

## NCBJ Newsletter Style Guide

The purpose of this style guide is to provide a uniform look to the NCBJ Newsletter and to minimize the amount of editing issue editors must perform in readying their issue for publication. The NCBJ Newsletter Committee requests those who submit articles to adhere to the style manual and thanks those who do so. **For style conventions not included below, the default style manual is Associated Press Stylebook** (there a few AP quick reference guides available for free online, such as this one: [www.brandeis.edu/communications/webcommunications/images/apstyle.pdf](http://www.brandeis.edu/communications/webcommunications/images/apstyle.pdf)).

### **Bylines:**

Bankruptcy judge:

By Kay Woods  
Northern District of Ohio

Non-bankruptcy judge:

By James D. Whittemore  
District Judge, Middle District of Florida

Other authors:

By Clifford White  
Executive Director, United States Trustee Program

### **Capitalization:**

-Do not capitalize seasons: fall, winter, spring, summer, unless referencing a specific season by year (e.g., Fall 2011).

-Do not capitalize “chapter” and “section.”

-Do not capitalize the noun “judge” unless it is used as a formal title (e.g., District Court Judge Terrell Hodges and the other judges attended the meeting).

-Do not capitalize “website.”

-Do not capitalize “email.”

-Capitalize Mid-Year Meeting.

-Capitalize “Roundtable” when referring to Schwartz program.

-Do not capitalize “court” unless referring to the Supreme Court.

**Case citations:** Case names should be italicized and not underlined.

**Circuit Courts** should be referenced by number and no superscript (e.g., 11th Cir.).

**Commas in a series:** Formal (not press) style (do insert a comma before conjunction and last item) (e.g., Bankruptcy judges’ hobbies include traveling, quilting, fencing, and cooking.). N.B.: This is the default convention for most legal writers, so it will save the editors time by not having them have to remove commas in a series. [I know we agreed otherwise at the 2011 annual Conference, but I called an audible on this to change back to formal style after reviewing the Winter 2013 issue and having to make so many changes for this convention.]

**Commas joining two clauses in a sentence:** Ordinarily, be sure that each clause is a complete sentence (subject and verb on each side).

**Common phrases:**

-Attorney fees (not plural or possessive or plural possessive, consistent with Fed. R. Civ. P.).

**Cutlines** should include pictured judges’ duty stations (see Judicial Duty Station below).

**Dates:** When referring to a month, day and year, do not set off the year with commas (e.g., “Oct. 17, 2005 is when most of BAPCPA became effective”).

**Dashes:** Use an “m” dash or two hyphens, not a single hyphen (the “m” dash is about equal to two hyphens) and put a space on either side.

**DIP:** Do not use hyphens in between letters (not D-I-P).

**Ellipses:** Use spaces between them (e.g., . . . ). For ellipses signifying the end of a sentence, use four (e.g., . . . .).

**Email addresses** should not be underlined (e.g., cmcewen@flmb.uscourts.gov).

**Font/typeface:** Use 12-point, Times New Roman.

**Format:** Articles should be submitted in WordPerfect format (Leisa Mayberry’s word processing format) if possible.

## **Headlines and subheads:**

-Headlines should be centered, in bigger font than byline (at least 2 pts.), Times New Roman font, not underlined, and stacked pyramid style if more than one line not equal in length. E.g.:

NCBJ Conference News Wins  
AP News Writers and Editors Award for  
Best Newsletter in Professional Organization Class

-Subheads should be caps and lower case, bold, not underlined (unless necessary for readability), not italicized, and not indented.

**Judicial Duty Station:** Is indicated after the bankruptcy judge's name in text or a cutline by a parenthetical following Blue Book Style for court location (not court type) (e.g., "attending were Joan Feeney (D. Mass.), Steve Raslavich (E.D. Pa.) and Mike Romero (D. Colo.)"). If the reference is to a non-bankruptcy judge, his title precedes the name (e.g., "Circuit Judge Charles R. Wilson (11th Cir.) gave the keynote address"). For a list of Blue Book state abbreviations, go here: [www.law.cornell.edu/citation/4-500.htm](http://www.law.cornell.edu/citation/4-500.htm).

**Justification:** Titles and bylines should be centered; articles should be formatted with full justification.

## **Numbers:**

-Spell out ten and less, use numerals for 11 and over, use numerals for mixed style (e.g., "3 men ate 20 hotdogs in the contest").

-Ordinals: Normal font, not superscript (11th Circuit, not 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit).

-Phone numbers: 813.555.1212 (international style).

**Paragraphs** should be indented.

**Percent:** Spell out (percent not %).

**Plural possessive:** For plural nouns ending in s, add only an apostrophe (e.g., the students' program). For singular common nouns ending in s, add 's (e.g., the witness's answer). For singular proper names ending in s, use only an apostrophe (e.g., the United States' talented Article I judicial officers handle more than a million bankruptcy cases each year with great efficiency).

**Quoted material:** Use a comma before the quote and not a colon.

**Spacing:** Use double line spacing for submitted drafts. Use two spaces after a period at end of sentence.

**Subsequent references to bankruptcy judges** generally should be to first names except for the “Meet These Bankruptcy Judges” column (e.g., Judge Joan Feeney called the meeting to order, and later Joan called for committee reports).

**Symbols:**

-When citing to a statute, spell out “section” unless citing to the United States Code, in which case use §.

-Spell out percent (do not use % sign).

**Time:** Use lower case a.m. or p.m. to signify morning or afternoon, and not capitals without periods (e.g., not AM, PM).

**Titles:** Put quotation marks around a book, movie or song title, but not a newspaper.

**URLs:** Blue font and not underlined blue (e.g., [www.google.com](http://www.google.com)). Omit “http” unless it is “https”(e.g., <https://jport.uscourts.gov>). (This should not require the author to change the font color in most cases because hyperlink format is a default auto format setting for URLs for many; however, hyperlink will add an underline that must be removed manually.) N.B.: This formatting shows the links better in the online version.