

# Checklist for developing your policies



Agencies\* write policies and procedures to help staff comply with legislation, adhere to standards, and create transparent practices.

Policies are written guidelines that help decision-makers form consistent, legally correct, and fair decisions.

..... This checklist is designed to supplement, rather than replace, relevant standards, policies and legislation governing agency service delivery.

## Use this checklist to create useful and relevant policy

### Consider the purpose, context, and accountability of your policy

- What is the purpose of this policy?
- Is it intended to mitigate a risk, address a gap in knowledge, introduce a new system or function, or respond to an issue that was revealed by a serious incident?
- What legislation or regulations are relevant for this policy?
- How will this policy guide readers to interpret legislation or regulations?
- How will this policy interact with existing policies, procedures and guidelines? Can existing policies be updated with this information instead?
- How does the policy impact on staff and/or stakeholders, including service users? Particularly people in vulnerable or marginalised groups.
- Which principles of best practice, or relevant professional standards, apply to this policy?
- How does this policy align with your strategic documents, for example, Strategic Plan and Service Delivery Charter?
- Which individuals, roles, and teams own and are responsible for implementing, communicating, monitoring and updating the policy?

### Things to include in your policy

- Clearly articulate the objective of the policy, and the principles underlying it.
- State how the policy aligns with relevant legislation, regulations and statutory powers.
- Identify and list which other organisational documents, including other policies, are related to this policy.
- Define changes to recordkeeping processes.
- Explain what users should do in cases where this policy appears to conflict with other organisational policies.
- Define key terms. Make sure definitions are consistent with definitions in relevant legislation and related policies.
- Define teams and roles and their levels of responsibility/ies for the policy.

- State when the policy takes effect, and when you will review it.
- Explain the circumstances that the policy applies to.
- Define what constitutes a breach of the policy.
- Detail the consequences of breaching the policy.

### Implementing the policy

- Decide what resources, teams and timeframes you need to implement the policy.
- Develop procedures that instruct and support staff how to apply the policy.
- Train staff how to use the policy and procedures appropriately (including new employees and contractors).
- Monitor compliance and assess possible breaches.
- Measure how the policy is addressing the risks you intend it to mitigate.

### Reviewing the policy

- Identify who is responsible for reviewing the policy. The level of reviewer should be commensurate with the level of risk that the policy is addressing.
- Review by the date specified, or sooner if required.
- Check that the content is still accurate and relevant.
- Update the policy with relevant changes to legislation, agency structure, processes.
- Schedule the next review date.

### Format and delivery

Confirm the policy is:

- representing the agency's values, standards and best practices
- written in plain English, using simple, everyday language (not jargon) to communicate clearly with readers
- available in formats that cater to the needs of all readers, including people with disabilities, and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- accessible to all staff
- published on the agency's website.

\* We use the word 'agencies' to describe all of the Queensland state government departments, local councils, public universities and statutory authorities that we can investigate.