



LIFEWAYS DOCUMENT GUIDELINES

Correspondence, Quality Improvement Council (QIC); Board Reports	
Standard	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Font – Calibri 11 point or Century Gothic 11 point.• Page Margins –<ul style="list-style-type: none">-REPORTS: Minimum .75” all sides to allow 3-hole punch and report headers/footers that will be added.-CORRESPONDENCE: 1” all sides.• Spacing –<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Line space – single;-Spacing before and after paragraph: 0 (in paragraph setting);-before and after paragraph, one hard return.<p>(The default when Microsoft Word is installed is 1.15 line spacing, 10 pt after paragraph. Simply change line spacing to single, spacing to 0 before and after paragraph and click “Set as Default” at the bottom of Indents and Spacing options on the Paragraph menu.)</p>• Logo Use – internal documents use 2021 logo. Logo can be found on Intranet Resources/Forms & Links/Brand Identity. The aspect ratio is not to be changed from the original logo. (Click on the logo to change the height. Height for reports is .65” or depending on the space in your document. Once you change the height it automatically changes the width to maintain the aspect ratio.)
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acronyms – Spell out the first time used in a document, then abbreviate the acronym in parentheses; can use abbreviations thereafter. When developing a report, not only is it proper to never use an acronym without spelling it out first, but also think of it from the standpoint of the person who may have never read a Community Mental Health (CMH) report before; we may know what the acronym stands for, but when someone else picks up the report you want them to know for sure. You spell out the word you are going to use the acronym for the first time in the document or section of a document and then put in parentheses the way it will appear thereafter in the report. This also alleviates confusion over duplicate acronyms and crossover occupations. For instance, a new board member or someone in the field of education reading a behavioral health report. Don’t assume that any reader knows what any acronym is when writing a report. A list of commonly used Acronyms is under the Operations Forms of the Resources page of the LifeWays Intranet.

- Ampersand – An ampersand is only appropriate to use when it is part of an official title, such as Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. It is not a replacement for the word “and” as in Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. (If in doubt, google it.) An ampersand should not be used in place of the word “and” in a sentence.
- Dates – Dates, when used in date format, are never followed by th, rd, st, or nd. The following is incorrect: We started this service on May 4th. It should read: We started this service on May 4. (You would never say June 1st, 2024 or July 4th, 2024 when listing the date; it would be June 1, 2024 or July 4, 2024.) You could, however, use st in the following: “In the 1st week of June,” or “the 13th day of August.”
- Hyphens – Compound verbs comprised of an adjective and a noun, or a noun and a verb, are usually hyphenated. For instance: “The report was well documented” does not have a hyphenated word, but “It is a well-documented report” does. The second sentence (with the hyphen) is an example of two words functioning together as an adjective, before the noun. This is why sometimes the same phrase is hyphenated in one sentence and not in another, i.e., “It is a decision-making body,” and “They are good at decision making.”
- LifeWays – LifeWays has a capital L, a capital W, and an s at the end. It has no punctuation, but because it ends with an s, only when you use it as a possessive noun, simply add an apostrophe *after* the end, i.e., LifeWays’ employees; LifeWays’ provider network. If it is too confusing, change the sentence to put a “the” in front of LifeWays and leave the apostrophe off, i.e., “the LifeWays provider network,” instead of “LifeWays’ provider network.”
- Numbers – Generally, numbers between one and ten are to be spelled out; 11 and above, use the number. When a number is the first word of a sentence, it is spelled out.
- Organization Names – When in doubt, google it. CDC does not mean Center for Disease Control; its official name is Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CMS is not Centers for Medicaid; its official name is Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (including the ampersand).
- Program Names – To look up or confirm an official program name, google MDHHS and the subject (i.e., Evidence-Based Practice). It will show that evidence-based is hyphenated (as is Person-Centered Planning, etc.). Don’t rely on other Community Mental Health Services Programs (CMHSPs) for your naming nomenclature, but rather the program source, i.e., MDHHS.
- Punctuation
 - Commas and periods stay inside the quotation mark. Think of the comma and period as being the smallest punctuation marks so they are like children that need to be held and protected; the apostrophes hold commas and periods inside and keep them from straggling.

	<p><i>Correct:</i> “The results were in.”</p> <p><i>Incorrect:</i> “The results were in”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Etcetera – etc. always has a period after it. ○ Examples (i.e. and e.g.) always have a period after each letter and a comma after. For example: “...i.e., progress note, treatment plan review, recovery, etc.” The i.e. means ‘in other words,’ and the e.g. means ‘for example.’ ○ A semicolon is to be used to link two independent clauses. <p><i>Incorrect:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Although this does not meet the target for this measure; our hope is our inpatient admissions continue to decrease.</p> <p><i>Correct:</i></p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">This does not meet the target for this measure; our hope is that inpatient admissions continue to decrease.</p> <p>The correct punctuation for the first sentence is to remove the semicolon.</p>
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Letters, Memos, Memoranda of Understanding, Agreements, Meeting Agendas and Minutes

<p>Standard</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Font – 11-point for letters and memos; 12-point optional for Agreements and MOUs. • Margins (Memos, MOUs, Agreements) 1” all sides to allow 3-hole punch or report headers/footers that other people will add. • Letterhead – LifeWays letterhead allows for 1” for the top, bottom, left and right margins. Second page, add header: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the first line indicates person’s name to whom it is addressed; - the second line is the date (always type the date out rather than select the auto date feature, as the auto date will replace the date of the correspondence to whatever the current date is whenever the document is opened); - the third line is Page __ of __ (no page numbers necessary for one-page documents). • Spacing – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Line space – single; -Spacing before and after paragraph: 0 (in paragraph setting); -before and after paragraph, one hard return. • Acronyms – Spell out the first time used in a document, then abbreviate the acronym in parentheses; can use abbreviations thereafter. • Generally, numbers between one and ten are to be spelled out; 11 and above, use the number. When a number is the first word of a sentence, it is always spelled out.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logo Use – use 2021 logo, height up to .75” . . Logo can be found on Intranet Resources/Forms & Links/Brand Identify. The aspect ratio is not to be changed from the original logo.
Policies & Procedures	
<p>In addition to all of the above:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions – Technically, the Definition section of the policy or procedure is not simply to spell out an acronym. For instance, the definition of MSHN is not “Mid-State Health Network.” It is: Mid-State Health Network is the Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan for Region 5, of which LifeWays is a member. Any acronym can be spelled out the first time it is used in a document and does not need to appear in the Definitions category. • Outline numbering – PolicyStat has an outline feature so that you never need to type your own number on a list or item. Please contact Karen Cascaddan or Cindy Keyes for PolicyStat training to demonstrate how to insert outline numbers on PolicyStat.
Brand Identity	
<p>In addition to all of the above:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See the Brand Identity guidelines, letterhead, logos, etc. on the Intranet under Resources/Forms & Links/Brand Identity