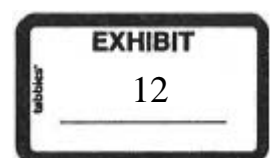


IOWA BILL DRAFTING GUIDE AND STYLE MANUAL

For use in the preparation of legislative bills, resolutions, and amendments

(Partially updated March 2017)

Prepared and issued by the Iowa Legislative Services Agency, in consultation with the Code Editor, as proposed rules and instructions, for adoption by the Legislative Council, for the drafting and preparation of legislative bills and resolutions pursuant to Iowa Code sections 2.42(10) and 3.2



Abbreviations.

Do not use abbreviations in typing bills except that after section 1 of a bill, all other sections are entitled "Sec."

Numbers.

All numbers should be stated in words. Exceptions are: (1) citations and references to statutes which should be stated in numerals; (2) line item dollar amounts in budget bills, which should be stated in numerals, unless the section is to be codified; (3) sections of budget bills in which an appropriation is made or in which a dollar limitation of an appropriation is made, the dollar amount should be expressed in numerals, unless the section is to be codified; (4) the listing of the full-time equivalent positions (FTEs) in budget bills are to be expressed in numerals; and (5) dates where the day and year are used, for example, use "July 1, 1989" not "the first of July, 1989".

Capital letters.

Capital letters are used only for:

1. The first word of a sentence or in some cases after a colon.
2. The first word of a subsection, paragraph, subparagraph, subparagraph subdivision, and subparagraph subdivision part.
3. Proper names of persons, states and political subdivisions, countries, nationalities, bodies of water, holidays, months, and publications. For example, "Cedar county", "city of Waterloo", "Nishnabotna river", "Grove street", "state of Illinois", "Iowa state university of science and technology", university of northern Iowa, and "state university of Iowa".
4. The words "Code", "Act", and "(Seventy-third) General Assembly" when referring to the Iowa Code, a particular legislative Act, or a particular numbered General Assembly.
5. Popular names and short titles of federal laws and of state laws when shown with quotation marks.
6. "Title", "Article", "Division", and "Part" when used in a centered headnote with numerals, as "Title X", "Division V", or "Part 3", but not when used in text, as "in this article" or "in this part". However, also capitalize "Title" if referring to a numbered title of the Iowa Code, e.g., Title II, or if referring to a title of a federal Act, e.g., Title XIX of the federal Social Security Act.

Capital letters are not used for:

Titles or names of state or federal officers, agencies, and departments. For example, the words "governor", "department of revenue and finance", and "supreme court" are

not capitalized. Neither are the words "section" or "chapter" capitalized in typing bills. The exception to this rule may be constitutional amendments if the section of the Constitution being amended capitalizes words such as "Governor", "Secretary of State", and "Supreme Court".

Punctuation.

Punctuation is very important in amendments which insert or strike part of a Code section. If it is intended to strike or insert a punctuation mark along with the inserted or struck words, the punctuation mark must have a strike over it or through it, or an underline for an insertion. As a general rule punctuation should be used infrequently in bill drafting. It should only be used where sentence structure requires it. A comma, particularly, should not be depended on to show meaning. Preferable form is to use a comma or a period rather than a semicolon. If semicolons seem to be needed, the sentence is probably too long. If extensive punctuation seems to be essential, consider whether the material should be rewritten to avoid some of the punctuation. Perhaps it should be rewritten into several shorter sentences.

Preferable form for a series of subparts is to use explanatory words such as "all of the following" or "any of the following" in the introductory sentence, and end each subpart with a period, rather than to end each subpart with a comma or semicolon and to use the word "or" or "and" before the last subpart in the series. Each subpart of a series should be a separate indented phrase, sentence, or paragraph. For example, a sentence such as "Copies of (1) a balance sheet; (2) an income statement; and (3) a statement of the source and application of funds shall be filed with the auditor." should be rewritten as:

"Copies of all of the following shall be filed with the auditor:

1. A balance sheet.
2. An income statement.
3. A statement of the source and application of funds."

When a series of three or more terms is used within a sentence, commas should be used between the terms and preceding the "and" or "or" which connects the final term in the series.

Citation of statutes.

Section 3.1, subsection 3, of the 1989 Code provides:

"3. All references to statutes shall be expressed in numerals . . ."

The following rules will be in effect in regard to citations: