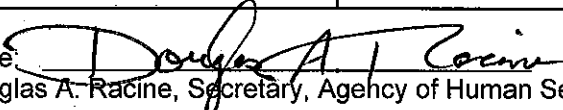


STATE OF VERMONT
Agency of Human Services (AHS)

Development and Dissemination of AHS-wide Policies, Standards, Guidelines and Procedures	REVISION HISTORY: 3/1/1987; 9/1/92; 7/25/2005; 9/19/13	Chapter/Number General 1.0
	EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/23/13	Attachments/Related Documents: Sample format/instructions
Authorizing Signature:  Date Signed: <u>9/20/13</u> Douglas A. Racine, Secretary, Agency of Human Services		

PURPOSE/POLICY STATEMENT:

To establish procedures for the development and dissemination of policies, standards, guidelines and/or procedures which are applicable to more than one department within the Agency of Human Services (AHS).

BACKGROUND and REFERENCES:

Since the creation of the original policy in 1987 much has changed in organizational structure as well as information technology and operations. This document is being updated to reflect these and other administrative and organizational changes. The 2005 revision merged two separate policies that cover the development and distribution of policies and the updated categories used to group policies. The 2006 revision recognized the cross-departmental nature of our operations while also recognizing the need for departments to maintain policy and procedures related to specific aspects of their work and deliverables. This 2013 revision reflects organizational changes in the Agency's Central Office.

DEFINITIONS:

Agency - The Agency of Human Services

Associates - Anyone who has a relationship with the Agency of Human Services, through contract, grant or other association that supports the delivery of services, general operation and functions of the various departments and programs within the Agency's purview.

Policy Review Board - Key staff of the Agency's Central Office; the Administrative Services Director (who will act as Chair), the AHS Executive Assistant, the Chief Information Officer and the General Counsel.

Policy - a high-level statement of an organization's beliefs, goals, and objectives and the general means for their attainment for a specified subject area.

Standards - Minimum expectations related to operations, staff conduct, organizational performance, structure or work place environment that Agency departments and offices must follow to provide policies with a support structure and specific direction.

Guidelines - General statements or considerations related to operations, staff conduct, organizational performance, structure or work place environment that Agency departments and offices must incorporate into existing or new departmental procedures and practice.

Procedures - Specific process for implementation of policies, standards and guidelines

SCOPE:

This document applies to Agency Departments, Division and Offices hereafter referred to jointly as "Department".

STANDARD:

In order to minimize the creation of policy, standards, guidelines or procedural documents that are duplicative or in conflict with Agency-wide expectations, individual departments are responsible for familiarizing themselves with existing Agency and State of Vermont policy, standards and guidelines.

Any Department developing policy, guidelines, standards or procedures that may have an Agency-wide impact, an impact on more than one Agency department, or may impact a consumer who receives multiple Agency services, must ensure that a relevant cross-departmental team has an opportunity for input or review. Relevant teams may include, but are not limited to: Commissioners, Policy Executives, etc. Reviews will, at a minimum, serve to:

- Minimize unintended consequences to consumers of multiple Agency services
- Eliminate inconsistency across Agency in other related policy, standards, guidelines or procedures

Draft documents shall be submitted to the Chair of the Policy Review Board, who shall ensure timely and appropriate review and, if applicable, revision and issuance of the document. Reviews will include but not be limited to:

- A determination of whether the proposal is applicable to other departments of the Agency
- Solicitation of input from senior leadership of the Agency related to the proposal's utility and feasibility
- Final review and recommendation to the AHS Secretary

Policies, standards, guidelines and procedures that are applicable Agency-wide or have an impact on more than one Agency Department are not effective until approved by the AHS Secretary.

In the interest of creating order in the dissemination of Agency-wide policies, standards, guidelines and procedures, an online electronic manual will be maintained by the Administrative Services Director or designee.

The Administrative Services Director or designee shall keep original hard copy signed versions of all policies, guidelines, standards or procedures that have an impact on more than one Agency department and shall provide for periodic reviews of the documents to: (1) ensure consistency with statutes, state policies and other changes, (2) verify that the information is current and (3) affirm that the material is clear, concise and consistent with necessary and efficient administration of the Agency.

Policies, standards, guidelines and procedures will be used to disseminate matters of lasting interest, e.g. regulations, and administrative matters of a continuing nature dealing with Agency operations.

Memos or notices will be used to deal with matters of a temporary nature, such as one-time required reports, interim regulations, or on-going procedures/practices not having on-going policy implications. Memos or notices will not be catalogued in the online system.

- **All Agency documents produced must substantially follow the format of this document as shown on Attachment A.**
- Final chapter assignment and numerical sequencing will be done by the Policy Review Board.
- All approved documents will be signed by the Secretary of the Agency.

Chapter	Section/Topic	Number in Sequence (if needed)	Year Created or Revised
01, 02, 03, etc.	A, B, C, etc.	1, 2, 3,	06, 07, 08

The following structure shall be used to categorize and number policies:

Chapters may be revised or added as needed by the Policy Review Board. Those authorized as of this revision include:

No.	Chapter
01	General Operations
02	Finance, Management, Budget
03	Space, Asset Protection
04	Human Resources
05	Information Technology & Electronic Communications
06	Consumer Information and Privacy Standards

COMPLIANCE:

Employees are responsible for reading and following Agency policies, guidelines, standards and/or procedures. Questions regarding the impact or implication of any Agency policy, guideline, standard or procedure may be directed to an employee's supervisor, Deputy or Commissioner or the Agency Policy Review Board.

All policies, guidelines, standards or procedures approved by the AHS Secretary after the effective date of this revision will be made available in the electronic form and will be posted on the AHS Intranet at: <http://intra.ahs.state.vt.us/policies-rules-guidelines-and-standards>

It is the responsibility of the individual Departments to:

- Ensure dissemination and review the policies, guidelines, standards or procedures, memos and notices to all employees within their Department and other associates as appropriate.
- Ensure that Departmental documents are consistent with and reflect Agency and, all relevant other State of Vermont policy, standards, guidelines and procedures.

ENFORCEMENT:

Enforcement of policies, guidelines, standards or procedures shall be specified on individual policies. The AHS Secretary may initiate reviews, assessments or other means to insure that policies, guidelines, standards or procedures are being followed.

**ATTACHMENT A: SAMPLE DOCUMENT FORMAT
STATE OF VERMONT
Agency of Human Services (AHS)**

TITLE	REVISION HISTORY OR NEW	Chapter/Number TBD BY AHS
	EFFECTIVE DATE:	Attachments/Related Documents: 1. List relevant documents here
Authorizing Signature: _____ Secretary, Agency of Human Services		Date Signed: _____

PURPOSE/POLICY STATEMENT:

A brief statement of the purpose of the document and/or the overarching policy

BACKGROUND and REFERENCES:

A statement of any relevant background and rationale for the document, if applicable, any authorizing state or federal statutes, rule or law or other reference (state policy, procedure)

DEFINITIONS:

Define any key words or terms that are specific to the document

SCOPE:

Identify who the document applies to (i.e. all Agency Departments, Division and Offices and/or Associates).

STANDARDS, GUIDELINES and/or PROCEDURES:

Choose either a "standard," "guideline" or "procedure" to indicate what type of adherence you expect.

Standards - Minimum expectations related to operations, staff conduct, organizational performance, structure or work place environment that Agency departments and offices must follow to provide policies with a support structure and specific direction.

Guidelines - General statements or considerations related to operations, staff conduct, organizational performance, structure or work place environment that Agency departments and offices must incorporate into departmental procedures and practice

Procedures – Specific process for implementation of policies, standards and guidelines

COMPLIANCE:

Specify actions necessary to measure compliance with standards, guidelines and/or procedures, if applicable.

ENFORCEMENT:

Specify on individual policies, what enforcement sanctions or other penalty may apply.