

## Style guide for terms related to the Office of Denver City Council

1. **Office of Denver City Council, Office of the Denver City Council, or Denver City Council** designate the central office or the council as a body/institution.
  - a. **Legislative Services** is also used to refer to the central office and staff but is less clear and should be avoided.
  
2. **city council**
  - a. Capitalize when part of a proper name: the Denver City Council.
  - b. Retain capitalization if the reference is to a specific council but the context does not require the city name.
    - i. “DENVER — The City Council voted last night to...”
    - ii. “The mayor’s proposal goes to the City Council on Monday. (Where it is known that it’s Denver’s council.)”
  - c. Lowercase in other uses.
    - i. the council, the Denver and Aurora city councils, a city council.
  - d. Use lowercase “city council” in plural references.
    - i. “The Denver and Aurora city councils are considering the matter.”
  - e. Always use an article when referring to the City Council.
    - i. The City Council met in a special session...
    - ii. The measure will go before the council
    - iii. **Wrong:** “City Council met in a special session.”
    - iv. **Wrong:** “The measure will go before Council.”
  
3. **City Council District vs. district vs. council district.**
  - a. When referring to a district in running text, it is not capitalized.
    - i. The meetings will take place in each district.
  - b. When referring to a generic council district, it is not capitalized.
    - i. Each council district will have the materials on hand.
  - c. When referring to a specific district, capitalize District and include a figure (do not spell out the district number).
    - i. She represents District 8.
    - ii. The meeting will be held in Council District 3.
    - iii. The new park is in City Council District 9.
    - iv. The road passes through City Council Districts 1 and 3.
  
4. **Committee**
  - a. The word “committee” is not capitalized in running text.
  - b. Spell out committee names in public-facing documents.
  - c. Capitalize when part of the official name.
    - i. The issue will go to the committee next week.
    - ii. The Land Use, Transportation, and Infrastructure Committee will meet next week to discuss the issue.

5. **council member, councilman, councilwoman, councilperson**
  - a. Central communications will use gender-neutral language where possible. Deference will be given to the preferences of individual council members on request.
  - b. **Council member** is the preferred, default term and it is two words. In all uses, “member” is not capitalized. Capitalize “Council” but not “member” when it precedes a proper name.
    - i. Council member Jane Smith said the bill will be filed later.
    - ii. The bill sponsor, Council member Jones, said the timing was off.
    - iii. Council members Smith, Jones, and Williams voted...
    - iv. She said that council members will be briefed later.
    - v. The bill will go before members of the City Council later in the week.
  
6. **Councilman, Councilwoman, Councilperson**
  - i. Capitalize only when it precedes a proper name or begins a sentence.
    1. The bill was introduced by Councilman Jones.
    2. The councilwoman received the report last month.
  
7. **“at large” and “at-large”**
  - a. While “at large” is acceptable in reference to council members representing the entire city, the more common use is “at-large”, and it should be lowercase. Hyphenate the entire phrase “member-at-large.”
    - i. There are two at-large council members who represent the whole city.
    - ii. Council member-at-large John Smith retired today.
  
8. **Council President and President Pro Tempore**
  - a. Both Council President and Council President Pro Tem (or Pro Tempore) are capitalized only when preceding a name. Pro Tem is not hyphenated.
    - i. City Council President Jane Doe said...
    - ii. The measure was sponsored by council President John Smith.
    - iii. The measure was sponsored by City Council President Smith.
    - iv. It then goes to the council president for review.
    - v. The council’s president pro tem usually stands in for the president on such occasions.
    - vi. The council meeting was led by President Pro Tem Smith.