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## Referencing Internet-Drafts in RFCs draft-hoffman-id-references-01

### Abstract

[RFC 2026](#) places restrictions on how Internet-Drafts can be referred to in RFCs. Over time, the way that the IETF community uses Internet-Drafts has changed. The restrictions from [RFC 2026](#) sometimes make RFCs inaccurate (because many drafts that are referred to are not actually "works in progress", and also make references to Internet-Drafts nearly useless to RFC readers. This document updates the one part of [RFC 2026](#), and the one part of [RFC 7322](#), that covers referencing Internet-Drafts.

### Status of This Memo

This Internet-Draft is submitted in full conformance with the provisions of [BCP 78](#) and [BCP 79](#).

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This Internet-Draft will expire on May 26, 2016.

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**[1.](#) Introduction**

[[RFC2026](#)], "The Internet Standards Process - Revision 3", places restrictions on how Internet-Drafts can be referred to in RFCs and other Internet-Drafts. These restrictions were well-intentioned at the time but now have become outdated. This document updates the section of RFC 2026 that restricts how Internet-Drafts can be referenced. It also updates [[RFC7322](#)], "RFC Style Guide", to reflect the changes from [RFC 2026](#).

Note that this document narrowly updates just one section of [[RFC2026](#)]. Earlier proposals to make the changes here were abandoned because there was a belief that changing one part of [RFC 2026](#) could not be done without opening all of [RFC 2026](#) to change, and that was too onerous of a task. This document proves that a limited change can be made to [RFC 2026](#) without having to take on the many changes that different people in the IETF community may or may not want.

**[2.](#) Change to [RFC 2026](#)**

The last paragraph of [Section 2.2 of RFC 2026](#) says:

Note: It is acceptable to reference a standards-track specification that may reasonably be expected to be published as an RFC using the phrase "Work in Progress" without referencing an Internet-Draft. This may also be done in a standards track document itself as long as the specification in which the reference is made would stand as a complete and understandable document with or without the reference to the "Work in Progress".

This paragraph is replaced with:



It is acceptable to reference an Internet-Draft in another Internet-Draft or RFC. Such a reference must be to a specific edition of an Internet-Draft by indicating its full filename, such as "[draft-ietf-somewg-someprotocol-03](#)".

**3. Change to [RFC 7322](#)**

[Section 4.8.6.4 of RFC 7322](#), "Referencing Internet-Drafts", says:

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References to Internet-Drafts may only appear as informative references. Given that several revisions of an I-D may be produced in a short time frame, references must include the posting date (month and year), the full Internet-Draft file name (including the version number), and the phrase "Work in Progress". Authors may reference multiple versions of an I-D. If the referenced I-D was also later published as an RFC, then that RFC must also be listed.

[SYMBOLIC-TAG] Last name, First initial., Ed. (if applicable) and First initial. Last name, Ed. (if applicable), "I-D Title", Work in Progress, [draft-string-NN](#), Month Year.

Example:

[RFC-STYLE] Flanagan, H. and S. Ginoza, "RFC Style Guide", Work in Progress, [draft-flanagan-style-01](#), June 2013.

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This section is replaced with:

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References to Internet-Drafts may only appear as informative references. Given that several revisions of an I-D may be produced in a short time frame, references must include the posting date (month and year), the full title, the full Internet-Draft file name (including the version number), and a URL to that specific version of the draft on the IETF Tools site. Authors may reference multiple versions of an I-D. If the referenced I-D was also later published as an RFC, then that RFC must also be listed.



[SYMBOLIC-TAG] Last name, First initial., Ed. (if applicable)  
and First initial. Last name, Ed. (if applicable),  
"I-D Title", [draft-string-NN](#), Month Year,  
<<https://tools.ietf.org/html/draft-string-NN>>.

Example:

[RFC-STYLE] Flanagan, H. and S. Ginoza, "RFC Style Guide",  
[draft-flanagan-style-01](#), June 2013,  
<<https://tools.ietf.org/html/draft-flanagan-style-01>>.

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#### **4. IANA Considerations**

None.

#### **5. Security Considerations**

None.

#### **6. Acknowledgements**

This idea has been kicked around for a few decades by many people.

#### **7. Normative References**

[RFC2026] Bradner, S., "The Internet Standards Process -- Revision 3", [BCP 9](#), [RFC 2026](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC2026, October 1996,  
<<http://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc2026>>.

[RFC7322] Flanagan, H. and S. Ginoza, "RFC Style Guide", [RFC 7322](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC7322, September 2014,  
<<http://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc7322>>.

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