

APHL BRANDING & COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

Official Style Guide for Graphics and Writing on Behalf of the Association

Updated: 2025



INTRODUCTION

When we present information on behalf of APHL, we speak for the association. This manual aims to strengthen our collective voice by providing a quick reference to style, usage and procedures for developing and producing publications, and to unify our overall brand.

The *APHL Branding and Communications Policy* attempts to cover many aspects of style and standards, but for more complete information you may need to refer to the Associated Press Stylebook and the American Psychological Association Publication Manual. The former is the APHL standard for usage and punctuation; the latter is its guide to citations.

The manual is regularly updated to reflect changes in language usage and in the association itself. Please take a few moments to familiarize yourself with the contents and consult Marketing and Communications staff with any questions.



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Chief Executive Officer

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COMMUNICATING ABOUT APHL

APHL STANDARD DESCRIPTION

The following statements should be used in formal statements or documents to introduce or define APHL.

Short Description

The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) works to strengthen laboratory systems serving the public's health in the US and globally. APHL's member laboratories protect the public's health by monitoring and detecting infectious and foodborne diseases; environmental contaminants; biological, chemical and radiological agents; genetic disorders in newborns; and other diverse health threats.

Long Description

The Association of Public Health Laboratories (APHL) is the national organization representing state and local health laboratories in the United States. Its members, known as "public health laboratories," monitor and detect health threats to protect the health and safety of Americans.

APHL collaborates with laboratory and public health partners to assure effective monitoring, detection and response to health threats. It works closely with federal agencies, including the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Health Resources and Services Administration, Food and Drug Administration and Environmental Protection Agency, to develop and execute national health initiatives. During public health emergencies, APHL operates as a coordinating center for laboratory response.

APHL also works around the world to develop effective national laboratory systems and expand access to quality diagnostic testing services. With over 70 years' experience managing public health laboratory programs, it is recognized internationally as a leader in laboratory science and practice. It supports ministries of health with consulting services including laboratory strategic planning, twinning partnerships, laboratory information management systems, quality assurance and training.

APHL's core members are state and local governmental health laboratories in the United States, including public health, environmental, agricultural science and food safety laboratories. Representatives from federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, corporations and interested individuals also participate in the association. International participation is expanding in response to the globalization of disease and APHL's active global health program, which operates offices in 10 countries. APHL has over 130 member laboratories, 50 corporate partner organizations and 1,600 individuals in its network.

ONE APHL

The work we do at APHL is collective and supported by the whole organization, not just a single program, committee, contractor or individual. We aim to speak as one voice and represent ourselves consistently across all platforms. To ensure this, abide by the branding standards outlined in the next section, and always credit activities or work as being done by APHL.

Do: APHL has released an updated guide for TB testing.

Don't: APHL's Infectious Diseases program has released an updated guide for TB testing.

Acknowledging Work by Non-staff

Volunteer (aka non-contractor) work by non-APHL staff (committees, ELP groups, etc.) and partners can/should be acknowledged when their work has significantly contributed to a work product.

APHL BRANDING STANDARDS

APHL has established branding and graphic standards to create a visual identity for the association.

By assuring consistent standards, we raise APHL's visibility among target audiences, as our customers come to associate our "look" with our commitment to strengthening public health laboratory science and practice. The standards also reinforce those qualities that make APHL unique: leading-edge science, innovative programs, quality service and high standards of excellence. Like a flag, the standards identify our products while representing our collective achievements, values and aspirations.

APHL COLORS

APHL has two primary colors: **TEAL** and **RUST**.

Primary Colors

Colors		RGB	CMYK	Hex Code
APHL Teal		R 0, G 160, B 175	C 100, M 0, Y 31, K 7	#009999
APHL Rust		R 180, G 46, B 52	C 0, M 90, Y 72, K 29	#990000
Black		R 0, G 0, B 0	C 0, M 0, Y 0, K 100	#000000

Secondary Colors

Secondary colors should be used sparingly but are helpful in presentations or graphics where a variety of colors may be needed (e.g., icons, charts).

Primary Color Gradients

Colors		RGB	CMYK	Hex Code
Teal - Light		R 163, G 204, B 204	C 36, M 7, Y 19, K 0	#A3CCCC
Teal - Medium		R 0, G 110, B 121	C 90, M 42, Y 45, K 14	#006E79
Teal - Dark		R 0, G 80, B 87	C 93, M 53, Y 54, K 33	#005057
Rust - Light		R 243, G 209, B 210	C 3, M 20, Y 10, K 0	#F3D1D2
Rust - Dark		R 134, G 34, B 38	C 29, M 95, Y 85, K 33	#862226

Secondary Colors

Colors		RGB	CMYK	Hex Code
Green		R 104, G 189, B 73	C 63, M 0, Y 97, K 0	#68BD49
Yellow		R 235, G 171, B 33	C 7, M 35, Y 100, K 0	#EBAB21
Orange		R 227, G 124, B 29	C 8, M 61, Y 100, K 0	#E37C1D
Purple		R 153, G 96, B 167	C 44, M 73, Y 0, K 0	#9960A7

Color Code Use

Only use RGB, CMYK or Hex codes for identifying APHL colors, not PANTONE or PMS; they have not been evaluated by Pantone, Inc. for accuracy and may not match the PANTONE color standards.

Color Code Type	Use
CMYK/process	Printing (offset)
RGB	Electronic documents, web, printing (digital)
Hex code	Web-safe equivalents

LOGOS

The APHL logo is the foundation of the association's identity, and the most visible component of our organization's brand. The following guidelines outline the correct and consistent use of the association's logo and apply to both the standard logo and authorized variations (such as Career Pathways). Measurements are provided in conventional (i.e., nonmetric) units. Find a selection of our standard logo files in the [MarCom SharePoint Image Library](#).

About the APHL Standard Logo

APHL Full/Long Logo

The full logo consists of the letters "APHL," the name of the organization, "Association of Public Health Laboratories" and the 12-oval icon "Logomark."

The order or location of these components should not be altered, and components should not be used independently (except for the acronym, see "Short Logo").

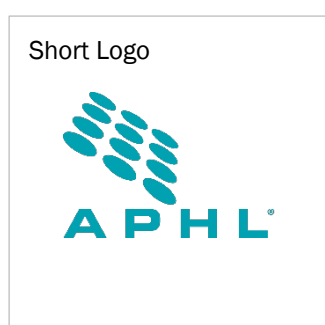
The full logo should appear on all APHL publications and products as well as those produced in collaboration with partner organizations.

It should **never be smaller than 1.75" wide**.

APHL Short/Acronym Logo

The short logo consists of the letters "APHL" and the 12-oval icon "Logomark."

It can be used in conjunction with the long logo or independently if space is at a premium or for internal/membership audiences who are already familiar with APHL.



Formatting the Logo

Defined White Space

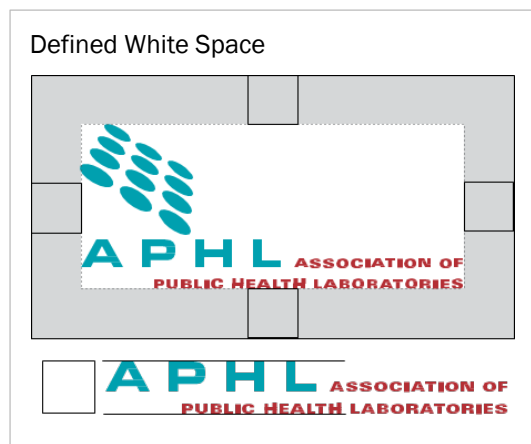
There should be equal white space surrounding the logo on all sides.

Minimum white space around the logos should be at least the height of the logo's text:

- **Full Logo:** APHL acronym + full name (see right for illustration)
- **Short Logo:** APHL acronym

Maintain Aspect Ratio

Do not skew or stretch the logo in any way.



Primary Logo Colors

APHL has color variations of the APHL logo to suit various design and printing situations. APHL teal and rust or all teal, rust, black or white are the ONLY color variations to be used (see “APHL Colors” for official color codes).

See the chart under “Logo Types and Uses” for information on how and when to use different color options.

Trademarks

A trademarked APHL logo should appear at least once on all APHL publications and products.

APHL has two types of logo trademarks:

- **Registered Trademark (®):** Used for print publications and materials
- **Trademarked (™):** Used for electronic materials

The registered trademark version (®) with the full name of the association should be included on either the front or back cover of print documents. The abbreviated (logo/acronym only) trademarked version (™) should be included in the banner or other prominent position in electronic documents; *when space allows*, the trademarked version with the full name of the association may be used in electronic documents. Please consult a MarCom staff member with any questions relating to logo usage in APHL publications and products.

The registered trademark or trademarked version of the APHL logo should appear at least once in a document; other instances can appear in a non-trademarked version.

File Formats

- **JPG:** Lower resolution format, ideal for use in electronic files (i.e. PDF). The file must be used in a RGB format and no smaller than 72 dpi. Use high-resolution (300 dpi) for print products.
- **PNG:** Ideal for digital platforms (e.g., webpage) as can be compressed to smaller sizes without losing quality (compared to JPG); background is transparent so can be used over non-white colors.
- **EPS:** Vector file format ensures logo is scalable in size so resolution is not lost; essential format for larger printed materials. The file must be used in a CMYK format and no smaller than 300 dpi. Background is transparent and can be used over non-white colors.

Logo Types and Usage

Logo Type	Logo	Use
Full logo (long), Teal and Rust		Preferred option For use on white or very light solid colors. Use any file type on white; PNG or EPS only over colors.
Full logo (long), Black		Use on light color(s). Use only as PNG or EPS to retain transparent background.
Full logo (long), White		Use on dark color(s). Use only as PNG or EPS to retain transparent background.
Short logo (acronym)		Use in conjunction with a long logo or on its own if space is an issue. Color options: • Teal: Preferred option; use on white or light solid colors. Use any file type on white; PNG or EPS only over colors. • Black: Use on light color(s); PNG or EPS only. • White: Use on dark color(s); PNG or EPS only.

TYPOGRAPHY

APHL Official Fonts

Helvetica Neue Family: Headers, Callouts

The Helvetica Neue typestyle was selected for titles, headers and extra “callout” information because of its crispness, simplicity and versatility. There are a variety of weights to suit your needs. The kerning for the type should be between -3 and -10.

Submit an ITS ticket to have the entire Helvetica Neue font family downloaded to your computer.

Franklin Gothic Family: Body Text

The Franklin Gothic typestyle was selected to be used for body copy because of its readability. The kerning for the type should be a consistent -3.

Alternative Fonts

Alternative to Helvetica for title/header font: Franklin Gothic Demi or Franklin Gothic Medium

Alternative to Franklin Gothic for body font: Arial

Sample Typography Hierarchy and Formatting

Exact size, color order, font weight, etc. can be adjusted as needed for the specific document or platform, but below are examples of font combinations currently in use in official APHL communications and publications.

If you do change the fonts/colors/sizes of headers, please try to keep a similar look/feel, and ensure that various levels are obviously different from one another. Adding spacing before a heading can also visually separate the section.

Formal Publications & Documents

Title: Helvetica Bold Condensed, Size 31

Subtitle: Helvetica Condensed, Size 21

HEADER 1: HELVETICA BOLD CONDENSED, SIZE 18, RUST, ALL CAPS

Header 2: Helvetica Bold, Size 16, Teal

Header 3: Helvetica Medium Condensed, Size 14, Dark Gray (R25, G25, B25)

Title: Helvetica Bold Condensed, Size 31

Subtitle: Helvetica Condensed, Size 21

HEADER 1: HELVETICA BOLD CONDENSED, SIZE 18, RUST, ALL CAPS

Header 2: Helvetica Bold, Size 16, Teal

Header 3: Helvetica Medium Condensed, Size 14, Dark Gray (R25, G25, B25)

Header 4: Franklin Gothic Medium, Size 12, Dark Teal (R0, G110, B121)

Body Text: Franklin Gothic Book, size 10

Informal Materials / Franklin Gothic Only

Less formal materials—such as flyers, posters and meeting agendas—can often just use Franklin Gothic or the alternative fonts listed above. The [APHL Letterhead template](#) has APHL colors and these fonts/paragraph styles built in:

Title: Franklin Gothic Demi, Size 31

Subtitle: Franklin Gothic Medium, Size 20

HEADER 1: FRANKLIN GOTHIC DEMI, SIZE 18, RUST, CAPS

Header 2: Franklin Gothic Medium, Size 16, Teal

Header 3: Franklin Gothic Medium, Size 14, Dark Gray (R25, G25, B25)

Header 4: Franklin Gothic Medium Italic, Size 12, Dark Rust (R134, G34, B38)

Body Text: Franklin Gothic Book, size 10

Title: Franklin Gothic Demi, Size 31

Subtitle: Franklin Gothic Medium, Size 20



HEADER 1: FRANKLIN GOTHIC DEMI, SIZE 18, RUST, CAPS

Header 2: Franklin Gothic Medium, Size 16, Teal

Header 3: Franklin Gothic Medium, Size 14, Dark Gray (R25, G25, B25)

Header 4: Franklin Gothic Medium Italic, Size 12, Dark Rust (R134, G34, B38)

Body Text: Franklin Gothic Book, size 10

APHL PUBLICATIONS AND BRANDED MATERIALS

MarCom Role in Production of Official APHL Documents

The Marketing and Communications department reserves the right to review and edit any document intended for public consumption to ensure that it aligns with APHL standards and positively and accurately represents the association. Materials that do not meet these standards may be asked to be withheld from publication/distribution until corrections can be made. Request content review and/or design assistance by submitting a [Design Projects request form](#) via the MarCom SharePoint site.

Working with Outside Contractors: InDesign templates are available for APHL publications. If you are working with an outside contractor for any design-related materials (publications, graphics, presentations, etc.), please coordinate with MarCom to ensure contractors provide materials consistent with APHL branding and quality standards.

Categories of Publications

Publication Type	Description	Examples
One Pager	A publication that is one page, front and back. All content fits into those two pages. Can include fact sheets, success stories, infographics, survey summaries, brochures, etc.	APHL Global Health Capabilities: Workforce Development Workforce Challenges in our Nation's Public Health Laboratory System: Select Findings from the 2021 All-hazards Laboratory Preparedness Survey
Brief	A publication of less than 12 pages that does not contain a table of contents.	Leveraging Public Health Laboratory Science to Understand and Address Climate Change Health Impacts Understanding Academic Partnerships with Public Health Laboratories
Report	A publication of more than 12 pages that contains a table of contents, and, of course, anything with “report” in the title	COOP Tabletop Exercises for Public Health Laboratories Campylobacter Isolation and Characterization from Clinical Specimens
Toolkit	A publication that members will actively use within their laboratories	Laboratory System Improvement Program Performance Measurement Tool Employee Advocacy Workbook: Self-assessment

White Paper vs. Report

Merriam-Webster defines “white paper” as “a detailed or authoritative report.” It is further defined by Wikipedia as a report that “informs readers concisely about a complex issue and presents the issuing body’s philosophy on the matter. It is meant to help readers understand an issue, solve a problem or make a decision.” Lately, its place is more in the financial sector or marketing and is used to sell a good or service. If you are not presenting graphical data or are trying to persuade your audience toward one idea, then you are submitting a white paper.

Guide vs. Toolkit

This probably seems self-explanatory, but it’s more than just having “Guide” or “Guidelines” in the title of your document. With a Guide, you are providing information on a new practice or procedure that has been widely accepted for use and adaptation within a laboratory. Recent examples include *How to Write a Laboratory Quality Manual* or *After the Assessment: Examples of L-SIP Quality Improvement Activities*. A toolkit is exactly what it says it is...the laboratory will use the publication to perform specific activities within their facility, based on accepted rules and/or procedures. Recent examples include *Rabies Diagnostics: Assessing Your Public Health Laboratory* and *Biothreat Agent Bench Cards for the Sentinel Laboratory*.

APHL WRITING STYLE

SUMMARY OF APHL WRITING STYLE

APHL follows the AP (Associated Press) Stylebook with a few modifications, noted in the sections below. Pointers on AP style can be found on websites such as [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#) and the [AP Stylebook](#).

Common Issues in Usage & Style

Acronyms

Write out the entire name of an organization when it first appears in text followed by its acronym in parentheses. Then use the acronym only. Do not list the acronym after the organization name if the organization is mentioned only once in the text. Do not repeat the acronym after the organization name in a title.

First occurrence: American Society for Microbiology (ASM)
Thereafter: ASM

Omit periods in acronyms – US for United States.

For a list of commonly used APHL acronyms, please refer to page 28.

Apostrophes

Use an s with no apostrophe for plurals of numbers and multiple letter combinations.

The 1980s LIMSs LDTs

For plural nouns ending in s, add an apostrophe only.

States' rights.

For singular common nouns ending in s, add 's.

The witness's answer.

For singular proper names ending in s, use an apostrophe only.

Texas' public health laboratories.

For singular proper names ending in s sounds such as x, ce and z, use 's.

Max's theories.

For plurals of a single letter, add 's.

The Boston Red Sox defeated the Oakland A's.

Bulleted Lists

Use a final period in bulleted lists only when items are in sentence form.

Public health laboratory directors need to advise on the design of CDC's National Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NEDSS) because:

- They will be key NEDSS users.
- They have a broad knowledge of public health systems.
- They have specialized knowledge of the laboratory procedures that will be recorded in NEDSS.

NEDSS has several unique features:

- A browser-based data entry system
- An integrated data repository
- A shareable directory of public health personnel



Capitalization

Capitalize proper nouns only. The following terms are not capitalized:

public health	standard operating procedures	quality assurance
public health laboratories	board of directors	the committee

Capitalize names of federal agencies:

Food and Drug Administration	Department of Health and Human Services
------------------------------	---

Do not capitalize directions but do capitalize the names of regions.

Drive north on I-95 to reach the hotel.

The outbreak was concentrated in the eastern half of the city.

Laboratories in the West have already implemented the new policy.

Do not capitalize a proper noun in plural.

San Diego and Los Angeles counties

The Potomac and Hudson rivers

Do not capitalize the second word in a hyphenated compound word when it appears in a title or heading.

APHL Fields Annual All-hazards Survey

Do not capitalize prepositions (about, by, to, etc.) and conjunctions (and, or, etc.) in titles and headings.

“Defending the Public’s Health: The Work of Public Health Laboratories”

Commas

Omit the serial comma (the third comma in a series before ‘and’ or ‘or’).

red, blue and green

However, use the serial comma to clarify the meaning of a series of multi-part items.

The fall issue of *Lab Matters* highlights the global response to Ebola in West Africa, the launch of the African Public Health Laboratory Network, the importance of laboratory biosafety and biosecurity, and much more.

Dates

Use cardinal numbers for dates.

May 16 (NOT May 16th)

Use a hyphen instead of ‘to’ to indicate a date range:

July 16-20, 2025

When a phrase lists only a month and year, spell out the month and do not separate the month and the year with commas.

The website will launch in January 2026.

When a phrase refers to a month, day and year, set off the year with commas.

The deadline is November 1, 2023, and all applicants will receive a confirmation email.

Omit ‘on’ before a date.

The meeting will take place December 1, 2025.

Do not abbreviate the names of months.

The meeting will take place in January.

Italics

Italicize titles of books, reports, issue briefs, magazines and movies. Consult citation guidelines for web-based sources. Hyperlinking a title may supersede the need to put the title in italics.

Public Health Laboratory Issues in Brief: Bioterrorism Capacity

Italicize scientific names:

Escherichia coli / *E. coli*

Candida auris

Italicize names of court cases:

Brown v. Board of Education

Italicize foreign phrases and words:

raison d'être

modus operandi

Money

Spell out the words “million” or “billion” and round the figure to the first decimal point.

\$2.5 million (not \$2,480,354)

Numbers

Spelled Out vs. Numerals

Generally, spell out numbers one through nine and use numerals for 10 and over one, two, three, etc.

11, 12, 13, etc.

Do not start sentences with numerals, even if over 10.

Thirty years of work went into the project.

Exceptions: use numerals for:

Statistics

Researchers determined that only 3 of 125 specimens (2%) were viable.

Millions, Billions and Trillions

1 million fans

Up to 5 billion trees

Measurements: Use a hyphen

4-foot window

5 miles

3 mL

Fractions and Ratios

Use a hyphen for fractions of less than one. Omit the hyphen in fractions of more than one. Use numerals and hyphens for ratios. One-third, two-fourths

Two and a half years

A ratio of 2-to-1, a 2-1 ratio, 1 in 4 laboratorians

Percentages

Use numerals and the percent sign.

25%

Use a hyphen to describe range. Include the percent sign on the last percentage only.

1-2%

Official Names vs. References

Capitalize key words in official names of agencies, offices and programs.

US Food and Drug Administration

Bureau of Laboratories, Pennsylvania Department of Health

APHL Food Safety Program

Do not capitalize a reference to an organization or other entity.

Utah's public health laboratory...

The most highly regarded university in the state...

The association launched a new training program.

The committee postponed its meeting.

Phone Numbers

Use periods instead of hyphens in phone numbers.

+1 240.485.4500

Quotations

Punctuation always goes **inside quotation marks**.

Bill said, "Do you think it will rain today?"

Seasons

Do not capitalize seasons of the year.

spring

fall 2026

Scientific Names

Italicize scientific names of organisms, capitalizing the genus and putting the species in lowercase.

Escherichia coli

Bacillus anthracis

Homo sapiens

Capitalize but do not italicize the name of the scientist who first identified the organism (species author) or the sub-species (serovar) where specified.

Leptospira interrogans serovar Ballum

Salmonella Bareilly

When referring to a larger species of organisms, italicize the genus but not the "species," and abbreviate species to "spp." after first use.

Shigella species

Shigella spp.

Mycobacterium spp.

Write out full name of organisms and pathogens on first use, then abbreviate in subsequent uses.

Legionella pneumophila

L. pneumophila

Where sources differ on how to write the classification of an organism, use the CDC version. For more information, see <http://blog.vancouvereditor.com/2011/03/science-writing-and-editing-scientific.html> or consult a member of the infectious disease staff.

Spacing

Use **only one space** at the end of a sentence and after a colon. Do not use spaces on either side of a long (em) dash.

She put on the PPE for the first time. It was more difficult to move than she had expected.

Biosafety practices—always critical to quality laboratory science—were the topic of the session.

State Abbreviations

Abbreviate states with their two-letter acronym.

The study was conducted in Baltimore, MD.

Spell out the state name when it stands alone:

The legislation has passed the Senate and awaits the signature of the California governor.

Time

Write the time in numerals using lowercase letters for am and pm and no periods. Indicate the time zone using two letters—rather than three—to avoid confusion between standard and daylight time.

10:00 am ET

12:30 pm PT

Titles of Publications

Write titles of books, reports, journals, movies, issue briefs and court cases in italics. Write titles of case studies, webinars, surveys and article titles in quotation marks.

Ready or Not: Findings and Recommendations of the APHL Chemical Terrorism Project

The study, “Third National Report on Human Exposure to Environmental Chemicals,” appears in *Science*.

Referring to a Person

Academic Degrees

Omit periods in abbreviations for degrees. List multiple degrees with most advanced degree first, followed by licensures—separated by a comma. Follow conventions for writing laboratory licensures.

Only include credentials for master’s level and above. Bachelors degrees do not communicate an area or level of specialized expertise in the same way that a graduate-level degree does.

Anne Smart, PhD, D(ABMM) John Kent, DrPH, MPH Amy Hernandez, SM(ASCP)

Do not capitalize degrees when referring to them in general terms. Write types of degrees using a possessive.

doctoral degree

master of science

bachelor of science

doctorate

master’s

bachelor’s

Abbreviate a title before a person’s name and use a period.

Dr. Ware

Ms. Garcia

Prof. Chan

Job Titles

Job titles should be **lowercase, placed after the name and set off with commas**. Do not abbreviate titles except: CEO, COO, Sen., Rep., Gov., Lt. Gov., Gen., Pvt. and Dr.

Daphne Ware, president of APHL, made a statement concerning the recent outbreak.

Exceptions:

Job titles may be capitalized:

- When placed directly before a name (note: place the title before the name only when the title is short).
APHL CEO Scott Becker spoke to the reporter.
APHL President Daphne Ware made a statement concerning the recent outbreak.
- In formal listings (such as in an agenda for a board of directors meeting or a conference)
- In a mailing address.

Personal Names

Write out first and last names and degree at first appearance in a document. Afterwards use only the last name.

First appearance: Daphne Ware, PhD

Subsequent appearances: Ware

Use a middle initial with common names to avoid confusion or misidentification or if an individual prefers its use.

Mary B. Smith

Use a comma before suffixes.

John Doe, Jr.

Harold Johnson, Sr.

Legislators

Identify legislators by title, party and state. ‘Senator’ and ‘Representative’ can be abbreviated to ‘Sen.’ and ‘Rep.’
Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA)

Use ‘US’ before the title only to differentiate between federal and state senators and representatives.
US Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) fought to extend the public health emergency.

Commonly Misused Words

Affect/Effect

Use “affect” as a verb to mean influence or modification.

Multiple hoaxes affected staff’s ability to respond to legitimate threats.

Use “effect” as a noun to mean outcome, result or consequence.

The vaccine has an immediate effect.

Use “effect” as a verb to convey “to cause to come into being.”

APHL’s efforts effected a change in the laboratory guidance. (The efforts led directly to the change.)

Among/Between

Use “between” to indicate an interaction involving two entities.

The link between APHL and CDC has never been stronger.

Use “among” for three or more entities.

APHL’s CoLABorate communities facilitate discussion among public health laboratory scientists.

Assure/Ensure/Insure

Use “assure” as a verb to promise or say with confidence, remove doubts.

Use “ensure” as verb to make certain something happens or guarantee it.

Use “insure” as a verb when speaking about protecting something or someone against risk with an insurance policy.

Compared To/With

Use “compared to” for similarities.

Because of its attractions, Salt Lake City is often compared to Denver.

Use “compared with” for differences.

Compared with older testing methods, rapid testing is faster and more convenient.

Comprise

Use “comprise” to mean “to contain” or “to include.” Note: it is not synonymous with “composed of.”

The plan comprises materials submitted by 10 state laboratories.

Fewer/Less

Use “fewer” for numbers and countable things. Use ‘less’ for quantity and uncountable things.

Fewer workers require less money.

Less time is taken up by doing fewer exercises.

Healthcare

Always write healthcare as one word.

It's/Its

Use “it’s” to mean “it is” or “it has.”

It’s been a long time. It’s up to you.

Use “its” as a pronoun.

The company lost its assets.

When referring to an organization or entity, use “its,” not “their.”

APHL believes in being environmentally friendly. Its mission supports that belief.

That/Who

When referring to people, the preferred usage is “who” not “that.”

The speaker recognized the microbiologist who identified the source of the foodborne outbreak.

That/Which

Use “that” to begin a clause that is essential to the sentence.

The safety guidelines that our lab uses have not been easy to implement.

Use “which” to begin a clause that can be removed from a sentence without losing the main point. Use a comma before ‘which’ and set off the non-essential clause with commas when placed in the middle of a sentence.

The lab safety guidelines, which are on the ASM website, are easy to implement.

Their/They’re/There

“Their” is a possessive pronoun.

They went to their house.

“They’re” is a contraction for “they are.”

They’re on vacation this week.

“There” is an adverb meaning “that place.” Also used as a pronoun to introduce a clause or sentence.

Did you see that new restaurant? We are going there with the group tonight.

There is a light at the end of the tunnel.

Toward/Upward

When writing for a US-based audience, these verbs should not be plural (towards or upwards).

Plural usage is acceptable when writing for international audiences, as it is considered correct in British/European English.

Who/Whom

Use “who” to indicate the person performing an action.

It was Dr. Petersen who delivered the specimen.

Use “whom” to indicate a person or thing who receives an action.

Whom did she call when the laboratory flooded?

Plurals

Form plurals of abbreviations by adding an 's.'

STCs (state training coordinators), CEUs (continuing education units)

APHL and other organizations are singular nouns.

APHL has reported on its activities.

"Data," "media" and "alumni" are always plural.

Hyphens & Prefixes

Use a Hyphen

To set off a prefix that ends in the same vowel that the next word begins with.

Co-owner

Re-emergence

Exceptions: 'coordinate' and 'cooperate'

To avoid confusion:

Under-served (not to be confused with "un-deserved.")

Under-used

First-come, first-served basis

If the word that follows the prefix is capitalized

During the pre-Communist period in Russia

Do Not Hyphenate

decision maker

fundraising/fundraiser

groundbreaking

livestream

HazMat

healthcare

policymakers

cosponsor

preconference

problem solving

twofold

Web Terminology

CoLABorate

Capitalize 'LAB' within CoLABorate when referring to APHL's online community.

Email

Write as one word and do not hyphenate.

Homepage

Write as one word and do not hyphenate.

Internet

Lowercase 'internet.'

Login

Write login as one word when used as a noun.

I forgot my login for the site.

Write it as two words when used as a verb.

I can't log in to aphl.org.

SharePoint

Capitalize both the S and the P. SharePoint is the name of the software platform, not to be confused with APHL's intranet (APHL8515.org) or external-facing website (aphl.org.)

URLs and Email Addresses

Write URLs and email addresses in lowercase except if capitalization can increase readability, such as when more than one word is used in a URL with no punctuation between, or if the url is an acronym that is less recognizable in lowercase:

www.google.com

scott.becker@aphl.org

www.APHL.org

www.DatapultAPHL.org

The Web

Lowercase 'web' when referring to the World Wide Web.

Webpage

Lowercase 'webpage' unless starting a sentence. Write as one word and do not hyphenate.

Website

Lowercase 'website' unless starting a sentence. Write as one word and do not hyphenate.

GENERAL WRITING TIPS

The APHL website, *Lab Matters*, *eUpdate* and social media sites all require different writing styles. Consider the audience and platform as you develop your copy. For assistance, consult a member of the Marketing and Communications department.

In general, it is always good practice to:

- Be concise. Use only the words required to make your point.
- Use active verbs whenever possible.
- Vary sentence length to keep the reader interested.
- Use a consistent point-of-view within a document.
- Choose details carefully. Concrete details make your writing interesting; however, too many details overload readers with unnecessary information.
- Use synonyms to avoid repeating one word many times; however, choose repetition over awkward-sounding sentences.
- Review your work thoroughly. Try reading it aloud.

Recommended Resources:

- Strunk, Jr, William and White, E.B. *The Elements of Style*. Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc.
- Fogarty, M. (2015) *Grammar Girl*. Retrieved February 19, 2015, available from: www.quickanddirtytips.com/grammar-girl.
- O'Connor, Patricia T. *Woe Is I. The Grammarphobe's Guide to Better English in Plain English*. Riverhead Books.

CITATION FORMATTING

General APHL Citation Style

APHL allows citations that follow either **Vancouver Style** or **American Psychological Association (APA)**. As long as citation styles and formatting are consistent within a singular document, staff may choose the style that is best suited to their content and audience.

- **Vancouver/ICMJE:**
 - o Common style used by biomedical journals
 - o Ideal for highly technical publications primarily written for a laboratory audience
 - o More complex formatting; for consistency, recommend using a citation generator
- **APA:**
 - o Designed to accommodate the sciences, education and psychology, so has simplified reference formatting and style rules
 - o Ideal for less technical materials and/or broad audiences
 - o Included in MS Word's Citations and Bibliography source management system
 - o More citation options for citing websites

You can check citations on Citation Machine, or use a citation manager (we recommend [Zotero](#) or [Mendeley](#), both free, or [EndNote](#)).

In-text Citations

Regardless of which citation style you are using, APHL style for in-text citations is numbered and superscripted. The superscript should appear after any punctuation.

Data or statement supported by single source:

Data from this survey were compared to previous HIV surveys conducted by APHL in 2018,⁶ 2019⁷ and 2021.⁸

Data or statement supported by multiple sources:

The presence of bovine serum albumin in media has been found to increase pH of acidic media²⁻⁵ and binds to POA, which may result in false resistance.^{8,55,56}

See the [APHL/CDC Competency Guidelines for Public Health Laboratory Professionals](#) or CDC's [Laboratory Testing for the Diagnosis of HIV Infection](#) for more examples.

Citing Online Sources

Include the date you accessed the site and a link to the source.

[cited 2022 Sep 4]

Always include a link to the source:

Available from: <https://www.aphl.org/aboutAPHL/publications/Pages/default.aspx>.

Consistency Within Document

Whichever citation style you choose, please ensure that you apply it consistently throughout the document. If you produce several related documents/materials—a toolkit or set of fact sheets, for example—they should all have the same citation style, applied in the same way.

You can check or generate citations on [Citation Machine](#), or use a citation manager (we recommend [Zotero](#) or [Mendeley](#), both free, or [EndNote](#)).

Vancouver Style Specifics

Vancouver Style is the citation style used by most **biomedical journals, such as Medline and PubMed**. It is maintained by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE) and is also known as the [Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals](#). APHL formerly used ICMJE as its main citation format; "Vancouver" is the maintained version of ICMJE and is what is commonly used in citation generators, so we will refer to it as such.

In-text Citations

Like APHL style, Vancouver Style uses a numbered placeholder system. This means that each source of information will be given a number, assigned in the order in which they appear in your assignment.

Vancouver Style allows in-text citation numbers to appear in brackets or as superscript, but **APHL style calls for use of superscript**.

Vancouver style calls for a numbered reference list, so the superscript numbers should align with that reference's order and be the same number throughout the document.

Reference List Formatting

Order

Sources should be numbered and arranged in order of appearance in the document.

Authors

If more than six authors, list the first six followed by "et al."

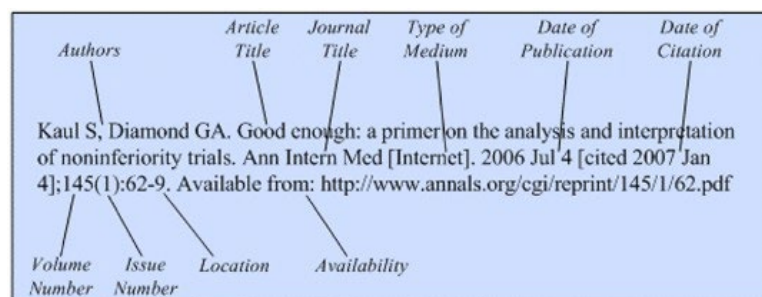
Titles

Capitalize only the first word and proper nouns; do not capitalize every word. No italics or underlining are necessary.

Source Type Examples

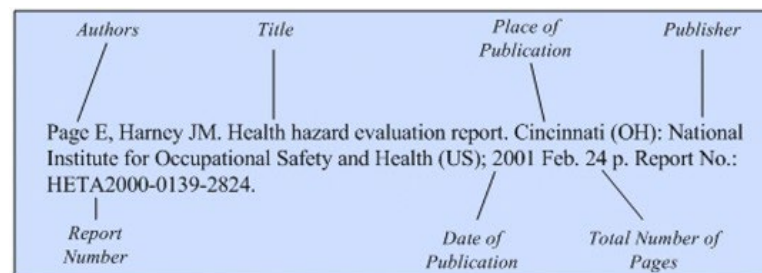
Online Journal Article

Author A, Author B. Article title. Journal Title [Medium]. Publication Year Mon Day [cited Year Mon Day];Volume(Issue):Page-Range. Available from: url



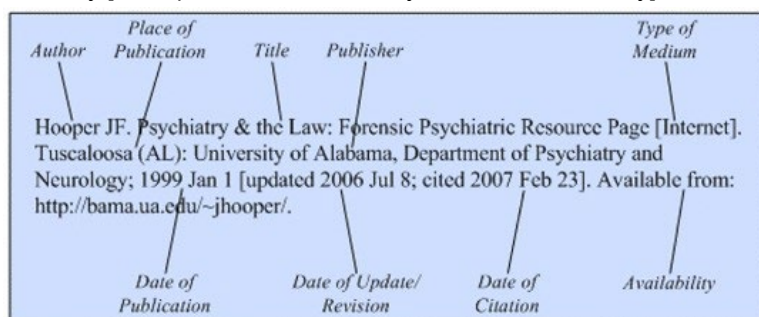
Scientific and Technical Reports

Author A, Author B. Report title. Journal Title. City of publication (State): Publisher (Country); Publication Year Mon. # of pages. Report No.: #.



General Online Source

Author A, Author B. Title. Journal Title [Medium]. City of publication (State): Publisher (Country); Publication Year Mon Day [last updated Year Mon Day; cited Year Mon Day]. Available from: url



APA Style Specifics

There are many online resources for APA style, as well [as citation managers/generators](#) that can help formulate the final references. The [Dalhousie University Libraries' Quick Style Guide](#) is a good resource.

Below are how to integrate APA into APHL style.

In-text Citations

APA traditionally calls for in line citations with the authors and years, but **APHL style calls for use of superscript, and this will take precedence.**

Because the official APA reference list is alphabetical, we recommend that the superscript be for a footnote where a regular APA style in-text citation can be noted.¹ Because this number is detached from the reference list, footnotes should restart their numbering after each page so as not to imply continuity throughout the document.

Reference List Formatting

Order

Sources are alphabetical.

Authors

Write out last names and use initials with periods for first and middle names. This does contradict APHL style but for the sake of consistency for those using citation managers, we will default to the traditional citation format.

Roger Alexander Williams → Williams RA or Williams R.

If more than 20 authors, list the first 19, followed by an ellipsis (...) then end with the last author.

¹ APHL, 2023

COMMON ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The list below is both a reference for staff unfamiliar with the terms, and a guide to the preferred usage of the acronyms across the organization.

APHL Organizational Terms

Funding and Operational Terms

ALC	APHL Learning Center
CoAg	Cooperative agreement
CWG	Collaborative workgroup
DEIA.....	Diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility
ELAN.....	Emerging Leader Alumni Network
ELP	Emerging Leader Program
GHSA	Global Health Security Agenda <i>Funding source</i>
ICS/ICT	Incident Command System/Incident Command Team
LLOT	Laboratory Leaders of Today
PEPFAR	President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief <i>Funding source</i>
PHAI.....	Public health associate institutional member
PHI	Public health institutional member
TrP	Training partner
SIG.....	Strategic Implementation Group

APHL Departments/Programs

EH.....	Environmental Health
FS	Food Safety
ID	Infectious Diseases
ITS	Information Technology and Solutions
MarCom	Marketing and Communications
NBS	Newborn Screening and Genetics
PHPR	Public Health Preparedness and Response
QSA.....	Quality Systems and Analytics
TWD.....	Training and Workforce Development

Laboratory and Scientific Terms

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
AIMS	APHL Informatics Messaging Services <i>Informatics platform</i>
AMD	advanced molecular detection
AMR	antimicrobial resistance
AR	antibiotic resistance
BT.....	biothreat
CLIA.....	Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (1988) <i>A quality certification program regulated by CMS</i>
ELSM	electronic laboratory surveillance message <i>Informatics initiative</i>
EQA	external quality assessment
ETOR.....	electronic test orders and results <i>Informatics data sharing initiative</i>
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
LIMS/LIS	laboratory information management system <i>Informatics data management/sharing system</i>
LOINC	Logical observation identifiers, names and codes
L-SIP	Laboratory Systems Improvement Program
MALDI-TOF.....	matrix-assisted laser desorption ionization— time of flight <i>Type of mass spectrometer</i>
NAAT	Nucleic acid amplification test
NGS	Next generation sequencing
NHANES	National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey
PCR.....	Polymerase chain reaction
PFGE	Pulsed-field gel electrophoresis
PHLIP	Public Health Laboratory Interoperability Project <i>Informatics initiative</i>
PHLSD	Public Health Laboratory System Database <i>Data repository managed by QSA</i>
STI.....	Sexually transmitted infection
WGS.....	Whole genome sequencing

Organizations

AAFCO Association of American Feed Control Officials

ADLM Association for Diagnostics & Laboratory Medicine

AFDO Association of Food and Drug Officials

APHA American Public Health Association

ASCLS American Society for Clinical Laboratory Science

ASCP American Society for Clinical Pathology

ASM American Society for Microbiology

ASTHO Association of State and Territorial Health Officials

CAP College of American Pathologists

CDC US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CIFOR Council to Improve Foodborne Outbreak Response

CLSI Clinical and Laboratory Standards Institute

CMS US Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

CSTE Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists

DHS US Department of Homeland Security

DOD US Department of Defense

DOE US Department of Energy

DOJ US Department of Justice

EPA US Environmental Protection Agency

FDA Food and Drug Administration

GAO US Government Accountability Office

HHS US Department of Health and Human Services

HRSA US Health Resources and Services Administration

IDSA Infectious Diseases Society of America

ISO International Organization for Standardization

MOH Ministry of Health

NACCHO National Association of County and City Health Officials

NASTAD National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors

NIH National Institutes of Health

NIEHS National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences

OP FDA Office of Partnership

OPM US Office of Personnel Management

ORS FDA Office of Regulatory Science

PAHO Pan American Health Organization

USAMRIID US Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases

USDA US Department of Agriculture

WHO World Health Organization

CDC-specific Divisions and Offices

Find all divisions/offices in the [CDC organizational list](#).

CGH Center for Global Health

CSELS Center for Surveillance, Epidemiology and Laboratory Services

DFWED Division of Foodborne, Waterborne and Environmental Diseases

DGHT Division of Global HIV and TB

GSLDS Global Surveillance, Laboratory and Data Systems Branch

IOD Immediate Office of the Director

LRN Laboratory Response Network

NCBDDD National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

NCCDPHP National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

NCEH National Center for Environmental Health

NCEZID National Center for Emerging and Infectious Zoonotic Diseases

NCHHSTP National Center for HIV, Viral Hepatitis, STD and TB Prevention

NCIRD National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases

NCIPC National Center for Injury Prevention and Control

NCSTLTPHIW National Center for State, Tribal, Local and Territorial Public Health Infrastructure and Workforce

NIOSH National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

OLSR Office of Laboratory Systems and Response

ORR Office of Readiness and Response

OPHDST Office of Public Health Data, Surveillance and Technology

OGS Office of Grants Services

OTHER RESOURCES

Visit the [Marketing and Communications SharePoint site](#) for more information on creating content for APHL, such as how to [coordinate the production of a publication](#), [submit an article to Lab Matters](#) or [submit eUpdate items](#).

REQUEST COPIES OF AN APHL PUBLICATION

1. Go to the [Office Management](#) site on SharePoint.
2. Under “Additional Resources” on the bottom half of the page, click the storage inventory list.
3. To search publications, scroll down to the “PB” section. Find the publication you would like to recall and jot down the locator code.
4. Access the [Office Management Requests](#) ticketing site and click “Storage Request”
5. Click on “New Storage Request,” fill out the required information and click “Submit Request.”

Please allow a week for delivery of APHL publications from off-site storage.

TEMPLATES

A wide variety of templates are available for staff to download and use from the [Marketing and Communications SharePoint site](#). Find them in the main Resources and Guides list on the homepage or find a [filtered list](#) on the [Conferences, Meetings and Exhibits](#) page.

EMAIL SIGNATURES

APHL staff should all use the same basic format for their outgoing emails and replies/forwards; periodic updates are sent out via email to add additional marketing information. Full and short signatures for reference are below.

To create the hyperlink of the pronunciation of your name, go to <https://user.namedrop.io/signup?org=aphl>

Please note: Mobile # is not required; fax # and Twitter handle may be added if appropriate. International staff may change the company name and address to reflect your in-country office name and location.

Standard/Full Signature Example

Full Name, MPH (he/him) ([hear my name](#))
Sr. Specialist, Marketing
P +1 240.485.2762 | M +1 202.744.8572
full.name@aphl.org | www.aphl.org

Association of Public Health Laboratories
8515 Georgia Avenue, Suite 700, Silver Spring, MD 20910
[APHL Blog](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [Instagram](#) | [TikTok](#)

Marketing Example: [Career Pathways in Public Health Laboratory Science](#)
Fellowship, Internship and Leadership Programs

Reply Signature Example

Full Name, MPH (he/him) ([hear my name](#))
Sr. Specialist, Marketing
Association of Public Health Laboratories
P +1 240.485.2762 | M +1 202.744.8572
full.name@aphl.org | www.aphl.org

Marketing Example: [Career Pathways in Public Health Laboratory Science](#)
Fellowship, Internship and Leadership Programs

WEBSITE WRITING & EDITING



APHL.org Content and Style Guide

This [guide](#) explains how to write and format your webpages, credit photos and more.



Editing APHL.org

Please contact ITS or Marketing and Communications to receive training before attempting to edit your program's webpages. Use [this presentation](#) as a refresher.