '70s

Dashes and hyphens

Dashes and hyphens are easy to get mixed up. Dashes are longer than hyphens and have different uses. Hyphens are mostly used to connect two-part words.

Not: She worked for a non–profit organization.
But: She worked for a non-profit organization.

We use dashes instead of commas and parentheses when we want to provide more emphasis.

When the committee discovered the errors – all nine of them – they asked for a new draft.

When you're writing about a span of numbers, dates or time, use "to" rather than a dash.

Not: Please read pages 11–17 in the report.

But: Please read pages 11 to 17 in the report.

Using dashes in sentences

There are two types of dash: the em dash and the en dash. Our style is to use the en dash.

This is an en dash:

The office will re-open at Taylor House – with limited services – on the February 26.

This is an em dash:

The office will re-open at Taylor House—with limited services—on the February 26.

Writing number spans

Use "to" rather than a dash when you write a span of numbers. This is often easier and clearer.

Not: See pages 11–14.

But: See pages 11 to 14.

How to find dashes on your keyboard

Two ways to find an en dash:

- Add a space after the word;
- type two hyphens;
- add a space; then
- type the next word.

Or:

Alt + 0150 (use the number pad on your keyboard)

The federal government's *The Canadian Style* has helpful guidance on when to use hyphens and different types of dashes.

e.g., and i.e.,

It's often better to avoid using e.g. and i.e. as not everyone understands them. You can use "for example" instead of "e.g." and "specifically" or a dash or colon instead of "i.e.".

Not: There are several communities in the Yukon, e.g., Whitehorse, Mayo and Haines Junction.
But: There are several communities in the Yukon. For example, Whitehorse, Mayo and Haines Junction.

Not: There are three communities in Yukon with a population of more than 1,000, i.e., Whitehorse, Watson Lake and Dawson.

But: There are three communities in Yukon with a population of more than 1,000 – Whitehorse, Watson Lake and Dawson.

If you use e.g. and i.e., include periods and a comma.

Not: e.g. or eg
But: For example, e.g.,

Not: i.e. or ie
But: that is, specifically, e.g.,

E.g. is short for exempli gratia, which means “for example” and i.e. is short for id est, which means “that is”.

Who

Use “who” not “that” when you refer to people.

Not: Two people that didn’t previously know about the services have now registered.
But: Two people who didn’t previously know about the services have now registered.

Writing in plain language

Government writing needs to be accessible for everyone. It needs to be easy to understand, concise and relevant.

What you write should be:

- specific
- informative
- to the point but not terse
- clear – as sometimes a friendly style can lead to a lack of precision and unnecessary words
- serious but not pompous
- objective – adjectives can be subjective and make the text sound more emotive and like spin
- focused on the facts – this makes it easier for you to remove irrelevant information and help people get the details they need

You should:

- aim for a reading level of Grade 6 to 9 – this is our standard for Yukon.ca and we also recommend it for all public materials
- use contractions like "we're" and "you're"
- use the language people are using – use Google Trends to check for terms people search for online
- write conversationally – picture your audience and write as if you were talking to them 1-to-1 and with the authority of someone who can actively help
- avoid words ending in "–ion" and "–ment" as they tend to make sentences longer and more complicated than they need to be
- avoid using long sentences – check any sentences with more than 25 words to see if you can split them up to make them clearer
- not let caveats dictate unwieldy grammar – for example, say "You can" rather than "You may be able to"
- for web content, avoid negative contractions such as "can't" and "won't" by writing them out as "cannot" and "will not" – this is because they're easy to misread when people scan web content

Find out about how people read.

Active voice

Name the action you want your user to take. For example – apply for funding, find an office, register for a workshop, get your Yukon health care card.

Use the active rather than passive voice.

The active voice makes it clear who's responsible. In active voice the subject performs the action expressed by the verb.

Active voice: Register your personal property lien through a professional.

In passive voice the subject receives the action expressed by the verb.

Passive voice: Personal property liens can be registered through a professional.

Address the user as 'you'

Address the user as "you" where possible. Content on the site often makes a direct appeal to citizens and businesses to get involved or take action. For example, "You can contact us by phone and email" or "Pay your vehicle registration".

Using ‘we’

When you write "we", make it clear as much as possible who the "we" is. Do not assume the audience will know. I’s not obvious who "we" is in all content. For example, web users might enter the content in the middle of a page or section. They could arrive at a heading from the navigation bar on the side or skim read from the top until they find the section they want. Use the full name of the department or program area if there's ambiguity who "we" refers to.

Writing for Yukon.ca

Plain language is mandatory for all of Yukon.ca. Yukon.ca needs to be accessible for everyone. We can do this by simply being very, very clear.

Writing inclusively

Writing inclusively is about being aware that using a word can sometimes have unintended consequences and reduce the perceived value of individuals and groups or of people's experiences. The consequences of using certain words or phrases can have very real impacts on thoughts, behaviour, culture and organizational priorities.

For example, when we're gathering information from Yukoners, it's important that we include all gender and other identities. We must not avoid collecting information about diverse identities and we must not avoid complex discussions. Government staff can email ecoinfo@yukon.ca to ask for guidance on this.

Gender-affirming language

Not: gender-affirming therapy for trans people, trans-affirming care or trans-affirming medical therapies

But: gender-affirming care, medical procedures, services and surgeries for trans people

Do not use the term "trans-affirming care". People can be trans with or without surgery or other medical services or care. The services and procedures referred to are about affirming people's gender identity.

Also use caution when using the term "therapy" to describe gender-affirming procedures and services. While hormone therapy is a widely used term and gender-affirming care can include mental health supports, gender and sexuality "therapies" terminology has historically been used to describe the dangerous and discredited practice of conversion therapy. For this reason, you must use the term with caution and avoid it when possible.

Other organizations' resources:

- Pride at Work Canada
- Qmunity
- Trans Journalists Association
- The Association of LGBTQ+ Journalists

Gender-inclusive words

Part of writing inclusively is making sure text is gender neutral wherever possible.

Not: he/she, his or her

But: they, their

Not: actress, fireman, businessman, spokesman, chairman, foreman

But: actor, firefighter, businessperson, spokesperson, chair, foreperson

Not: man a booth

But: staff a booth

The word “ombudsman” is an exception. It's a Scandinavian word said to be gender-neutral in its origin.

The word “grandfathering” cannot be simply switched for a gender neutral term (“grandparenting”). It has a complicated story with roots in the history of voting rights for people in the U.S. who were formerly slaves.

Tips to help you avoid describing people differently because of their gender or ethnicity.

- When you do not know who you’re addressing or do not know someone’s preferred pronoun or self-identification, use “they” or their job title or role, such as manager, councillor, director, committee member, home owner, parent, reader, teacher, delegate, participant.
- If you’re using a title (honorific), use Ms. when referring to a woman unless she has indicated a preference for Mrs. or Miss.
- To check for descriptions that may be sexist, try substituting a man for a woman in the situation or role.
- Avoid hidden sexism or words that have been traditionally used only to describe specific genders, such as the word “shrill” to describe a woman’s voice rather a man’s, or the phrase “working mom” rather than “working parent”.
- Beware of stereotypes, such as assuming child care is only delivered by women. This applies to choosing images as well as words.

Names

Not: Christian name, first name

But: given name

Not: surname, last name

But: family name

Objects

Use “it” rather than “she” or “her” to describe ships, nature, nations, cars, engines, gas tanks and so on.

Parallel treatment

Avoid highlighting gender and ethnicity if it’s not relevant.

Avoid unnecessary descriptions.

Not: Aboriginal woman Minister of Justice Jane Doe tabled a bill.

But: Minister of Justice Jane Doe tabled a bill.

Personal pronouns

Personal pronouns are words we use to refer to people without using their name, such as she/her, he/him or they/them. Pronouns are an important part of who we are and how we identify.

Using someone’s correct personal pronouns is a way to respect them and create an inclusive environment, just like using a person’s name is a way to respect them. Sharing your own name and pronouns signals to other people that you’re interested in learning their preferred pronouns.

People do not always use the pronouns that you may expect. It’s important not to assume someone’s gender based on their name or appearance. When a person shares their pronouns, respect and use them when you refer to that person.

Share your pronouns in your email signature

Adding the pronouns you use to your email signature is a clear and simple way to communicate that information to the people you interact with internally and externally.

By adding your pronouns to your signature, you:

- communicate that you're aware that this is an important piece of information; and
- help create a work culture where it's the norm to inquire about people's pronouns so you do not accidentally use the wrong ones.

To add your pronoun information, cut and paste an email signature template from the How to create your email signature document on the visual identity page.

How do I ask someone what pronouns they use?

Asking an individual

You can simply ask. For example,

- "My name is Reina and my pronouns are she and her. What about you?" (This is probably the most respectful way to ask.)
- "What pronouns do you use?"
- "How would you like me to refer to you?"

Asking in a group

You can invite people to share their name and pronouns during an introduction round. It's a good idea to go first so you can model how to say it in case you're with a group of people who may not be familiar with the practice.

While these are good ways to normalize asking for pronouns, remember that some people may:

- use different pronouns in different settings;
- change what pronouns they use over time; or
- prefer not to share their pronouns.

What if I get someone's pronouns wrong?

Apologize briefly, correct yourself and continue speaking. Most importantly, ensure that you use the correct pronouns next time.

Why should I use the gender-inclusive 'they' when someone's gender is irrelevant or unknown?

We already do this naturally when we do not know the gender of the person we're referring to. For example, "I think someone left their wallet behind in the waiting room."

In some cases, you may see the terms "s/he" or "he/she." However, these are not inclusive of people who use other pronouns. Never use these in government materials. Use the gender-inclusive "they" in sentences when you do not know the gender of the person or it's irrelevant.

Places

Do not assume that everyone will know where a location or address is. Also be careful not to be Whitehorse-centric. If you're writing about a neighbourhood or subdivision or providing an address, include the name of the community as well.

Not: the COVID-19 Testing and Assessment Centre, the Community Health Centre
But: the COVID-19 Testing and Assessment Centre in Whitehorse, the Community Health Centre in Dawson

Put the person first

Follow the put the person first guidance when you're referring to people who use drugs.

Sexual identity

Use 2SLGBTQIA+ unless you're referring to the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.

When you're formally communicating with the Government of Canada, match their style.

2SLGBTQIA+ stands for Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer or questioning, intersex and asexual.

References and resources:

- Pride at Work Canada
- Qmunity resources
- Trans Journalists Association
- The Association of LGBTQ Journalists Stylebook on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Terminology

Writing about disabilities

Always put the person first, not someone's condition or whether they use a particular aid or tool. Stress people's abilities rather than their disabilities and only refer to someone's disability if it's relevant.

Avoid phrases such as "the disabled" and "the blind" because they lump people into a type. Also avoid "handicapped" as it is considered offensive by many people.

Use language that respects people with disabilities as active individuals who have control over their lives.

Not: handicapped, afflicted with a disability, confined to a wheelchair, wheel-chair bound

But: a person living with a disability, people with disabilities, disabled people, people with visual impairments, people with hearing impairments, people who are differently abled, people who are cognitively impaired

If you need specific information, for example if you are organizing an event, you can ask questions such as: "Do you need wheelchair access?" or "Do you have any audio or visual requirements?"

Not: handicapped parking

But: accessible parking

Deaf

Capitalize Deaf when you're referring to people who are part of Deaf Culture. For example:

The American Sign Language Interpreting Program will benefit the Deaf community in Yukon.

Capitalize "Sign language" and "Sign languages."

Canadian Association of the Deaf website

- Deaf Culture vs. Medicalization
- Terminology

Queries and comments

The Government of Yukon Style Guide is managed and produced by the Executive Council Office. The guide is also online at https://guide.yukon.ca/style-guide. If you have any queries or comments, you can reach us at ecoinfo@yukon.ca.