

Fiscal Note Narrative Formatting Tips and Tricks

Internet Browsers

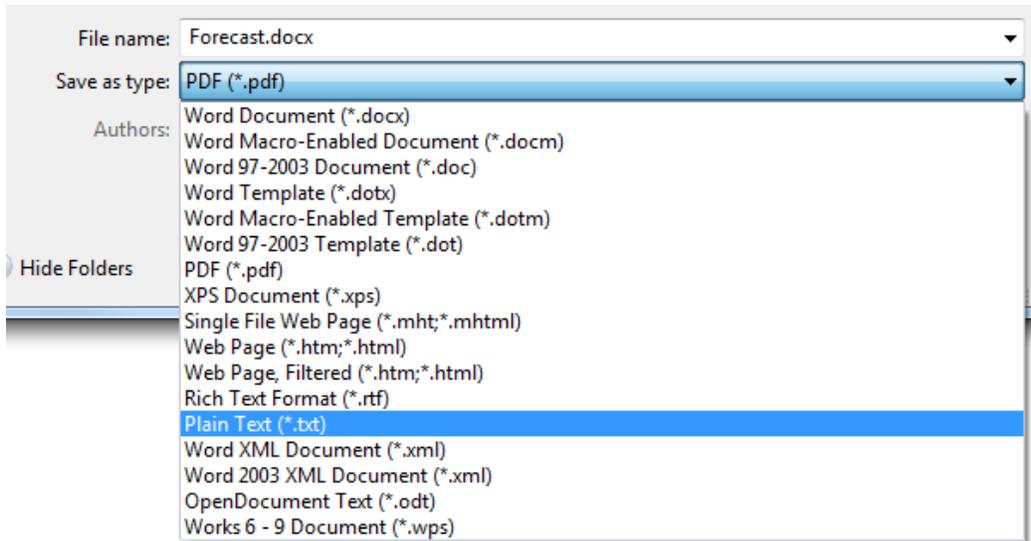
FNTS is compatible with Google Chrome or Internet Explorer (IE) web browsers. Agencies using Internet Explorer (IE) version 11 must have it set to Enterprise Mode to allow copying/pasting text into the FNTS Prepare Screen's textboxes (narrative). Please see the Internet Explorer Version 11 Enterprise Mode instructions for more information. <http://www.mn.gov/mmb/images/fnts-ie11-enterprise-mode.pdf>

Composing your Narrative Recommendations

- Compose the narrative outside the system before entering it into the Fiscal Note Tracking system to ensure that you have the correct content and that you have a backup file for your narrative.
- Use font Arial 10 or 12.
- Add formatting to your narrative by using the narrative text box's toolbar options within FNTS instead of pasting in from a Word document. This will limit the number of formatting edits which need to be made after pasting into the narrative text boxes.. Formatting such as bullets, numbered lists and nested bullets do not copy into the narrative text boxes in the fiscal note tracking system well.
- DO NOT use underlining in your narrative (from Word document or within the narrative text box). We will be disabling the text box's underlining tool because it does not properly convert in the pdf printed fiscal note.
- DO NOT copy directly from an Adobe PDF file, a web page, email text, etc. Using an unformatted MS Word document or a plain text document to copy from will help ensure the printed fiscal note pdf will be formatted properly.

Save the document as a Word Plain Text file.

1. In your Word document, go to the File tab and click Save As...
2. In the Save as type: drop down, select Plain Text (*.txt).

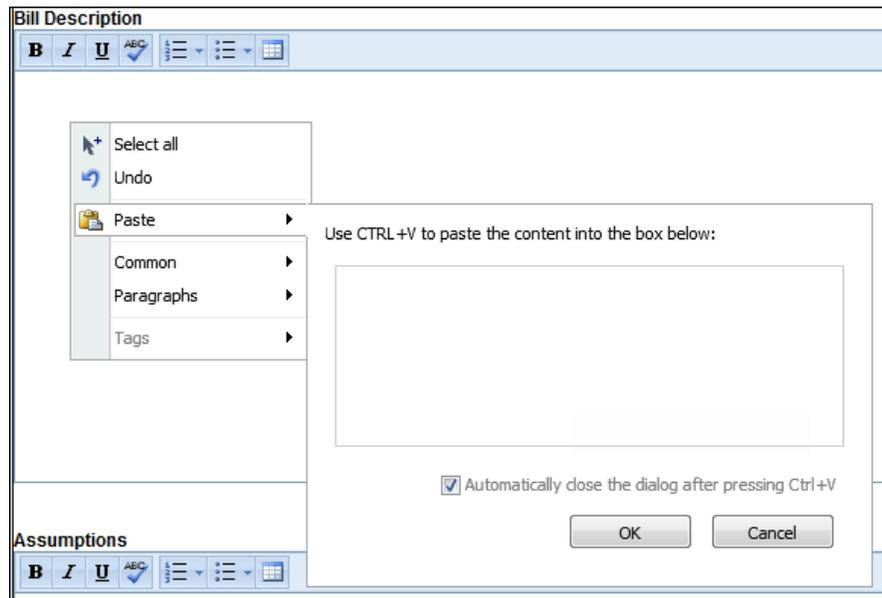


Copying and Pasting Information into the System

NOTE: The system does not allow copying and pasting of charts from Word or Excel.

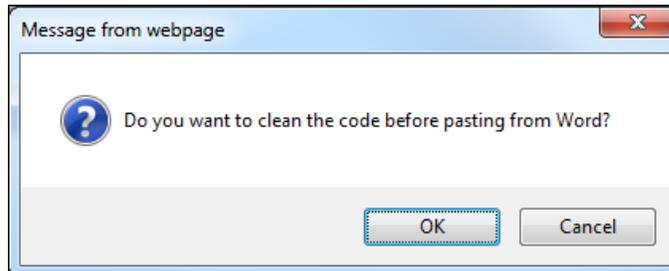
When pasting from Word, a lot of unnecessary Microsoft Word specific markup is pasted as well. You must clean the HTML code in order to create a clean narrative in the system.

1. Copy the text from Word, right click in the narrative text box. In the menu, hover over Paste. A dialog box will appear:



- 2.
3. Paste in your text by using CTRL+V and click OK.

- A prompt will pop up asking you if you want to clean the code. Click yes and the text will be pasted correctly in rich text format. **NOTE:** If this prompt does not appear, this could be a Browser issue (see instructions on [Browser Compatibility](#))



Make sure that a “table” really is a table.

- The exception to right click pasting is a table: Word tables will retain their formatting better if you paste them directly into the text box without using the right click functionality.
- Tables may also be copied from an Excel file. Follow the same procedure.
- Tab-separated or space separated columns are NOT tables. You can easily convert this to a Word table:
- One tab stop between columns is all that is needed. If your columns are separated by multiple tabs, delete the extra ones. Word uses the tab stop to know where to put the column border.

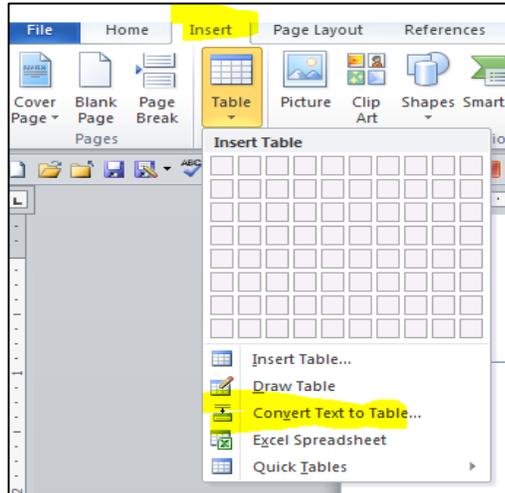
This (Table format in word):

Forecast	→	\$27,413,339	→	\$29,535,828	→	\$31,410,455	→	\$32,113,260	→	\$32,969,293
5.0% increase effective 7/1/2017	→	\$1,230,660	→	\$1,554,901	→	\$1,599,806	→	\$1,641,331	¶	
0.0% increase effective 7/1/2018	→	\$0	→	\$0	→	\$0	¶			
→ Cost Increase	→	\$0	→	\$1,230,660	→	\$1,554,901	→	\$1,599,806	→	\$1,641,331
→ Federal share	→	\$0	→	\$618,776	→	\$777,450	→	\$799,903	→	\$820,666
→ State share	→	\$0	→	\$611,884	→	\$777,450	→	\$799,903	→	\$820,666

NOT this (Tabbed content in word):

Forecast	→	\$159,717,883	→	\$172,744,207	→	\$177,655,018	→	\$183,223,760	→	\$190,624,208
5.0% → increase effective 7/1/2017	→	\$7,197,675	→	\$8,841,827	→	\$9,114,782	→	\$9,469,417	¶	
0.0% → increase effective 7/1/2018	→	\$0	→	\$0	→	\$0	→	\$0	¶	
→ Cost Increase	→	\$0	→	\$7,197,675	→	\$8,841,827	→	\$9,114,782	→	\$9,469,417
→ Federal share	→	\$0	→	\$3,618,991	→	\$4,420,914	→	\$4,557,391	→	\$4,734,709
→ State share	→	\$0	→	\$3,578,684	→	\$4,420,914	→	\$4,557,391	→	\$4,734,709

Highlight the text to convert. Click on the Insert tab in the ribbon. Click Table—Convert Text to Table



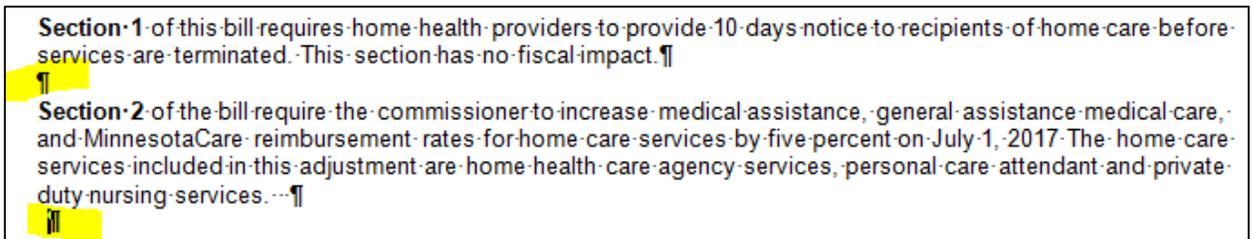
1. You should see something like this:

Forecast	\$27,413,339	\$29,535,828	\$31,410,455	\$32,113,260	\$32,969,293
5.0% increase effective 7/1/2017		\$1,230,660	\$1,554,901	\$1,599,806	\$1,641,331
0.0% increase effective 7/1/2018	\$0	\$0	\$0		
Cost Increase	\$0	\$1,230,660	\$1,554,901	\$1,599,806	\$1,641,331
Federal share	\$0	\$618,776	\$777,450	\$799,903	\$820,666
State share	\$0	\$611,884	\$777,450	\$799,903	\$820,666

2. Select the table, right click, paste into the box, and click OK to clean the code.

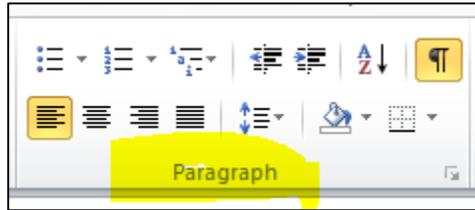
Other tips for tables

- Extremely long tables with blank rows or columns are problematic. Split these tables into workable sections and use the formatting tips outlined above. Avoid leaving entire columns or rows blank.
- Be aware of spacing between paragraphs.
- Minimize unnecessary white space in the fiscal note narrative by avoiding hard returns in your Word document.
- In the example below, space between paragraphs is created by hitting the Enter key and inserting a paragraph (“hard return”) and creating a space.



- A better practice is to adjust the paragraph settings in Word. Go to the

Home tab in the ribbon and expand the Paragraph tab,



- OR right click at the end of a paragraph and click on Paragraph:

