



Center for Plain Language
MAKE IT CLEAR.

Center for Plain Language
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Center for Plain Language Releases 11th Annual Federal Plain Language Report Card *Several Agencies Earn High Marks*

RICHMOND, VA — For more than a decade, the Plain Writing Act of 2010 has required federal agencies to use clear government communication that the public can understand and use. And in a time when disinformation is rampant, federal agencies continue to showcase their commitment to maintaining public trust by embracing plain language principles. That's one finding from this year's Federal Plain Language Report Card, released today by the [Center for Plain Language](http://centerforplainlanguage.org).

[See the full report and individual agency grades.](#)

Every year the Report Card grades 21 federal agencies on their writing, while also providing a separate grade that reflects how well they comply with basic requirements of The Plain Writing Act of 2010.

For this year's writing grade, the Center graded two web pages that every agency is required to publish: a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request page, which the Center had also graded last year, and the Contact Us page. Grades on these two pages were averaged to get each agency's "writing quality" grade, which appears on the one-page version of the Report Card.

Highlights include the following:

Nearly two-thirds of agencies surveyed this year earned an A in the "organizational compliance" category—where agencies are evaluated on how well they meet the staffing, training, and annual reporting requirements of the 2010 Plain Writing Act. The most-improved award goes to the Small Business Administration, whose compliance grade jumped from an F to a C.

Overall, the average writing grade for agencies was a C, a slight decrease from the B- average in 2021. Within that average is a far more positive story about the federal government's commitment to plain language: one third of agencies saw an improvement in their overall writing grade, with the Department of Agriculture seeing the most improvement with their grade improving from a C to an A.



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“Across various sectors, officials are trying to combat misinformation and a surefire way to achieve that is for government agencies—in particular—to establish themselves as an official source of information. The 2022 Federal Report Card results showcase the federal sector’s continued work to make information easy to understand and provide the public with a direct line to reach the agencies who serve them,” said Barbra Kingsley, chair of the Center for Plain Language.

The Social Security Administration provides a perfect example of that commitment to embracing plain language principles. Back in 2012, when the Center first launched its Federal Report Card, SSA earned a C for compliance. Since then, it has earned straight A’s in compliance and either A’s or high B’s in writing.

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ABOUT THE CENTER FOR PLAIN LANGUAGE

The Center for Plain Language is a North American non-profit organization that helps government agencies and businesses write clear and understandable documents. The Center sponsors the annual ClearMark Awards for the best communications in plain language, the WTF (Work That Failed) Awards, and the Federal Plain Language Report Card, which evaluates how well federal agencies are complying with the Plain Writing Act of 2010. To become a member or for more information, visit us at <https://centerforplainlanguage.org/> and connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).