

AP Style Changes Reflect Efforts in DEI

1 Minute

Long the go-to — or at least the starting point — for media stylebooks, the Associated Press announced changes that mark a step toward making its seminal style-book more inclusive and conscientious. *AP Stylebook* editor Paula Froke announced several additions and updates to AP style in her annual presentation at the conference of ACES: The Society for Editing. Here are just a few:

+ **ableism** (new)

Discrimination or prejudice against people with disabilities; the belief that typical abilities – those of people who aren't disabled – are superior. A concept similar to racism, sexism, and ageism in that it includes stereotypes, generalizations, and demeaning views and language. It is a form of discrimination or prejudice against people with disabilities.

+ **anti-Asian sentiment** (new)

Avoid this euphemism, which conveys little meaning. Alternatives may include *anti-Asian bias*, *anti-Asian harassment*, *anti-Asian comments*, *anti-Asian racism* or *anti-Asian violence*, depending on the situation. Be specific and give details about what happened or what someone says happened.

+ **disabilities** (expanded)

The terms *disabilities* and *disabled* include a broad range of physical and mental conditions both visible and invisible. People's perceptions of disabilities vary widely. Use care and precision when writing about disabilities and people with disabilities, considering the impact of specific words and the preferences of the people you are writing about.

Avoid writing that implies ableism: the belief that typical abilities – those of people who aren't disabled – are superior.

When possible, ask people how they want to be described. Some people view their disability as central to their identity, and use *identity-first language* such as an *autistic woman* or *an autistic*. Others prefer *person-first language* such as *a woman with autism* or *a woman who has autism*.

+ **special needs, special education** (new)

When possible, avoid these terms. While they remain in wide use in education and law, many view them as euphemistic and offensive. Instead, be specific about the needs or services in question. If you're looking for additional guidance in avoiding dehumanizing or discriminatory language in your writing, check out the Conscious

Style Guide at consciousstyleguide.com.

