

**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
SERVICE DIRECTIVES**

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OVERVIEW

2.1 What is the purpose of this chapter? This chapter provides U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) employees with the information they need to write consistent, clear Fish and Wildlife Service Manual chapters.

2.2 What are the objectives of this chapter? Service employees will use this chapter to:

- A. Properly format chapters for the Service Manual,
- B. Include the appropriate elements in the chapters they write, and
- C. Write chapters using plain language principles so they are clear and easy to read.

2.3 What is the scope of this chapter? This chapter is applicable to all national policy written for the Service Manual.

2.4 Who is responsible for writing Service Manual chapters? See Table 2-1.

Table 2-1: Responsibilities for Writing Service Manual Chapters

These employees...	Are responsible for...
A. The Director	Approving or declining to approve Servicewide policy.
B. The Assistant Director	Overseeing the management of Service directives.

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These employees...	Are responsible for...
– Management and Administration	
C. Regional Directors	Reviewing draft chapters and providing program offices with comments (see 011 FW 3 for more information).
D. The Chief, Policy and Regulations Branch (PRB), in the Division of Policy, Economics, Risk Management, and Analytics (PERMA)	<p>(1) Ensuring that Service Manual chapters are easy to read,</p> <p>(2) Working with program offices to develop and manage chapters, and</p> <p>(3) Publishing Service Manual chapters online after the Director approves them.</p>
E. The Chief, Division or Office of the Program Writing the Chapter	<p>(1) Working with PRB to develop the chapter,</p> <p>(2) Working with the Office of the Solicitor (SOL) on the content of the chapter to ensure legal sufficiency,</p> <p>(3) Sending the draft chapter through the Director to the Directorate for review and comment, as necessary (see 011 FW 3),</p> <p>(4) Incorporating comments from the Directorate and preparing a final chapter for surname, and</p> <p>(5) Keeping the chapter up to date.</p>

FORMATTING

2.5 How does an author format the text when writing a chapter? Exhibit 1 is a Microsoft Word template that you should use when writing a chapter. The following are overall guidelines for formatting your chapter:

A. Use a table of contents. A table of contents orients readers by giving them an overview of the organization of the chapter, and it helps them find specific information. Be sure to use the heading styles provided in the template so that the chapter is easy to navigate and is compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act. These headings, when used properly, appear in the navigation pane in the “view mode” of the document.

B. Use a standard, one-column format with single spacing. Use two lines (double-space) between paragraphs.

C. Assign a number or letter to every paragraph so that readers can refer to them by letter or number.

2.6 What questions should the author include in each chapter and in what order? We pose questions that the reader is likely to ask. Exhibit 1 describes which questions are required and which

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are optional. Following the up-front, required questions posed, you should write your policy in a logical order. You may leave out questions that are not applicable, or do not fit well into the organization of the chapter you are writing.

2.7 How long should a chapter be? Try to limit the length of chapters to fewer than six or seven pages. If your chapter is longer than ten pages, you should consider dividing it into more than one chapter, or use exhibits for illustrations or examples (see [section 2.11](#)).

TIPS FOR WRITING

2.8 What are some tips for writing good chapters?

A. First, consult with PRB and any other affected offices or divisions to see if they can contribute to the process.

B. Check other Service Manual chapters, Director's Orders, and handbooks to be sure your chapter does not contradict or duplicate them.

C. Use plain language (see [section 2.9](#) below for more information).

D. Check your facts and make sure your information is accurate.

E. When you are listing laws, regulations, or other policies in the authorities section of your chapter, be sure to check your references to make sure the citations are accurate and in the proper format.

F. Identify any forms that are part of the policy.

(1) PRB will direct you to appropriate personnel in the Information Resources and Technology Management (IRTM) program to help you ensure any forms you include are compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, have an official form number assigned, and are posted on the Service's official forms page when they are final.

(2) PRB also will help you with information collection requirements if your form (or some other aspect of your chapter) requires information collection clearance (see [281 FW 4 - 6](#) for more information).

G. If your chapter replaces an existing chapter or supersedes a part of a chapter or a Director's Order, be sure to indicate that by typing, "Supersedes XYZ, dated MM/DD/YYYY" on the top of the chapter (see Exhibit 1, the template for writing chapters).

H. A chapter is an internal Service policy. It does not take the place of proposing a regulation. Do not write a Service Manual chapter instead of proposing a regulation.

2.9 What plain language principles does the Service use when writing a chapter?

A. Exhibit 2 provides tips and techniques for writing clear, easy-to-understand chapters.

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B. You may also read [116 FW 1](#), the Service's chapter on plain language.

C. The PRB staff member who edits and publishes Service Manual chapters can help you with plain language questions.

2.10 What style manual does the Service use for capitalization, punctuation, and spelling rules? We use the [U.S. Government Printing Office Style Manual](#), which is available on the internet and in hard copy.

EXHIBITS, HANDBOOKS, AND AMENDMENTS

2.11 What is an exhibit? Typical exhibits include glossaries, examples, illustrations, templates, and organizational or flow charts. Number exhibits consecutively in the order in which you mention them in the text of the chapter. Identify them by part and chapter number at the top of the exhibit.

2.12 What if the author wants to include technical and detailed instructions that are too specific or too long to put into a chapter? You can develop a handbook to accompany a chapter (see [011 FW 4](#)). Reference the handbook in the chapter. You must submit the handbook for review when the authorizing chapter is going through the review and surname process. See [011 FW 4](#) for more information on developing and revising handbooks.

2.13 How does the author write and format amendments to chapters? If you want to make a minor change or update a chapter, and it does not require an extensive revision, then you can amend the chapter.

A. To amend the chapter, you:

(1) Prepare an amendment to the chapter using the amendment format shown in Exhibit 3. The amendment must include a brief description of its purpose and a clear explanation of what you are changing or adding.

(2) Prepare a surname package as described in [011 FW 3](#).

B. We recommend that you amend a chapter no more than once or twice, and only if the revisions are straightforward. If the revisions are extremely complex, it is best to revise the entire chapter.

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Service Directives

Part 011 The Fish and Wildlife Service Manual

Chapter 2 Standards for Format and Text for Service Manual Chapters

011 FW 2

CLEARANCE

2.14 What are the requirements for review and clearance of Service Manual chapters? See [011 FW 3](#) for these requirements.

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