STYLE SHEET

OBPP Text Narrative & Fiscal Notes

1. Number Formats

Write out numbers from one through nine
Use numerals for numbers 10 and above.
Use words for numbers that begin a sentence (Ten programs -- or rewrite the sentence rather than One thousand three hundred and sixty-six dollars will be. . .),for most ordinals (Fifty-eighth Legislature) and for many fractions (one-third of the staff. . .).

Numbers in millions or higher may be expressed with numerals and words ($21 million or 14.5 million).
When numbers run to four or more figures, use commas to separate thousands (2,375 or $11,500).

2. Dollar Formats:

Use numerals to express exact or approximate amounts of money ($12 million or nearly $1,000).
Use the dollar sign with each amount in a range or series (between $25,000 and $30,000; $0.8 million through $0.9 million; $1 million to $2.5 million).

3. Percent Formats:

Use the % sign when referring to a specific percentage.
Always use a number when stating a percent (3%; 350%).
When referring to a general percentage, spell out the word percent ("the percent change in the consumer price index").

4. Biennium Formats:

Refer to either the 2017 biennium or FY^2016 and FY^ 2017.
Do not spell out fiscal year
There is a space (^) between FY and the respective year (FY^2014 actual)
Biennium is not capitalized.

5. Bill Numbering Formats:

House and senate bills are written HB^2, HB^49, SB^315 or HB^100 in sentences with no periods and with a space (^) between bill and number.

6. FTE Formats:

Use two decimal points when writing about FTE (2.00 FTE, 1.75 FTE or 0.25 FTE).
There are no periods in FTE and the plural when used is FTEs (not FTE's).
All modifiers follow FTE (1.00 FTE engineer).

7. Decimal/Fraction Formats:

Use decimal representation rather than fractions (0.5 rather than 1/2).
When a decimal stands alone, without a whole number preceding the decimal point, insert a cipher "0" before the decimal point (There are 0.25 FTE or 0.08 gram).
(Firearms exception: the .36 caliber revolver)

8. Reference format for Montana Code Annotated, Montana Constitution, and Administrative Rules of Montana:

44-2-115(1), MCA, (not Section XX-. Note that MCA is followed by"," or ";" or ".")
Title 75, Chapter 1, part 3, MCA. (part is lower case)
Article X, Section 9, Montana Constitution
Title 18, Chapter 1, ARM,

9. Capitalization:

A. Legislature usually is capitalized (the Legislature) and always capitalized as part of a formal name (the 2013 Legislature, Sixty-second Legislature ((text)), Sixty-Second Legislature ((title))). Capitalize and spell out Senator John Smith, Speaker of the House, the House, the Senate, but not senator or representative by itself.

B. Governor is always capitalized, but Schweitzer's administration policy, or the executive is not. Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Superintendent of Public Instruction, and Public Service Commissioner are capitalized when followed by the person's name. Otherwise, do not capitalize titles. In general, do not capitalize job titles (social worker II, deputy administrator, MSU professor).

C. The various funds and trusts are not capitalized (general fund, education trust, resource indemnity trust, coal tax trust, pay plan, school foundation program). Do not capitalize state or federal unless the word is part of a formal name (subject to federal laws; the Federal Reserve Board).

D. Do capitalize formal organizational names (Developmental Disabilities Division, Water Quality Bureau, Water Development Program). Spell out names of agencies and programs in the first reference and follow up with the acronym in parenthesis; use the acronym thereafter (the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP); the Board of Investments (BOI)). Use the acronym that has common usage in agency documents rather than your own creation.

E. Do not capitalize council, board, or department after the first formal reference. For instance: The Board of Regents...the board; the Department of Administration...the department; the Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission...the commission.

F. Executive budget is capitalized when it is used as part of a formal name (the Governor's Executive Budget, the 2017 Biennium Executive Budget, FY 2016-FY 2017 Executive Budget), but not in general references (The executive budget recommendations include...).

10. Other Grammatical Guidelines:

A. Try not to use the word "this" as the subject for a sentence. For instance: This caused the revenue shortfall. Rather: This tax policy caused the revenue shortfall.

B. Use between when referring to **two** persons or things and among when referring to **three or more** persons or agencies. Responsibility is shared between the Departments of Livestock and Agriculture. Responsibility for the XYZ Program is shared among the Departments of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

C. When three or more items are listed in a series and the last item is preceded by “and, or, nor” place a comma before the conjunction as well as between the other items.

D. Lower case, Latin abbreviations require a period after each initial, but no space between the period and the next letter. (For example: e.g. or that is: i.e.) Upper case (capital) letter abbreviations normally require no periods and no internal space (DPHHS, FWP, FM)

E. Who, Which, and That. Who and that are used when referring to **persons**. Select who when the individual person or the individuality of a group is meant and that when a class, species, or type is meant. (The Board of Land Commissioners determined that the commissioner is the only one who can decide whether or not an EIS is required. Reclamation policy is an issue that the administration has studied during the interim.)

Which and that are used when referring to **places, objects, and animals**. Which is always used to introduce nonessential clauses set off with commas; that is ordinarily used to introduce essential clauses. (The department report on vacant positions, which was presented to the 2009 Legislature, was not used to develop the 2011 biennium budget recommendations. The pay plan report that was prepared by the Committee on State Employee Compensation is funded in the executive budget...)

F. Commas set off a dependent clause within a sentence and a nonessential clause within a sentence. The following words/phrases always introduce nonessential clauses. “All of which, although, even though, though, for, no matter what, no matter how, none of which, none of whom, some of whom, whereas.”

Example: The figures for FY 2014 include large cities only, whereas the data for the 2015 biennium include rural areas as well.