

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY OPERATING PROCEDURES MANUAL		
CHAPTER 115	WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS	
	Effective: 06/15/2023	Commissioner Approval: 
	Authorities:	
	Applicability: ALL DEPARTMENTAL EMPLOYEES	
	Special Instructions:	

### 115.100 INTENT

DPS shall establish a policy for written communication authored on behalf of the department.

### 115.300 GENERAL INFORMATION

- A. Correspondence concerning policy or procedure restricted.** Written communication, including e-mails, concerning policy or procedure may not be sent unless it is within the realm or responsibility of the sender.
- B. Inter-department correspondence must be routed to division Director.** Written communication, including e-mails, to the executive level of another State government agency shall be drafted at the unit level or above and routed to the Director who may route it to the Commissioner for sending.
- C. Correspondence with Legislative or Executive branches restricted.** Without the Commissioner's approval only a Director may correspond with the Legislature, Governor or related staff, politicians, or the executive level of government using Department stationery or position. This is to prevent confusion between the Department's official position and the employee's personal opinion and does not preclude an individual from corresponding as a private citizen.
- D. Author of forwarded correspondence to be notified in writing.** Whenever written correspondence, including e-mails, must be forwarded to another agency for a reply, the author will require notification in writing that his inquiry has been responded to.
- E. Tracking correspondence prepared for others.** Written correspondence prepared for signature by another will be accompanied by the Document Tracking Form and will show the date of preparation, the author's name, and those of any approving supervisors.

### 115.310 MEMORANDUM

Memorandums will be used for informal communication within the Department and with other State Government agencies. Any DPS personnel may initiate memos. Where applicable and appropriate, a copy is to be sent to Command personnel for review, or copied to the addressee's commander.

## CHAPTER 115 WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Memorandums shall be prepared in modified block format, left margin aligned or fully justified. Memorandums printed on blank paper using a laser printers, must be a reasonable facsimile of the [Department-approved format](#).

### 115.320 LETTERS

**A. Formal correspondence.** Letters are formal correspondence to individuals or agencies and may be initiated by any DPS employee except as restricted in Section 115.300 (C).

Letters will be prepared using current [State letterhead](#) with the Commissioner's name printed or typed under the Governor's name in the upper right hand corner of the stationery.

**B. Format of letters.**

1. Letters will be prepared in modified block format, text left margin aligned or fully justified. [Sample – Letter](#).
2. Letters will be signed by the originator indicating rank, position, and location unless the letter is addressed to the head of a governmental agency or contains information on Division policies or procedures, in which case it must be signed by command level personnel. Copies of all letters sent will be sent to the appropriate Detachment Commander.

*Signature*

Rank (if applicable) & Name  
Title (if not used in rank)  
Detachment/Bureau

3. The signature block shall be signed by the originator's designee, if the originator is unable to sign the letter. An administrative assistant or secretary who signs a letter at the originator's request customarily signs the originator's name and adds his or her own initials. However, if the originator prefers, the administrative assistant or secretary may sign the letter using his or her own name.

Sincerely yours,

Sincerely yours,

*Originator by AA*

*Admin Assistant*

Originator's Name  
Originator's Title

Administrative Assistant's Name  
Administrative Assistant's Title

If the person who signs for the originator is not the administrative assistant or secretary, either of the following may be used.

Sincerely yours,	Sincerely yours,
<i>Signer's Name</i>	<i>Originator' by Signer's Initials</i>
For Originator's Name	Originator's Name

4. When two people have to sign a letter, arrange the two signature blocks side by side or one beneath the other.
  - a. If they are placed side-by-side, start the first signature block at the left margin and the second signature block at the center. If this arrangement is used, the complimentary closing is to end at the left margin. (This arrangement is appropriate for all letter styles.)
  - b. If the signature blocks are positioned one beneath the other, start typing the second block on the fourth line below the end of the first blocks, aligned at the left. In a modified block-style letter, begin at the center; however, in a block-style or simplified letter, begin typing at the left margin.
5. Subsequent pages to a letter are to bear a header. [Sample – Continuation Page](#)
6. Enclosures are listed two lines below the signature block, left margin aligned.
7. A list of the persons (including rank and such other information as may be needed for clarity) receiving courtesy copies (cc:) goes two lines below enclosures.
8. The initials of authors, typists, or those preparing letters WILL NOT appear on correspondence prepared by the Department.

#### 115.330 ROUTING CORRESPONDENCE

- A. Copies of correspondence to command staff.** If correspondence refers to policies or procedures copies must be sent to the appropriate Detachment Commander and Director.
- B. Copies of correspondence to be retained.** Copies of all correspondence must be retained. This will normally be in appropriate reading files however those locations with appropriate facilities may retain electronic copies provided that off-site backup is provided. Copies of these files will be retained in accordance with the State of Alaska General Administrative Records Retention Schedule and Program Records Retention Schedules authorized under AS 40.21 and 4 AAC 59.
- C. Correspondence concerning cases to be filed with case.** A copy of correspondence concerning cases should be filed with the original case file.

**115.340 DIRECTIVES**

**A. *Directives deal with policy or procedures.*** The Commissioner or a Director issues directives to provide guidance on issues of policy or procedures to personnel under his command. Directors are limited to issuing directives dealing with policy or procedures unique to their Division. Only the Commissioner may issue directives which modify the OPM or which deal with multi-divisional policy or procedures.

**B. *Directives to be sequentially numbered.*** Directives will be designated using the appropriate letter, year of issue, and sequence number and expire one year from the date of issue unless otherwise noted.

1. Commissioner's directives will begin with C;
2. AST directives will begin with T;
3. AWT directives will begin with P;
4. Division of Administrative Services directives will begin with A;
5. Fire & Life Safety directives will begin with F; and,
6. Statewide Services directives will begin with S.

**115.350 TYPING STANDARDS**

The following standards shall apply to all Department typing:

1. All official typing will be letter perfect and without typographical errors;
2. Typing will be proofread for accuracy, correct grammar, and spelling prior to being returned to the originator;
3. The draft and/or instructions will be returned to the originator along with the typed document;
4. Audio recordings will be returned to the originator; and,
5. Documents will not be prepared in all capitals or uppercase unless specifically requested by the originator.

**RESOURCES**

[Document Tracking Form](#)

[Sample letterhead](#)

[Sample Continuation Page for Letter](#)

[Sample Memorandum](#)