



Discover the Benefits

Policies and Procedures Can Bring to Your Organization



Writing policies and procedures is not usually something that excites or motivates people, but you might feel differently if you realized the value they bring to your organization. If you want to increase communication, become more efficient and gain credibility among supporters, legal counsel and insurance brokers, developing policies and procedures should be a priority.

All organizations can benefit from clarity and consistency. Whether you are an informal group that plans an annual conference, a provincial association or an inter-provincial board, policies and procedures can help your organization accomplish its goals and work together more effectively.

Top 10 reasons to create policies and procedures

They:

1. establish a standard for how to do things
2. make sure decisions are made and documented by members of the board
3. communicate the same message to all staff, board members and volunteers
4. provide clear expectations to make it more likely that staff, board members and volunteers will meet or exceed those expectations
5. may attract more volunteers to your organization
6. make sure important information on how to do things is not lost when an employee leaves the organization

7. promote fair and equitable treatment of others
8. show you've complied with applicable legislation
9. reduce conflict, and
10. help your organization mitigate risks

Your organization may already have many documents in place that can help you put together a policies and procedures manual. There are many resources and tools out there to help you get started. Checking back through meeting minutes is one of the best ways to gather information. Any other checklists or annual event-planning documents can also be helpful. Search online to find resources or similar policies that can be adapted for your own situation.

Create a manual that's easy to use

The manual needs to be user-friendly, relevant and a practical tool that staff and volunteers will refer to regularly. Do not feel pressured to include information or procedures that serve other organizations. Whatever you include must be relevant to the work you do.

It's also important to make sure all policies and procedures follow relevant legislation at the municipal, provincial and federal levels for programs, health and safety and labour. If you have employees, all hiring procedures and termination policies must comply with the human rights code and employment/labour legislation of the jurisdiction in which the organization operates.

Other things to keep in mind when creating your policies and procedures

- Start with what you already have in place and remember that your manual will be continually updated and revised.
- When things might be best explained with a photo, use one. Technology makes it easy to photograph steps to a procedure. This is especially helpful for those who learn best through visual aids or struggle with the written English language.
- Use a style that suits your organization. There are no specific rules about how a manual should look – only that it should be easy to use. Feel free to be creative!
- Keep it simple. It is tempting to use jargon or over-explain things. Write in the same style you'd use if you were explaining it to someone verbally.
- Organize the manual so it is easy to navigate. When a volunteer is in a crisis and needs to know how to handle a particular situation, he or she wants to find the information quickly.
- Your policies and procedures manual needs to be approved by the board. Even though someone else may do much of the work creating it, the board has the final say in adopting it. When introducing the manual to staff and volunteers, highlight its uses and show them the content. Avoid just sending an email or giving out a binder, as it may sit on the shelf and not be used.
- Schedule regular reviews of the manual to make sure it remains current – and don't forget to choose someone to lead the reviews. Putting together a policy and procedure manual has significant rewards for an organization. The content helps everyone in the organization understand clearly what they need to do, and how to do it.

Place policies and procedures on your next board meeting agenda, so you can discuss when you will begin developing a manual or reviewing the ones you already have in place.

To give your board a push to start developing or revising your policies and procedures, request a half-day workshop from a [rural leadership specialist](#).



Policies are principles that an organization decides they will implement to accomplish their goals. They explain who, what, why and when an action will be completed.

Procedures are the steps that need to be taken to implement policies. They describe how an action is to be completed.

For more information

- Go to manitoba.ca/agriculture and click on Industry Leadership
- Email us at leadership@gov.mb.ca
- Visit your local Manitoba Agriculture GO Office