



STYLE MANUAL

Our Brand

Each of us plays a critical role in managing the Mecklenburg County Bar's brand. Every time we answer the phone, greet a member or visitor, write a letter or send a quick e-mail, we leave behind an impression about our organization.

This guide helps to ensure consistency and professionalism in the ways we communicate with the public. Raising the Bar's profile, clarifying its mission and positioning it as a relevant, valuable and essential organization is critical in recruiting and retaining volunteers, attracting support from sponsors and building recognition for our programs.

Our Look

One of the best tools we have for reinforcing our brand is the Mecklenburg County Bar logo and Mecklenburg Bar Foundation logo. In order to ensure that our members and the public receive a clear and consistent message concerning our identity, please follow the logo standards detailed below. A uniform presentation will help our members and the public connect our work and mission with our organization's name and identity.

Logo Color

- A one-color logo may not be printed in any other color besides maroon, black or white (if printing on a dark background).
- Use primary logos on all electronic and color-printed materials, use secondary logos when printing in b/w.

Primary: Maroon

Mecklenburg County Bar

Mecklenburg Bar Foundation

Color specifications for choosing maroon –

Use any of these options

Pantone 1955

RGB – R-135, G- 2, B- 49

Hex #870231



Secondary:

Mecklenburg County Bar – Black

Mecklenburg County Bar – White (reversed)



Logo Size

- There should be at least a one-fourth inch area of isolation (blank space) around the logo at all times.
- The logo should not be smaller than one inch, except in special circumstances, such as promotional materials where the logo must fit a particularly small space.
- The name always should be readable.
- Use the logo rather than a typeset (the name spelled out) on promotional materials.
- Do not stretch the logo out of proportion to make it fit a wider or taller space. When resizing the logo in Word, use the corner handles to keep the correct proportion. If you need help resizing a logo to meet your needs, please ask the Director of Communications to assist you.

Logo Usage

- The logo should be present on all letterhead, envelopes, signage, fliers, invitations, business cards, etc.
- Promotional materials (mugs, shirts, bumper stickers, etc.) should be approved in advance by the Director of Communications and the Executive Director.
- Always use logos stored on the Shared drive – do not reproduce from a Web site.
- The logo may not be redrawn, distorted or disassembled.
- MCB and MBF Committees and Practice Sections may use the logos on all printed and electronic materials.

Logo location on the H:\ drive:

- Mecklenburg County Bar logos can be found H:\Graphics\Logos\MCB
- Mecklenburg Bar Foundation logos can be found H:\Graphics\Logos\MBF

Fonts

The Bar uses two primary fonts. If you do not have these fonts installed on your computer, ask the Director of Communications for a copy.

Times New Roman: standard serif font used for printed text in letters and publications. Preferred headline use is BOLD SMALL CAPS.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Arial: standard sans serif font used for e-mail, Web site, electronic media.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z
a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w x y z
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

Correspondence Formatting

The professional impact of MCB and MBF letterhead and envelopes can be greatly enhanced by formatting letters with appropriate alignment, spacing and typefaces. Template Documents may be found in H:\Templates.

Letterhead

- Use 12-point Times New Roman for body text, use a minimum of 10-point Times New Roman on long letters you are trying to fit on one page.
- Letters generally use the block paragraph format, double spaces between paragraphs but not indented.
- The date and closing are not indented.
- Letterhead margins:
 - Left and right margin: 1 inch
 - Top margin: 1.75 inches
 - Bottom margin: 1.25 inches
 - Right margin of body text: 1 inch for an average letter; use a minimum of ½ inch on a long letter

Envelopes / Mailing Labels

- A template for the standard #10 MCB or MBF envelope can be found in the Templates folder
- Mailing labels or printed addresses use 12-point New Times Roman.

E-mail Signature

Use one of the following email signatures in 8-point or 10-point Arial. Include this signature on your email auto reply when you'll be away from the office for more than two days. Use Maroon RGB – R-135, G- 2, B- 49 for Mecklenburg County Bar. You may find a template of this email signature and instructions on how to set it up in H:\Templates.

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Name, Title

Mecklenburg County Bar

2850 Zebulon Avenue

Charlotte, NC 28208

Phone: 704/375-8624 ext.ABC

Fax: 704/333-6209

www.MeckBar.org



The Mecklenburg County Bar & Foundation Center is located at

**2850 Zebulon Avenue
Charlotte, NC 28208**

Please be advised that the contents of this message and any reply may be subject to disclosure under North Carolina Public Records Law N.C.G.S. Chapter 132.

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Name, Title

Mecklenburg County Bar

Mecklenburg Bar Foundation

1123 S. Church St., Ste. 103

Charlotte, NC 28203

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Voice Mail

Suggested message for your voice mail. You may incorporate the Web site, your email address, hours, etc. to fit your needs.

“You’ve reached (title/name). I’m sorry I’ve missed your call. Please leave a message, and I look forward to returning it as soon as I can. For immediate assistance, dial 0 to speak with the receptionist.”

Vacation Voice Mail

Suggested message for your voice mail when you'll be out of the office for more than two days. You may incorporate the Web site, your email, etc. to fit your needs.

“You’ve reached (title/name). I will be out of the office until (date.) Please leave a message, and I look forward to talking with you upon my return. For immediate assistance, dial 0 to speak with the receptionist.”

Our Style

The Bar uses the Associated Press Style (AP Style) for consistency and credibility in letters, publications, press releases and other written materials. The following are some basic AP principles. Feel free to refer to the AP Stylebook for other examples, you may find this in the Director of Communications’ office.

Abbreviations/Acronyms

- First mention of the term should be spelled out entirely with the abbreviation in parentheses following, then try to use abbreviation throughout rest of article (unless too redundant or for emphasis). This treatment should include even what might be thought of as obvious terms (for example, MCB, LRS, UNC, CMS, and YLS).

Commas and Punctuation

- Use commas to set off the second and all following items in addresses and dates.
Example: He came here Sept. 12, 1989, from Topeka, Kan.
- When quoting someone, the punctuation goes inside the quotation marks.
Example: "I would like to volunteer at the Bar," Attorney Bob said.
- Use commas to separate elements in a series, but do not put a comma before the conjunction in a simple series. Example: I like red, blue and green m & ms..
- Use a hyphen when compound adjectives modify a noun.
Example: Your tax-deductible gift is appreciated. Your gift is tax deductible.

Figures

- Use figures for all numbers 10 and higher. Write out numbers zero through nine.
- Use figures for percentages, and write out the word “percent,” unless you have restricted space on signage.
- Spell out fractions less than one, using hyphens.

Miscellaneous

- Do not hyphenate “nonprofit”
- Do hyphenate “e-mail.”
- Web site is two words, Web is capitalized.
- “Over” generally refers to a spatial relationship; if you’re describing amounts, use “more than.”
Example: There were more than 200 members at the Annual Meeting.
- In general, use “fewer” for individual items and “less” for items in bulk.
Example: She gave fewer dollars than last year. She gave less money than last year.
- “Board of Directors” is a singular body that requires a singular verb.
Example: The Board of Directors meets every other month.
- Do not capitalize “board” or “board member.”
Example: The board meets monthly. The board members attend events. John W. Lassiter is a board member. Board member John W. Lassiter attends board meetings.
- Always capitalize Continuing Legal Education.

Names and titles

- Capitalize a title preceding a name, but use lower case when it follows a name or when there is no name included.
Example: Executive Director Nancy Roberson is here. Nancy Roberson, executive director, is here. The executive director is here.
Exception: Capitalize your title after your name in your e-mail signature and in other select cases when it is listed with other staff members and their titles.
- Of Counsel/Special Counsel—Always capitalize when used as job title.
- Use formal names – first name, middle initial, last name, suffix in publications unless otherwise requested. – Henry V. Pharr II
- Suffixes do not require a comma preceding the suffix – Joseph R. White Jr. or Henry V. Pharr III
- Correspondence and salutations to retired judges should be to The Honorable First Last
- Correspondence to active judges (not including Supreme Court or State Supreme Court) should be addressed (envelope and address block) to The Honorable First Last. Salutation should be Dear Judge Last name

Mecklenburg County Bar-Specific

- Use Mecklenburg County Bar rather than the Bar. MCB may be used, but only after Mecklenburg County Bar (MCB) is written first. Exception – in email subject lines, MCB may be used in place of Mecklenburg County Bar.
- Our office is the Mecklenburg County Bar & Foundation Center. It may be referred to as the Bar & Foundation Center.
- Bar & Foundation Center rooms should be referenced in the following format: **Bar & Foundation Center – Formal name (Room #)**. **Examples:** Bar & Foundation Center – *King & Spalding Conference Room (Room 104)*; Bar & Foundation Center – *Education & Training Hall (Room 112A)*
- Our Web site should be written as www.MeckBar.org or MeckBar.org.
- SelfServe Center—SelfServe should be one word with Serve capitalized.
- At no time should the word association be attached to the Mecklenburg County Bar.
- Professionalism, Lawyer Life and Culture

Latin phrases

- Very well-known ones can be roman (for example, pro bono).
- Those that may be not well-known should be italicized (for example, *pro se*).

Phone numbers

- Area code then a forward slash then the phone number with a hyphen (for example, 704/375-8624).
- Always use 704/375-8624 in publications – never direct line numbers
- Phone extensions should be abbreviated ext.108 – (704/375-8624 ext.108)

Time, dates and years

- Times should always be accompanied by an a.m. and p.m. (for example 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. or 1:30 p.m. – 3 p.m.)
- On-the-hour times do not require :00 – 10 a.m. 1 p.m.
- The second year of inclusive years of the same century should only have the year and not include the century (for example, 2001–05).

It's vs. Its

It's is the conjugation of "it" and "is." *Its* is possessive, meaning it represents ownership. If you are ever uncertain which form to use, replace the word with "it is." If "it is" makes sense, use *it's*; if "it is" doesn't make sense, use *its*."

Example - *It's* frustrating to feel like a cat chasing *its* own tail in circles.

There, Their and They're

Most often, *there* is used to describe a location, point or moment.

Their is possessive, meaning it represents ownership.

And *they're* is the conjugation for "they are."

Example - Since *they're* running late for the meeting, *their* boss asked them to come into work early the next day. Unfortunately, *there* is no way for them to avoid going *there*.

Your vs. You're

Your is possessive, representing ownership.

If "you are" fits in the sentence, use the conjugation *you're*.

Example - You won't attain *your* goals unless *you're* committed to success.

Me vs. I

If you are talking about yourself and another person, and you don't know whether to use *me* or *I*, here's an easy the rule of thumb: take the other person out of the equation. Does *I* or *me* make sense? Go with that.

Example - Brian and *I* took our daughter to the park today, and she wanted her Dad and *me* to push her on the swing. (If you remove Brian and Dad, the sentence still makes sense – I took our daughter to the park today, and she wanted me to push her on the swing.

Which vs. That

Which and *that* are not usually interchangeable. *That* introduces essential clauses and *which* introduces nonessential clauses. An essential clause can't be omitted without changing the meaning of a sentence, so it shouldn't be set off with commas. Any clause introduced with *that* is an essential clause and uses no comma.

A nonessential clause can be left out without changing the basic meaning of the sentence, so it should be set off with commas. The words *which* and "who" often introduce nonessential clauses.

Example - The website, *which* is about sales techniques, is very informative. This is a subject *that* is important for all multi-level marketers to understand.

Then vs. Than

Then is an adverb used to describe time. *Than* is a conjunction used to compare things.

Example - After realizing she was more successful *than* she ever imagined, she *then* celebrated with friends.

Whose vs. Who's

Whose is the possessive of *who*. *Who's* is a contraction of "who is."

Example - *Who's* going to determine *whose* marketing textbook that is?

Effect vs. Affect

Affect / Effect – Affect, as a verb, means to influence – *This game will affect the national rankings*. Avoid using affect as a noun.

Effect, as a verb, means to cause – *He will effect many changes in the company*. Effect, as a noun, means a result – *He miscalculated the effect of his actions*. *The effect was overwhelming*.

Assure, Ensure and Insure

Assure, *ensure* and *insure* basically mean the same thing: to guarantee or promise something. However, there are minor differences between them. *Assure* means to say or write the guarantee. *Ensure* means to take an action to make sure or guarantee that something happens. *Insure* means to guarantee something with insurance or other financial means.

Example - She *assured* us the Renegade Network Marketer would ease our frustrations in building our downline. So, we purchased the ebook to help *ensure* we would succeed with our MLM opportunity. Unfortunately, there is no way to financially *insure* our success, so we must put in the time and effort to build our business.

To vs. Too

Too is another word for "also." *To* is a preposition that typically indicates movement.

Example - Are you going *to* the beach with the *two* of us this weekend *too*?

Who vs. Whom

Use *who* when referring to the subject of a clause and *whom* when referring to the object of a clause.

The subject of the clause is the topic of the clause, telling the reader what the clause is about. It is usually a noun, although it can also be pronoun or even a list of items. (The man tripped over the stairs.)

The object of the clause is who or what is the recipient of the verb's action. It is usually a noun. (The man tripped over the stairs.)

When choosing between *who* and *whom*, ask yourself if the answer to the question would be he or him. If you can answer the question with him, use *whom* (remember they both end with “m”).

Example - *Who* wants to achieve financial success? In *whom* should we invest our time to provide success coaching?

Loose vs. Lose

Look out for this common grammar mistake. Spell check isn't going to catch it, and it's easy to miss if you're typing too fast and not proofreading your work carefully.

Example - After I *lose* 20 pounds, all of my pants will be too *loose*.

Complimentary vs. Complementary

Complimentary refers to something free; *Complementary* refers to something that completes something else.

Collective nouns such as *team* and *staff*

Collective nouns may be either singular or plural depending on their use in the sentence.

Examples - *The staff is in a meeting.* (*Staff* is acting as a unit here.) *The staff are in disagreement about the findings.* (*The staff* are acting as separate individuals in this example.) The sentence would read even better as: *The staff members are in disagreement about the findings.*