

SOUTH FLORIDA NEWS SERVICE – STYLE GUIDE

21st Century

AmericanAirlines Arena – Note the lack of space between the first two words.

Biscayne Bay Campus – The North Miami campus of FIU. May stand alone if the phrase “Florida International University” has appeared earlier in the piece. However, on first reference, it should be fully spelled out. *For example: Florida International University Biscayne Bay Campus.*

Broward Sheriff’s Office – The law enforcement agency. BSO is acceptable on second reference. Its employees are deputies, not officers.

CEO – Stands for chief executive officer, the highest-ranking officer of a corporation. CEO is acceptable on first reference, and is capitalized even when not directly in front of a name, an exception to the AP rule on titles. *E.g., “The CEO of Disney, Bob Iger,…”*

cities, towns and villages – Under Florida law, there is no legal difference between these terms, which refer to municipalities with civic governments. However, make sure to refer to each as it identifies itself, though the identifier is often unnecessary. *E.g., “The city of Miami” or “the village of Key Biscayne” is usually simply better written as “Miami” or “Key Biscayne.”*

city hall – The building where most of the day-to-day business of a particular municipality takes place. Capitalized if referring to a specific municipality, *e.g., “Miami City Hall,”* otherwise lowercase. Note that **town hall** or **village hall** is the correct term if a municipality refers to itself as a city or village.

city commission / city council – Capitalized when talking about a specific body, *e.g., “Miami City Commission,”* otherwise lowercase. Note that **town commission/council** or **village commission/council** is the correct term if a municipality refers to itself as a city or village. Using *commission* or *council* is also acceptable.

Don Shula Expressway – Also known as State Route 874

figures – Refer to AP Stylebook for complete discussion of numbers and the various styles that apply to different situations. However, reporters and editors need remember that accurately quoting a source on a stat or figure is not sufficient. That figure always needs to be double checked as officials are often wrong.

Florida Board of Education – The state-level board of education that sets policy for K-12 public schools for Florida. Members are appointed by the governor.

Florida Highway Patrol

Florida International University – FIU is acceptable on second reference.

Florida House of Representatives

Florida Legislature – Indicates the entire legislative branch of government.

Florida Senate – When referring to individual members of this body, use the phrase “state senator” to differentiate that person from a member of the U.S. Senate. Normal title rules apply. *E.g.: “State Sen. Bill Nelson...” but “Bill Nelson, the state senator...”*

Fort Lauderdale – Hollywood International Airport – The formal name of the airport. Fort Lauderdale airport is fine on first reference.

grassroots – Avoid. The term has become so vague as to be functionally meaningless. Instead, talk about the membership of the group. *E.g. “Save the Scholars, a group made up of recent Florida International University doctoral graduates, lobbies professors to give grad students more time to complete their dissertations.”*

hurricane – Capitalize only when it is part of the name of the storm given by forecasters. *Hurricane Irma*. Use *it* or *its* in its pronoun form, not *him*, *her*, *he* or *she*. Use the full name unless part of a headline.

Kendall – An unincorporated community in Miami-Dade County.

mailman – “Mail carrier” or “letter carrier” is preferred.

Marlins Park – Note the lack of an apostrophe

Miami Police Department – The law enforcement agency for the city of Miami. Not be confused with the Miami-Dade Police Department. Its top official is the police chief.

Miami-Dade County – Note the hyphen.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools – The formal name for the public school district in Miami. Acceptable synonyms include “the district,” “public school system” or “Miami-Dade schools.” Note this is the name of the school district, not its governing body.

Miami-Dade School Board – The governing body of the Miami-Dade County Public Schools system. School board members are elected officials who set policy for the district. The day-to-day operations of the district is run by a superintendent who, in turn, reports to the School Board.

Miami-Dade Police Department – The Miami-Dade County law enforcement agency. Equivalent to the sheriff’s departments in other jurisdictions, though its top official (the MDPD director) is not elected. Its headquarters are in Doral.

Miami Seaquarium

Miami Springs farmers market – Not “farmer’s market”

Modesto A. Maidique Campus – The main campus of FIU. May stand alone if the phrase “Florida International University” has appeared earlier in the piece. However, on first reference, it should be fully spelled out. *For example: Florida International University Modesto A. Maidique Campus.*

organizations – Organizations, businesses, non-profits, charity groups, government agencies and other similar items are inanimate objects. Though populated by human beings, such things are properly referred to as *it* or *its* not *they*. In addition, remember that because these institutions are not alive, it cannot speak, and sourcing needs to come from a human being. Do not have a construction that goes “*The Miami-Dade Police Department said it was investigating the murder.*” Instead write “*A spokesman for the Miami-Dade Police Department said detectives are investigating the murder of the accused kidnapper.*”

Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office – Note the difference in style from the Broward Sheriff’s Office. This law enforcement agency employs deputies, not officers.

Palmetto Expressway

President Donald Trump – Use the full name on first reference.

protester – Not protestor

said – Use when sourcing a quote or information to a human being. Avoid terms like *explained, admitted, shouted, etc.*

South Florida – Includes the counties of Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach and Monroe.

spokesman/spokeswoman – The person who is speaking on behalf of a institution, entity or another person. Do not use the informal (and potentially offensive) term *flak*. However, *spokesman* or *spokeswoman* is more descriptive than that person’s formal title, such as *public information officer* or *vice president of external affairs*.

stated – Use when sourcing information to a document. Exception to this is when quoting from an email. *E.g., “Mayor Francis Suarez said in an email that...”*

street directionals – Use “Northwest,” “Southwest,” “Northeast” and “Southeast” when referring to numbered streets. Write out the number for first through ninth and numerically afterwards. *E.g. “Northwest Second Avenue” and “Southeast 17th Street.”*

Sun-Sentinel

Zoo Miami