



Policy Matters!

Presented by:
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Alberta Culture and Tourism

[1]

What attracted you to this workshop?

[2]

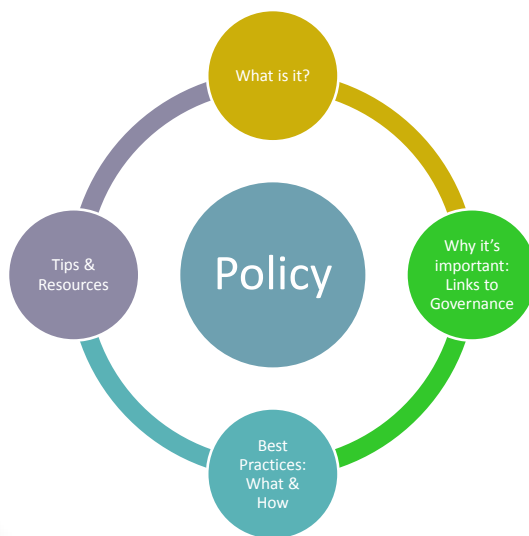
Your Experience so far...



What's gone well?
Where is there room for improvement?

(3)

Presentation in a Nutshell



(4)

What is Policy?

What is
Policy?

A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by a government, party, business, or individual – Oxford Dictionary

A set of ideas or a plan of what to do in particular situations that has been agreed to officially by a group of people, a business organization, a government or a political party – Cambridge Dictionary

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What is Policy?

What is
Policy?

Form the written basis of operation secondary to legislation and the organization's bylaws

Explain the rules or laws related to the group's overall mission, goals and objectives

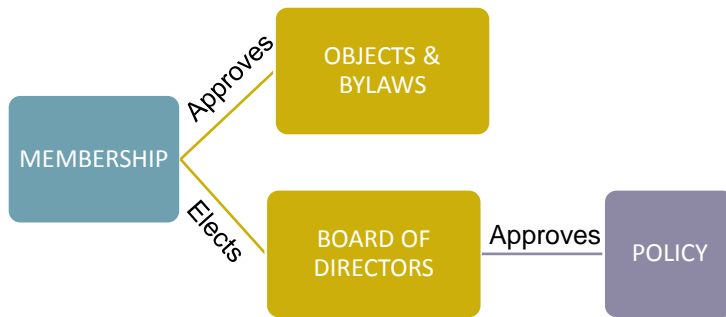
Provide the parameters, terms, or conditions to guide the actions of the board, committees, staff and volunteers

Prescribe limits and pinpoints responsibilities within the organization

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Legal Context

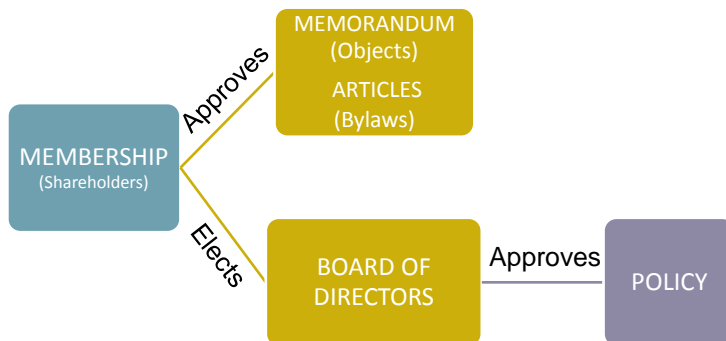
Links to Governance



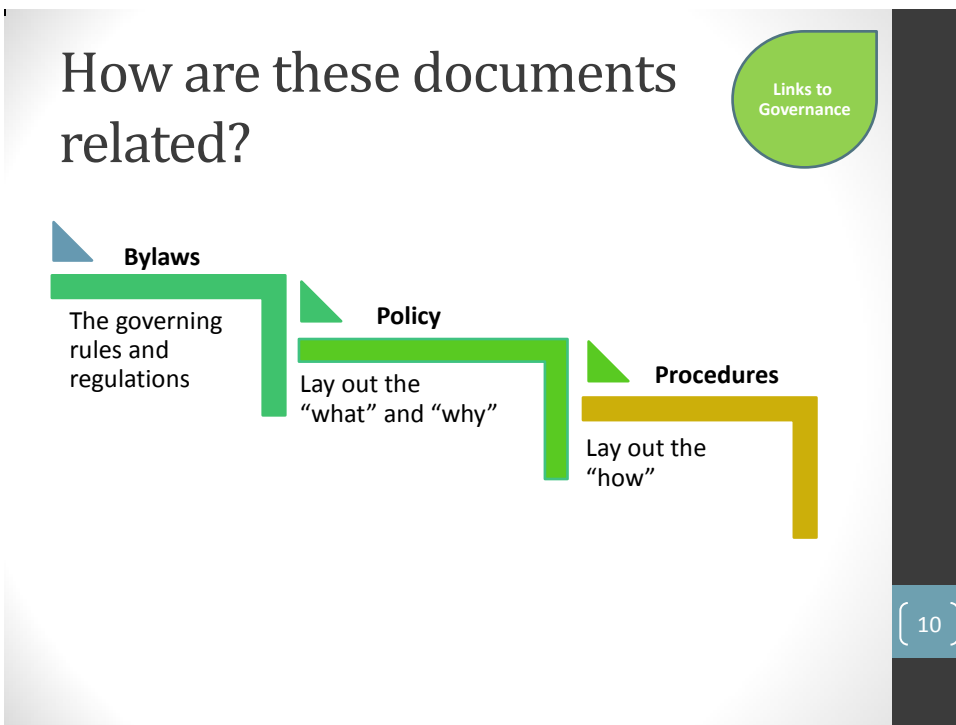
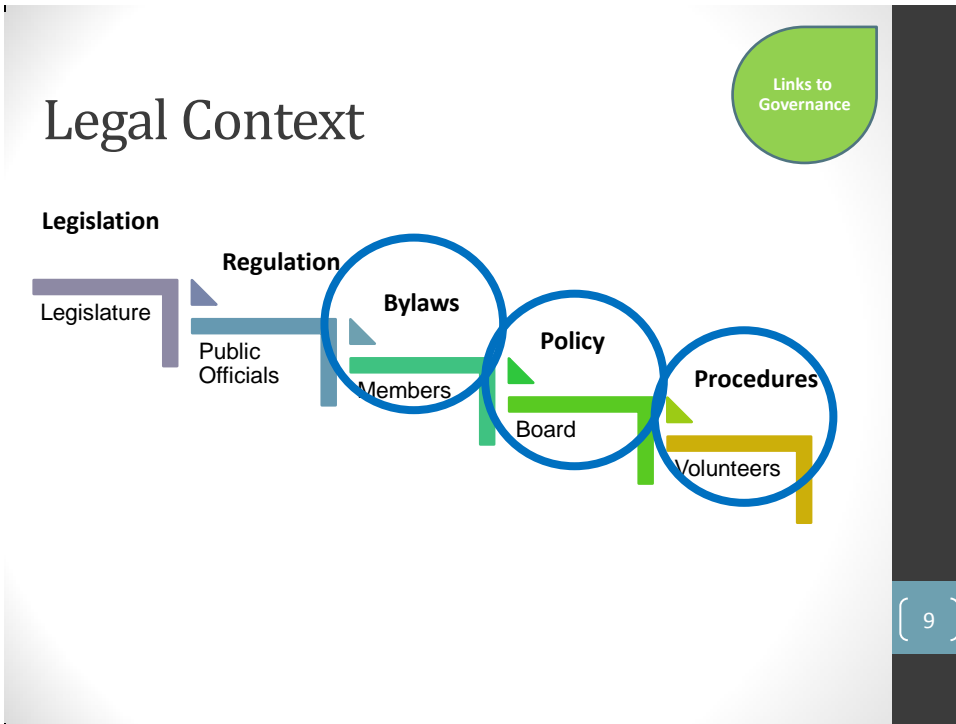
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Legal Context

Links to Governance



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Example

Links to Governance

Bylaws

Directors are entitled to claim reasonable expenses for organization-related travel

Policy

Director travel **should** be approved in advanced by the Chair or Board

Procedures

Expenses are submitted by the fifth day of the month

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More about...How these documents related

Links to Governance

Policies ...

- Are clear, simple statements of how your organisation intends to conduct its services, actions or business. They provide a set of guiding principles to help with decision making.
- Don't need to be long or complicated – a couple of sentences may be all you need for each policy area.

Procedures...

- Describe how each policy will be put into action in your organisation. Each procedure should outline:
 - Who will do what
 - What steps they need to take
 - Which forms or documents to use.
- Procedures might just be a few bullet points or instructions. Sometimes they work well as forms, checklists, instructions or flowcharts.
- Policies and their accompanying procedures will vary between workplaces because they reflect the values, approaches and commitments of a specific organisation and its culture. But they share the same role in guiding your organisation.

Source: <https://www.volunteer.vic.gov.au/manage-your-volunteers/policies-and-procedures/whats-the-difference-between-policies-and-procedures>

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Activity

Links to
Governance

Task: Practice crafting a policy statement. Imagine you are a board member on a community organization serving a vulnerable population.

Instructions: Select one of the following questions and draft a statement describing the board's policy.

What is the board's policy on...

- The collection of personal information and its use within the organization?
- The treatment of clients accessing services?
- The use of personal cell phones at work by staff and volunteers?

What is the board's ...

- Code of conduct policy?
- Conflict of interest policy?
- What is the board's volunteer policy?
- Policy on how it makes policy?

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Benefits of Policy

Links to
Governance

At the Board Level

- Fosters stability and continuity in planning and decision-making
- Enhances board /staff efficiency
- Serves as a storehouse of wisdom
- Clarifies governing styles, roles, responsibilities and expectations
- May reduce liability
- Assist in the orientation of new Board members
- Helps shift organization from reactive to proactive position

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Benefits of Policy

Links to
Governance

At the Staff / Volunteer Level

- Helps everyone understand the values and vision of the Board
- Clarifies responsibilities and defines lines of communication and accountability
- Provides a structure for sound management
- Promotes consistency and continuity in the way the organization operates and in how decisions are made
- Ensures continuity over time and from staff to staff

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Types of Policy

Best Practices:
What & How

Framework	Board Self-Governance	Operational	Advocacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision • Mission • Values • Strategic Plan • Planning Cycle • Work Plan • Annual Report 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Policies • Board Recruitment, Orientation and Training • Board / Committee Positions • Code of Conduct • Conflict of Interest • Confidentiality • Bylaw Review • In-camera Board Discussions • Board meetings • Board liability insurance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program development • Safety for clients / staff • Advocacy • Board relationship to executive director • Authority of ED • Roles & Resp. of ED • Policies for salaries • Policies for volunteers • Budgeting and financial reporting • Fundraising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization's stand / position on relevant issues • Linkages with the community • Linkages with other organizations • Policies related to social issues, public awareness, media

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Types of Risk

Best Practices:
What & How



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Types of Policy

Best Practices:
What & How

What policies do we/ should we have?

Who is / should be involved in developing policy?

Tailor your policies to meet your organizational needs

TIP

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Activity - Policy Audit

Tips & Resources

An approach to help you identify what your organization has and needs for policies

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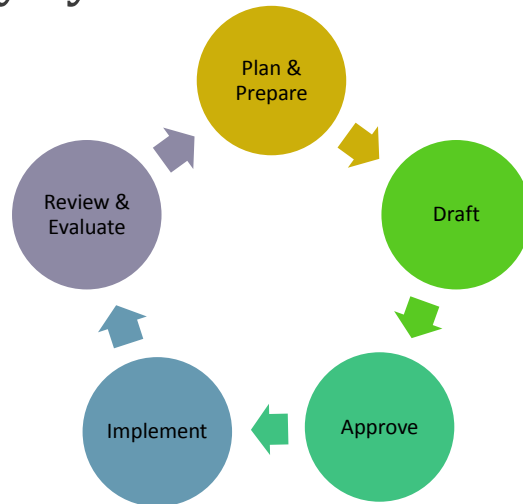
Who Develops Policies?

Best Practices:
What & How

- Board and its committees work with the staff to develop policy
- Policies can be written by a number of different people including board, staff, volunteers, a committee, a consultant
- The governing Board is the only body authorized to approve policies
- Staff develop procedures to implement policy

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Policy Cycle



Best Practices:
What & How

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Plan and Prepare

1. Describe or discuss your current practice
2. Review the organization's policy on policy making
3. Identify issues and underlying concerns
 - “Do We Have Policies About...?”
 - “Do We Need a Policy About...?”
4. Research – What are others doing?



Best Practices:
What & How

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Drafting Policies

Best Practices:
What & How

Policy & Procedure



- It's a process: write, edit, re-write, edit, re-write
- It takes time – plan for it
- Don't expect perfection. A policy manual is a "living" document
- Start with the general and move to specific



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Writing Tips

Tips & Resources

Policies should be simple and straightforward.

Apply the 3 C's: Clarity, Conciseness, and Coherence

Clear writing

- Easy to understand and read
- Uses active voice – present tense, use action verbs in instead of passive verbs

Conciseness

- It is direct
- Uses short sentences, short paragraphs, lists
- Limits jargon, clichés and redundancies

Coherence

- Logical order
- Sentences link together
- Discernable threads of thought

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Policy Format

Best Practices:
What & How

Policy Type	• Category of Policy
Policy Name	• Title of Policy
Policy Number	• Sequential or linked in categories
Rationale / Preamble	• Why do we have or need this policy?
Policy Objective / Aim	• What are we hoping to achieve?
Policy	• Detailing the expectation and how the policy will be implemented

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Approve

Best Practices:
What & How

Questions you could ask as part of the review process:

1. What is the policy's purpose?
2. What informed our draft policy?
3. What debates/challenges did you experience in drafting the policy?
4. What does the policy address? (*Risks*)
5. How will this be implemented? (*Remember roles & responsibilities if choosing to ask this question*)



Policies Under Review



Four possible forms of policy review feedback:

1. The draft seems fine with no further comment
2. In general the draft seems fine with a few minor exceptions
3. The draft policy is unacceptable and needs significant changes
4. No opinion (hopefully this is rare)

**Policies require Board approval; procedures do not.
Record approval in the minutes.**



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Implementation

Best Practices:
What & How

Ways to communicate & support implementation

- Employee Handbooks
- Email/Bulletins
- Intranet and shared drives
- Information sessions
- Training sessions
- Ongoing communication
- Model the way



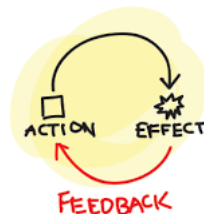
Don't forget about Procedures. They translate policy into action!
Store Policies and Procedures together for easy reference



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Monitoring

Best Practices:
What & How



How does this currently happen?

What other approaches might we use?

- To assess how implementation is proceeding
- To understand how effective the policy appears to be?

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Evaluate (Review & Revise)

Best Practices:
What & How

How do we know our policies are still relevant?



Questions you could ask as part of your review process:

1. **What has changed in our environment that could / should influence our policies?**
 - New legislation, standards, practices, risks (recent example: *Anti-Spam*)
2. **What have we learned about how the policy/procedures are working?**
 - Are they having the desired effect?
 - Are we experiencing any unintended consequence?
3. **Other questions?**

Build in mandatory reviews. For example: On the policy document itself, include a space for identifying review date.



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Managing the Work

Tips & Resources

Committees



Timeline

Teams



Priorities



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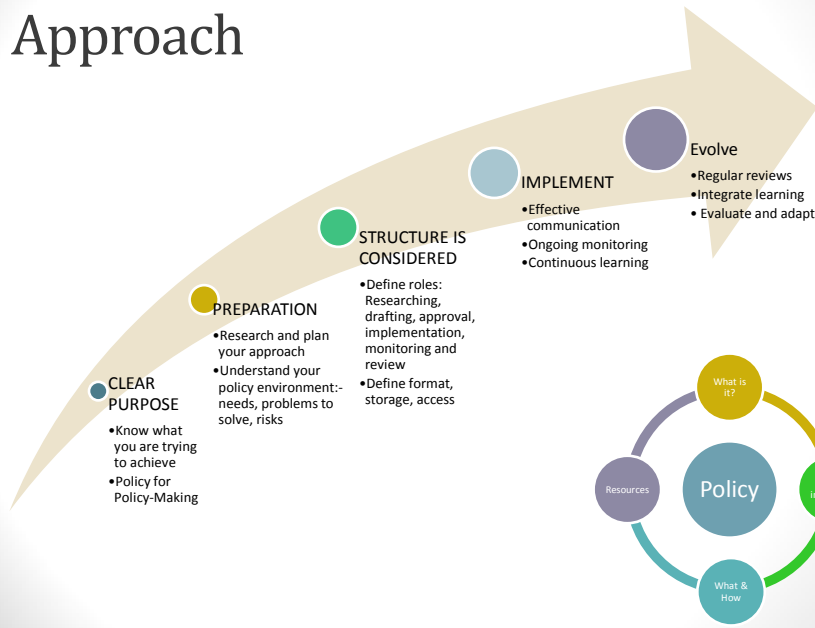
Other ideas...

Tips & Resources

What would you recommend to ensure a positive and useful policy experience?

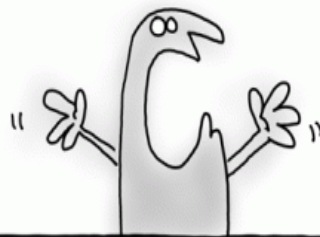
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Ingredients for an Effective Policy Approach



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Now What?!!



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Trio Talk:

What is one thing you will take from this presentation to make a difference in how you approach policy?

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Additional Resources

HR Council – HR Toolkit

<http://hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/home.cfm>

Imagine Canada Standards Program for Canada's Charities and Non-Profits

http://www.imaginecanada.ca/sites/default/files/www/en/standards/standards_program_handbook_may_2012.pdf

Chartered Professional Accountants Canada – 20 Question Series

- 20 Questions Directors of Not-for-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Fiduciary Duty
- 20 Questions Directors of Not-for-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Governance
- 20 Questions Directors of Not-for-Profit Organizations Should Ask about Risk

Dalhousie University – Non-Profit Leadership Program

<http://www.dal.ca/faculty/cce/programs/non-profit-sector-leadership/non-profit-resources.html>

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Image Sources: Typewriter www.synergyconsultingsvc.ca; Green Circle <http://www.firstreference.com/whitepapers/hrpp-wp-5558.aspx?wherefrom=FRT>; Glasses & Checkmark www.bscw.de; Tips <https://www.caminodesantiago.me/wp-content/uploads/ftp.gif>; Walnut Shell www.123rf.com; Binders allthingsadmin.com; Magnifying Lens www.dreamstime.com; Policies Under Review www.hscdsb.on.ca; clock www.shutterstock.com; Feedback Loop www.galesstormjathering.com; Evolve www.forbes.com; Timeline www.st3recruitment.org.uk; Committees norfolkcc.cmis.uk.com; Priorities; Volunteers god.community; Consulting www.nectaraglobe.com

Questions?

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Community Development Unit

www.culture.alberta.ca/communitydevelopment