A Style Guide for
New Hampshire's Historical Highway Marker Program

General

- Use full sentences, no sentence fragments, bullets or lists
- Avoid the use of subjective adjectives; for example “the most beautiful” – unless it can be backed up by documentation
- Periods and commas go inside quotation marks
- Use only one space after a period
- Do not use a hyphen for an adjective ending in “-ly,” e.g. “highly regulated” not “highly-regulated”
- Hyphen as follows for age-related dates used as adjectives, e.g. “19th-century book” or “six-week battle”
- Use “and” instead of “&” – unless part of a trademarked name, e.g. “Boston & Maine Railroad”
- Capitalize “The,” “A” etc. when at the beginning of a proper name
- Within the body of the marker, follow standard capitalization rules in titles, e.g. prepositions are lower case
- On first use, give a person’s full name, but on subsequent use give only the last name
- Capitalize job titles only if normally done formally, e.g. “Professor John Smith” but not “Smith was a Professor”
- Use a comma after an introductory phrase, e.g. “In 1773, John Smith…” or “Signer of the XYZ, John Smith…”
- Titles of books, stories, poems go in “”s, not italics

Numbers, Dates and Ages

- Spell out numbers less than 10; otherwise use Arabic numerals (one, two, etc., but 10, 100, 1,000, etc.)
- For ages over 10, always use Arabic numerals
- For ages of people: hyphenate throughout, e.g. “nine-year-old” or “27-year-old”
  NOTE: not for objects, e.g. “nine year old cheese”
- Write out ordinals when used as part of chronology, e.g. “Smith was the first to…”
- Use a numerical ordinal, e.g. “1st,” for rankings (e.g. Smith came in 1st place”) or as part of a formal name when normally presented that way, e.g. a regiment name
- Use a comma to separate thousands, e.g. “1,234”
- Hyphenate between a number and measurement when used as an adjective, e.g. “18-inch thick walls”
- No apostrophe when referring to a century or decade as a time span, e.g. “1800s” not “1800’s”
- Write out “century,” so… “19th century” not “19th c.”
Abbreviations

- Do not use honorary titles such as Mr. and Mrs., but do use and abbreviate occupational titles and ranks (the Rev., Col., Maj. Gen., Dr., etc.)
- Abbreviate only the following months: Jan., Feb., Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. and Dec. when writing dates (Dec. 7, 1941; March 17, 2021)
- Do not use commas before or after Jr., Sr., II, etc. (e.g. James Brown Jr.)

Format for marker text

Include a title of no more than 45 character/spaces per line; a two-line title reduces the number of text lines by one

Provide between 12 and 14 lines of text with no more than 45 characters/spaces per line

- Each letter in a word counts as one space;
- Spaces between words count as one space each;
- One space is allowed for a set of quotation marks;
- Periods and commas are not counted.