

Welcome to  
**WRITING EFFECTIVE  
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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# Housekeeping

We'll take one 20-minute break around 10:15 a.m.

Most of the time, you'll be muted for a better audio experience for everyone.

Use the Chat feature to communicate with the group or with me directly.

Respect others' opinions, even when they differ from your own.

# AGENDA

Definitions and differences

Common driving factors

## **Policies**

Content

6 Traits

Analysis

Writing

Hall of Fame

## **Procedures**

7 Guidelines

Analysis

Writing

Hall of Fame

# POLICY

A policy is a course of action adopted to guide decisions on a particular topic to achieve a rational outcome.

It provides a logical, consistent framework for action.

A policy should reflect the "rules" governing behavior—  
and be based on organizational values.

# PROCEDURE

A procedure represents an implementation of a **policy**. It should evolve over time as (1) new tools emerge, (2) new processes are designed, and (3) the risks change.



*There should be an expectation that people will challenge an outdated procedure.*

Rather than combine policies and procedures in a single document, policies and procedures should be **separate** because of their different usages.

# POLICY v. PROCEDURE

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Procedure</b>
<p><b>What</b> to do— and <b>why</b></p> <p>Conveys a <b>requirement</b></p> <p>Values-based</p>	<p><b>How</b> to do something</p> <p>Conveys <b>guidance</b> and assistance</p> <p>Steps-based</p>

## SECTION

### 6.0 BOARD MEETINGS

It is this Board's **policy** that, above all else, its meetings be conducted:

- With the best interest of Cal Expo always considered of foremost importance;
- With fairness for all concerned;
- With sufficient attention to detail as to be responsible for the direction of Cal Expo;
- In as expeditious a manner as possible; and
- With attention paid to the discussion and determination of matters of policy only, leaving the day-to-day operation of Cal Expo in the hands of the General Manager/CEO.
- **Openly so that the public may remain informed.**

### 6.4 PROCEDURES

#### 6.4.1 GUIDELINES

The control and management of Cal Expo is the responsibility of the Directors. The following guidelines are furnished as a guide to fair management.

- The official minute record should be maintained in book form, either bound or loose leaf, in perpetuity and pages should be numbered.
- Meetings are normally to be held bi-monthly, and more often near or during Fair time. Minutes should specify if the meeting was regular, special, or emergency.
- The General Manager/CEO must mail to each Director, at least ten days prior the meeting, an agenda of the business to be considered at that meeting.
- A copy of the minutes is to be sent to each Director. Should a Director be unable to attend a meeting, he/she will be informed of what took place during the absence. Any necessary corrections for errors or omissions, which may occur in the minutes, will accordingly be recorded in the minutes of the subsequent meeting.
- The minutes of the previous meeting should be read and approved. This approval should be recorded in the minutes with a reference to the date of the previous meeting.
- **All official actions of the Board are to be recorded accurately in the minutes.** ~~The minutes should include no resolution or recordation of a motion not actually acted upon~~ by the Board in official session.

# BE THINKING ABOUT...

a **policy** *and* **procedure** you want to work on today

1. They must be work-related.
2. They must be related to each other.
3. They must pertain to a topic that affects you or that you know about.

## NEED IDEAS?

### **Policy**

Telework policy

Workstation privacy  
policy

Overtime policy

Training policy

### **Procedure**

Communication protocol

How to secure your  
computer and files

Overtime request and  
reporting procedure

How to request, get approval  
for, and attend a class

# COMMON DRIVING FACTORS

Agencies write or revise policies and procedures as a result of **internal** or **external** factors.

## INTERNAL FACTORS

- Personnel changes (capturing historic knowledge)
- Cultural shifts due to departmental reorg
- “Incidents”

## EXTERNAL FACTORS

- Legislative changes
- Cultural changes
- Technological changes and updates
- Global events

# **POLICIES**

# POLICY CONTENT

## **Headline**

Title, effective date, supersedes notice, if any

## **Purpose**

Concise statement of rationale for the policy—Why?

## **Policy statement**

The “meat” of your document

## **Applicability**

Exactly whom the policy applies to (and consequences of non-compliance)

## **Definitions**

Any definitions of terms used, as needed for understanding

## **Contact person**

The specific person who helps with questions

## **Authority**

The highest officer authorizing the policy (+ next review date)

## **Related policies**

Info about any related policies, procedures, forms, etc.

# 6

## TRAITS

Easy to understand

Concise

Complete

Well-designed

Consistent

Up-to-date

# STRATEGY #1

Introduce the key points

The opening paragraphs should reference (explicitly or implicitly):

- ✓ **Purpose** of the policy
- ✓ **Values** the policy is based on
- ✓ **Sources** of authority and rights



Easy to understand

# Introduce the key points

**Purpose** of the policy

**Values** the policy is based on

**Sources** of authority and rights

The latest science shows potential extinction for many of California's native salmon and steelhead species over the next decades, if present trends continue. State agencies have committed to a suite of actions to improve survival rates, including restoring habitat, improving stream flow, and reintroducing species to ideal habitat.

# Introduce the key points

**Purpose** of the policy

**Values** the policy is based on

**Sources** of authority and rights

Citing extreme peril posed by wildfire risk, Governor Newsom issued an Emergency Proclamation on March 22, 2019, directing us to immediately implement projects to protect lives and property. To ensure necessary work can get underway immediately, the proclamation suspends certain requirements and regulations.

# Introduce the key points

**Purpose** of the policy

**Values** the policy is based on

**Sources** of authority and rights

## Professional Development and Training Policy

### Purpose:

The purpose of the Staff Development and Training Policy is to:

- enhance workforce development
- encourage staff participation in professional development opportunities
- institutionalize management support for staff development

Implementation of this policy should be done in coordination with the current Staff Performance Evaluation policy.

# STRATEGY #2

## Use plain language

- Focus on doers and actions
  - Use the active voice
- Use language that's:
  - common
  - specific—no wordiness or redundancies
  - measurable

who + what

Need a refresher?  
Visit Purdue OWL

Concise

## TELEWORK AFTER COVID

COVID-19 changed the face of the workforce and proved that modern technology has created a way for employees to work effectively from home. To improve employee morale and reduce pollution, traffic, and costs, employees that can meet deadlines and maintain communication via telephone and email will be allowed to telework 2.5 days per week, upon successful completion of a six-month probationary period.

This Policy will assist the Department in creating a formal telework program that is in conformity with both state and administrative law.

# TELEWORK POLICY

effective May 1, 2020

Governor Newsom has ordered all California agencies to implement a telework program.

Telework is a program that allows employees to work from home or a place outside of the office.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the telework program is to increase employee productivity. We believe that teleworking allows employees to have more flexibility in their work schedule. This will, hopefully, ease some of the stress and time restraints in balancing home and work life. Also, telework will eliminate travel time to and from work.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

All managers are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the telework agreement is beneficial to both employees and the Department
- Explaining the requirements of telework to their employees

# STRATEGY #3

## Address users separately

Separate content to address different users or roles. This ensures complete understanding.

**Bonus:** This allows users to access just the parts of the policy that impacts them (aka skim).



# Address users separately

## Responsibilities of Supervisors and Managers

You are required to take immediate and appropriate action to correct any discriminatory, harassing, or retaliatory conduct in the workplace. You must immediately report any complaint of this type to the EEO office and your manager.

Once you're aware that your employee has complained of discriminatory, harassing, or retaliatory conduct, you must protect that employee. Management may give you specific instructions for preventing further acts of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation.

## Responsibilities of Employees

...

# STRATEGY #4

Use headings, white space, and lists to direct your readers

- HEADINGS emotionally prepare readers for what they're about to read and try to understand
- WHITE SPACE (area with nothing in it) gives readers' eyes a break
- LISTS are easier to understand when each item has its own line



Well-designed

It is the policy of California Department of \_\_\_\_\_ to maintain a consistent and clear understanding of labor laws to its employees. Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, all covered employees are entitled to at least one-and-one-half times an employee's regular rate of pay after 40 hours of work has been completed in one work week. All approved overtime is at a matter of agreement between employer and employee and must follow proper overtime request and reporting procedures outlined in section two of this article.

- HEADINGS?
- WHITE SPACE?
- LISTS?

# OVERTIME POLICY

## PURPOSE

We strive to apply all labor laws to our employees fairly and consistently. This policy governs both management's and employees' rights and duties about overtime.

## LEGAL AUTHORITY

Under the Fair Labor Standards Act, all covered employees are entitled to at least 1.5 times their regular rate of pay after 40 hours of work in one work week.

## HOW IT WORKS

All overtime requests must:

- (1) be approved by your manager
- (2) follow the process outlined in the

OVERTIME REQUEST AND REPORTING  
PROCEDURE

# STRATEGY #5

Use terms consistently throughout your document

Readers want to fully understand what they're reading; don't make them assume anything

What you might feel is redundant and boring may be repetitive, but is clear for your reader



Consistent

# STAFF USE OF PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

It is our top priority to do everything we can to slow the spread of COVID-19 and ensure we are working in the safest environment possible. Our primary goals are (1) preventing the virus from getting in our facilities in the first place, and (2) preventing it from being spread among us.

Along with being screened prior to entering, we require the use of facial coverings to get into any of our facilities. Following Center for Disease Control guidance, appropriate masks include surgical masks and Respirator N95 masks for all health care workers. If you arrive and don't have the appropriate equipment, and if there is sufficient supply, we will give you a PPE.

# PUT IT ALL TOGETHER



Examine a CDCR policy

Easy to  
understand

Concise

Complete

Well-designed

Consistent

Up-to-date

## ARTICLE 2 — USE OF FORCE

*Revised January 12, 2016*

### **51020.1 Policy**

It is the policy of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation's (CDCR), Division of Adult Institutions (DAI), to accomplish custodial and correctional functions with minimal reliance on the use of force. Employees may use reasonable force as required in the performance of their duties, but shall not use unnecessary or excessive force. Staff may, at any point, determine the situation can be resolved without the use of force and terminate the use of force process.

This policy, in conjunction with related procedures and training, defines staff responsibilities and requirements concerning the use of force.

This policy will assist staff in identifying when and how much force is appropriate under different circumstances, ensure that supervision, monitoring, and evaluation of the use of force is consistent with procedures and training, and ensure the investigation of possible unnecessary or excessive use of force. Staff found culpable of violations of the Use of Force Policy will be subject to disciplinary (preventive, corrective, or adverse action) procedures.

### **51020.2 Purpose**

The purpose of this Article is to outline DAI's procedures pertaining to the use of force, as set forth in CCR, Title 15, Section 3268.

### **51020.3 Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of all employees to understand and comply with the Use of Force policy, related procedures, ongoing training, and applicable law.

It is the responsibility of each Institution Head:

- To ensure that all employees receive appropriate training annually and understand the Use of Force policy and procedures, including both the application of force and subsequent reporting and documentation requirements.
- To record and track all training and discipline related to the use of force.

# TIME TO WRITE!

Using the guidelines we've discussed...

Start writing a policy

~or~

Edit a policy you've already started working on

**1** You've got **50 minutes** to write  
(in an MS Word document)

**2** When your time is up, email me your draft:  
*[allison.horak@pppldev.com](mailto:allison.horak@pppldev.com)*

**3** I'll choose a few to share with the group

# **PROCEDURES**

7

# 7

Be complete

Be clear and  
correct

Be  
unambiguous

Use warnings

Use the  
imperative voice

Organize using  
steps

Test-drive your  
procedure



Be  
complete

It's better to assume too little knowledge, experience, and familiarity with your subject matter on the part of the reader than to assume too much.

**No one has ever complained that a procedure was too easy to follow.**

It's a good idea to state in your introduction:

1. who the intended audience is
2. what knowledge you assume on their part

# SCHEDULING PROCEDURE

This procedure for a psych tech assumes access to and basic knowledge of the ON-DEMAND program and MS Excel.

**Step 1:** Use the scheduling template (linked here) every Friday to record your notes.

**Step 2:** Use ON-DEMAND to gather each patient's (1) name, (2) id #, (3) IDTT due date, and (4) suicide risk evaluation due date. Export that information into an Excel spreadsheet.

**Step 3:** Transfer this information onto the scheduling template. (The template has corresponding sections for those four pieces of information.)

**Step 4:** Add or remove patients from the template based on the daily morning movement report.

**Step 5:** Add your observations about the patients' affect and behavior to the Comments section of the template.

**Step 6:** Email the template to the clinician on duty.

Be clear and  
correct

Few things are as frustrating to readers as instructions they can't understand or that contain errors.

Keep your language:

- ✓ **plain**
- ✓ **conversational**
- ✓ **human**

Reading a procedure should be like having a patient tutor at your side, helping you step by step to perform the tasks described.

If you cannot attend a mandatory training you are signed up for, you must submit a written request to re-register for the training, along with a detailed explanation why you cannot attend. It is also your responsibility to find out from headquarters when the training is being offered again and re-register.

If you have to leave in the middle of a training, your supervisor shall be notified and new date picked for a make-up session. You can call headquarters to get that information. If you fail to sign up in the allotted time for the designated training, you shall email headquarters immediately to check on stand-by status and notify your supervisor of the issue. Once you have secured a date, see Step 4.

<b>If you...</b>	<b>you must...</b>	<b>and then...</b>
are unable to attend the day of the training	submit a written request to reschedule and explain why you can't attend	ask headquarters about make-up dates and times
have to leave during the training for any reason	notify your supervisor to reschedule	ask headquarters about make-up dates and times
miss the training registration deadline	(1) email headquarters to check on stand-by status, and (2) notify your supervisor	wait to find out if you made it off the stand-by list or that you're enrolled in a future class

# TABLES MAKE COMPLICATED STEPS EASIER TO UNDERSTAND

<b>If you...</b>	<b>you must...</b>	<b>and then...</b>
are unable to attend the day of the training	submit a written request to reschedule and explain why you can't attend	ask headquarters about make-up dates and times
have to leave during the training for any reason	notify your supervisor to reschedule	ask headquarters about make-up dates and times
miss the training registration deadline	(1) email headquarters to check on stand-by status, and (2) notify your supervisor	wait to find out if you made it off the stand-by list or that you're enrolled in a future class

# Consider a little humor

Although most of the text should be written in this straightforward imperative mode, an occasional pun, joke, or other "human" interruption can break the monotony of dull instructional prose and help wake up sleepy readers. Here's an example from a manual on using PCs:

We need just 10 of the 255 characters in IBM's extended set. Thus, we ought to be able to pack some 25.5 times more numeric information into a byte than is permitted by the ASCII coding scheme. That seems reasonable, doesn't it?

In fact, this is exactly what is done in practice. I'm not going to put a glaze in your eyes by explaining the arcane coding schemes used—I'd have to look them up anyway!\*

Although the author could possibly have explained this topic more concisely, and some readers might feel he's going off on a tangent, we like this copy; it warms up the piece, because the personality of the author comes through in the prose. While not appropriate for every technical document, an occasional shift into this more personal, more human tone can liven up an otherwise dull document for your readers.



Be  
unambiguous

It's better to be repetitious and perfectly clear than brief and possibly unclear.

While it's important to make your procedure as concise as possible, it's even *more important* to give instructions that the reader can **follow with confidence**.

**→ Write not only to be understood, but also so you *cannot* be *misunderstood*.**

# IS THIS UNAMBIGUOUS?

To apply for a REAL ID, Californians must visit a DMV office and bring the following documents:

- One proof of **identity**\* – original or certified (examples: valid passport, birth certificate)

\*Legal name change document(s) if name on proof of identity is different from the name on the other documents

- One proof of **Social Security number**
- Two proofs of **California residency** – paper copies (examples: utility bill, bank statement)

Visit [REALID.dmv.ca.gov](https://REALID.dmv.ca.gov) for a complete list of acceptable documents and a helpful quiz to determine if you need a REAL ID.



Use  
warnings

You must tell your readers what to do, but you must also take responsibility for telling your readers what **not** to do.

Warnings should be highlighted in some way, like **bold**, large typeface, or putting a  box around them—people always read text in boxes.

## Beware

Boxed warnings should be used sparingly and reserved for only the most important warnings. Overusing the box (or any other graphic technique) makes it less effective.

# HOW TO TRANSFER AN EMPLOYEE BETWEEN INSTITUTIONS

When an employee transfers institutions, we want to avoid duplicating their profile, losing their information, or overwriting their profile. This ensures the employee's earned leave balances are intact when they transfer.

The **sending institution** will:

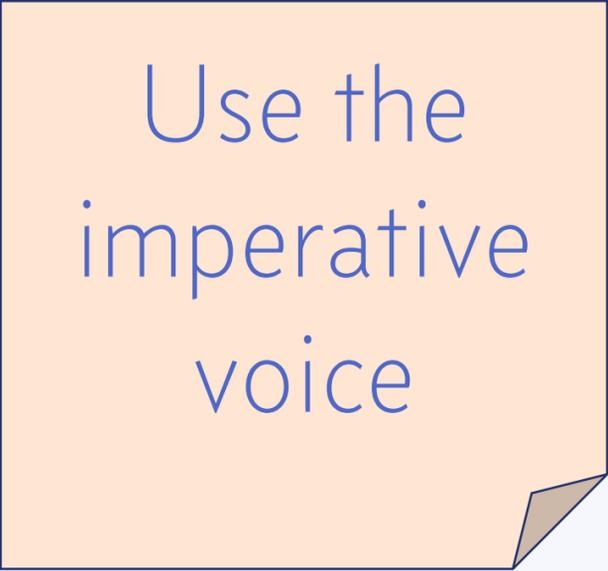
- share the employee with the receiving institution under the Institution tab
- end-date the employee's current assignment
- make any changes necessary to the employee's schedule

The **receiving institution** will:

- assign the employee to a post in their institution
- keep the employee shared (up to two weeks after their transfer date) until the sending institution has finished making any changes to the employee's schedule.
- "unshare" the employee with the sending institution by unselecting the sending institution under the Institution tab

## **What Not to Do:**

Do *not* create a new profile for the employee (at the receiving institution).



Use the  
imperative  
voice

When writing in the imperative, begin with an action verb instructing the reader to perform a certain task:

attach | begin | check

examine | find | install

make sure | remove | test

Effective instructions tell the reader what to do in the simplest, most direct language possible.

Organize  
using steps

Number your steps

- It's easier to follow
- It's easier for users to reference if they need help

**"I got stuck  
on Step 3!"**

Reminder: Begin each step with an action verb (imperative voice)

Help readers skim by *avoiding* putting introductory material before your action verb

List **only one action** per step

- Begin each step with an action verb
- Help readers skim by avoiding putting introductory material before your action verb
- List only one action per step

**Step 1:** If you're going to lift your car with the manufacturer-supplied car jack, check the owner's manual for the proper placement of the jack underneath the vehicle, which is probably on the "pinch weld" located between the front and rear tires. If you place the jack incorrectly you can damage the vehicle, or worse, it will slide off the jack, which is (as discussed) dangerous.

**Step 2:** Once you have the jack placed properly, with the vehicle on the flat ground and at least one wheel chocked, you're ready to lift the car. If you're using a scissor jack, insert the rod, or place the wrench over the knob and begin to crank to the right. It should slowly rise and engage with the vehicle, which will add some resistance. Keep going. At first the car will rise up on its suspension, however, it will eventually top out and the tire will come off the ground.

- Begin each step with an action verb
- Help readers skim by avoiding putting introductory material before your action verb
- List only one action per step

Park the car on level ground on a paved surface, if possible. If you have to park on an incline, park close to the curb and turn the wheels inward.

Block the downside wheels with wheel wedges, wood blocks, or bricks to prevent the wheels from accidentally rolling.

Put the car in park and engage the emergency brake. If the car is a manual transmission, put it in first gear, still engaging the parking brake.



Test drive  
your  
procedure

This means giving a few typical users your first draft and getting their reactions.

Be specific about what you want them to look for. Give them permission to point out *anything* they feel might be unclear.

**Feedback at this stage is an invaluable gift.**

Seek it out!

## **Service of Court Filings on the CDI**

We have temporarily modified our service procedures in response to COVID-19. To ensure the safety of the public and our employees, we will accept service of summons and complaints, writ petitions, and subpoenas by email.

Service of summons and complaint, writ petition, and subpoena must be directed to *CustodianofRecords@insurance.ca.gov*. For service of summons and complaints and writ petitions, please include two copies of the notice and acknowledgement of receipt. Service is deemed effective when we sign and email the notice and acknowledgement of receipt forms back to you. For service of subpoenas, service is deemed effective when we send an email confirming receipt of the subpoena.

## Service of Court Filings

In response to COVID-19, we've temporarily changed our service policy. Until further notice, we will accept service of these documents **by email**:

- summons and complaint
- writ petition
- subpoena

You must email your documents to *CustodianofRecords@insurance.ca.gov*.

<b>If you're serving...</b>	<b>you must submit...</b>	<b>and service is complete when...</b>
summons and complaint	2 copies of the notice and acknowledgement of receipt	we sign and email them back to you
writ petition	2 copies of the notice and acknowledgement of receipt	we sign and email it back to you
subpoena	only the subpoena	we send you an email confirmation of receipt

# FOR LONG PROCEDURES...

Number sections in outline form using a hierarchical system.

## Why?

This clumps categories of information together and makes updating the document easy, less time-consuming, and cheap.

MS Word features makes this easy:

1. Styles (Home tab)
2. Table of contents (References tab)

# TIME TO WRITE!

Using the guidelines we've discussed...

1. Start writing a procedure that supports your policy

~or~

2. Edit a procedure you've already started working on

**1** You've got **45 minutes** to write

**2** When your time is up, email me your draft:  
*[allison.horak@pppldev.com](mailto:allison.horak@pppldev.com)*

**3** I'll choose a few to share with the group

# COURSE EVAL

Course Title: \*

Writing Policies and Procedures

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Course Date: \*

January 5-6, 2021

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Instructor Name: \*

Allison Horak

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