

REGULATORY DRAFTING

- Resource: PlainLanguage.Gov

“Writing User-Friendly Documents,” www.plainlanguage.gov

- Use Lots of Informative Headings
- Use Question-and-Answer Format
- Use Personal Pronouns



BEFORE: Few Headers—Opaque, Vague, General

- Special Grants For Economic and Core Management Grants to Small Tribes
- § 254.11 Native American Rights
- § 254.12 Applications
- § 254.13 Multi-tribal grants
- § 254.14 Administrative requirements
- § 254.15 Appeals



AFTER: More Headers—Specific, Q&A, Pronouns

Economic Developments and Core Management Grants to Small Tribes

- § 254.11 How do the procedures in this part affect Native American rights?
- § 254.12 How do I apply for a grant under this part?
- § 254.13 When must I submit my application
- § 254.14 Can a multi-tribal organization submit a single grant request?
- § 254.15 What special information is required for an application by a multi-tribal organization?
- § 254.16 Must each tribe in a multi-tribal organization submit certification forms and budget?
- § 254.17 If I receive a grant under this part, what requirements must I follow?



Use “You” and “I” for the Reader.

BEFORE

- Copies of tax returns must be provided
- Submission of applications

AFTER

- You must provide copies of your tax return.
- What must I do if I want a loan?



Use “We” for the Agency.

BEFORE

- Loan applications will be reviewed to ensure that procedures have been followed.
- The Office of Consumer Affairs will process your application within 30 days after receipt.

AFTER

- We will review your loan application to ensure that you have followed our procedures.
- We will process your application within 30 days of receiving it.



Use “If-Then” Tables.

“If-then tables are a powerful tool for simplifying complicated regulatory material. By laying out complex provisions visually, you help the reader to see relationships in a way that dense text never could. Tables almost always use many fewer words than a straight textual explanation would use.”

John Strylowski, “Using Tables to Present Complex Ideas”



BEFORE: Is this clear to you?

The processing office must receive your completed application for reduced royalty payments on or before the 15th day of the second month following the month you are reporting if you do not submit your application electronically, or the 25th day of the second month following the month you are reporting if you submit your application electronically.



AFTER: Is this clearer to you?

If you submit your application...	then the processing office must receive it by...
electronically	the 25 th day of the second month following the month your are reporting.
other than electronically	the 15 th day of the second month following the month you are reporting.