



2015

**Writing and Maintaining CEO Programmatic
and Agency Administrative Policy**

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About

This guide is designed to:

- Help policy and procedure developers write and maintain purposeful, user friendly, and current policies;
- Ensure all policies are reviewed and approved at an Administrative level; and
- Ensure all applicable policies are approved at the Board of Director level.

Definitions

A **policy** is a statement of governing principle, plan or understanding that guides action/procedure.

A **procedure** includes the steps necessary to comply with the policy, with sufficient detail that end users will readily understand how to comply with the policy mandates.

Characteristics of a Good Policy or Procedure Document

- Practical, administrative guide, with both style and content
- Developed, written and updated with the user in mind
- Written in third person using simple, clear, concise language
- Avoids jargon and overly technical descriptions
- Spells out acronyms initially then indicates in parenthesis, ex. Department of Health (DOH)
- Provides a purpose and associated function (standard, best practice, regulation, etc...)
- Has an effective date
- Is reviewed and updated minimally annually or as needed

Note: Remember that policy/procedure documents are not marketing documents or creative writing pieces. The goal of a well written policy/procedure is to clearly explain how to accomplish a specific process at CEO with minimal problem, aggravation or risk of non-compliance.

Things to Keep in Mind/Writing Tips

-  Users of your policy/procedure are not experts in your area of expertise.
-  Users of your policy/procedure will often be new to your program and/or CEO:
 - This means to keep policies as simple and straight forward as possible.
-  Write with attention to specifically what all users need to know:
 - This means avoid “specialist” language and/or detail.
-  Policies and procedures are different:
 - Policies explain why we have certain procedures but not how to accomplish tasks.
 - Procedures explain the steps a user must take to remain in compliance with a policy.
-  Word choice makes a big difference:
 - “Shall” or “must” indicate something is required.
 - “Should” and “may” indicate there might be other options.
-  People leave and policies and procedures remain:
 - Use position titles not personal names.
-  Less is more:
 - Clear concise tools encourage independence, efficiency and compliance.

Preparation and Research

Before starting to write any policy or procedure it is important to gather the information you need to develop an accurate, usable, effective document. To effectively focus your preparation, be sure you are clear on the point of the policy/procedure. Is this policy/procedure being developed in response to a problem in the program and/or agency or is it in response to a new agency wide, governing or funder regulation? You need to determine what you are trying to accomplish, and make sure the point of the policy/procedure is clear to you so it will be clear to others.

When you are developing a new policy/procedure be sure to:

-  Engage staff, peers and others impacted to gather varying perspectives;
-  Seek examples from other like entities to further increase perspective and enhance implementation;
-  Cross reference agency and governing entity’s policies;
-  Avoid duplicating an already existing policy (agency, other department and/or governing entity);
-  Align policies with applicable agency and/or governing entity policies to ensure compliance; and
-  Incorporate agency and/or governing entity expectation “language”.



Templates

There are universal CEO policy and procedure templates that should be used to capture all programmatic and agency wide policies and procedures.

The templates for writing a policy or procedure can be found on the CEO intranet under the Resources tab/Marketing & Communications/ Policy or Procedure Page Template.

Template Section Definitions

- Governed By – Program, department or position responsible for administering, enforcing and maintaining policy or procedure.
- Policy – Statement of governing principle, plan or understanding that guides action/ procedure.
- Policy # - policy # assignment by department or program
- Procedure – Includes the steps necessary to comply with the policy, with sufficient detail that end users will readily understand how to comply with the policy mandates.
- Purpose -a brief statement to explain the “what and why” of the policy and/or procedure.
- Approved Date – Date policy was approved by Sr. Cabinet
- Effective Date – Date procedure was released and expected to be followed.
- Updated Last – Date policy or procedure was last updated

Policy Template


Policy #: 3 – Customer Code of Conduct

Governed by: Administration	
Approval Date: August 11, 2015	Last Updated: October 16, 2015
Purpose:	

Policy:
Here the formatting is unrestricted to allow the use of:

- Bullets
- **Bold text**
- *Italic Text*
- Etc.



Formal Policy Review Process

When a draft of a policy is complete and all facts contained have been confirmed accurate submit to policy oversight departments as follows:

-  Operations for Programs
-  ECS Director for ECS
-  Chief Administrative Officer for Facilities
-  Chief Planning Officer for IT, Development, Marketing and Communications
-  Chief Compliance & QA Officer for Grants, HR, Fiscal, Governance , Planning and Operations
-  Board of Directors in relation to applicable fiscal and personnel policies

Oversight departments are responsible to review policy DRAFTS and ensure:

-  Valid purpose and necessity
-  Accuracy of information
-  Alignment and compliance, not duplication, with governing entity and/or agency policies
-  Alignment with mission and programmatic and/or agency goals
-  Proper grammar, spelling, formatting
-  User friendliness

Final Policy Approval Procedure

Once oversight department has confirmed all of the above during the review process:

-  **Operations & ECS**
 - Will formally approve at the programmatic level and confirm staff training and effective date.
-  **Administrative Officers**
 - Will return to administrative department with the green light to put on an upcoming Sr. Cabinet agenda for final review, approval and/or next steps (either agency roll out or Board level approval discussions).
-  **Board of Directors**
 - Personnel and internal control policies also require Board review and approval before implementation.



Responsibilities of Policy Developers and Departments

-  Ensure the continued accuracy of policies and procedures.
-  Ensure intranet and Operation Manuals are kept current and accessible for staff and governing entities.
-  Monitor and ensure ongoing compliance with policies and procedures.

Updates

Annual Review and Updates

All policies and procedures must be:

-  Reviewed annually, by developer, to ensure continued validity and relevance;
-  Updated as changes occur; and
-  Replaced on the intranet, as applicable.

Other Updates

Updates that change the “purpose” or potentially the end result of any policy must go through the formal review process again before shifting from formerly approved expectations.

Contact Information

Questions, comments, and suggestions regarding this document may be sent to Kristin McGivern, Chief Compliance & Quality Assurance Officer, at kmcgivern@ceoempowers.org.