



GP 01

Establishment and Maintenance of Policies

Classification:	Governance
Responsible Authority:	Board of Directors/Executive Director
Author:	Martin Lee
Approval Authority:	Board of Directors
Date First Approved:	2017-03-07
Date Last Reviewed:	2017-03-07
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PURPOSE

In order to better establish consistency, accountability, and strategic direction, the ACO and Board of Directors, will establish and maintain a set of policies, outlining the various levels of heirarchical controls (policies, guidelines, Standard Operating Proceedures, and Bylaws), and assigning responsibilities therein.

These are of particular importance for long-term and short-term direction, and allow all parties in ACO, participants, volunteers, staff and board members to understand their roles, administrative tasks, and duties.

Establishment of these documents is key, as well as a paper trail to establish records of changes, and regular review dates. All of these documents are 'living' documents, meaning that while they are applied at any given time, they are subject to review and approval by appropriate people/groups of people.

SCOPE

Policies, Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines apply generally to all members of the ACO, including Directors, Employees, Volunteers and Participants. In general, the administration of them is handled by the Executive Director or the Board.

DEFINITIONS

This includes an explanation of terms and abbreviations used within the policy and procedure.

Word/Term	Definition
Board	A group of individuals established at the ACO Annual General Meeting who are legally bound with the governance of the ACO.
Bylaw	A rule or regulation which has been established and approved by a motion at the ACO Annual General Meeting.
Director	Means a member of the Board.
Employee	A paid employee of ACO.
Executive Director	The staff member of the ACO who is authorized with daily operational



management of the ACO. Also known as the ED.

Guideline	A guideline is a statement by which to determine a course of action for Directors, the Executive Director, Employees, Members and Participant. A guideline aims to streamline particular processes according to a set routine or sound practice. By definition, following a guideline is never mandatory. Guidelines are not binding and are not enforced.
Member	Means a person, firm, corporation or other organization who is admitted to membership in the corporation pursuant to the by-laws.
Participant	Any individual who is receiving a service, participating in a service, or attending a service by the ACO.
Policy	A policy is a statement of intent, and is implemented as a procedure or protocol. It is meant to be a living document intended to establish a general direction or intent for the ACO.
Standard Operating Procedure	A standard operating procedure, or SOP, is a set of step-by-step instructions compiled by the ACO to help a member, participant, employee, volunteer or director carry out routine operations. SOPs aim to achieve efficiency, quality output and uniformity of performance, while reducing miscommunication and failure to comply to applicable regulations.
Volunteer	An unpaid person who is working for the ACO under the guidance of the Volunteer Coordinator.

POLICY

1. ACO policies, guidelines and standard operating procedures exist to ensure that the ACO's processes and practices align with the ACO's mission, values, strategic plan, bylaws and with legislative requirements
2. ACO recognizes that the focus of Board responsibilities should be the governance of the organization and that the day to day administration of the organization is the responsibility of the Executive Director.
3. To that effect, ACO has established a hierarchy of policies to enable the Board to establish high level direction and guidance for ACO to fulfill its mission and achieve its strategic plan while enabling the Executive Director to establish administrative policies and Standard Operating Procedures required to operationalize Governance Policies or perform the day to day administration of the organization.
4. There are three level of policies, each of which having precedence over the next:
 - 4.1. Governance Policies** provide high level direction and guidance, establish key principles and responsibilities, set fundamental requirement and allocate responsibilities. Policies are approved by the Board of Directors and have ACO-wide application.
 - 4.2. Administrative Policies** operationalize legislative requirements, bylaws and governance policies. They provide direction and establish responsibilities at a more specific level than



Governance Policies. As such, they cover matters that are the responsibility of the Executive Director and the management team. Administrative Policies are approved by the Executive Director and the board executive and have ACO-wide application.

4.3. Standard Operating Procedures establish a mechanism by which a specific task is conducted – from administrative through to practical. By following the steps in the standard operating procedure, the ‘correct’ outcome should be obtained. Standard Operating Procedures are approved by the Executive Director.

5. ACO policies should follow the guidelines to writing policies and the policy template attached in Annex to this policy.
6. ACO policies should contain the following sections:
 - 6.1. Purpose**
 - 6.2. Scope**
 - 6.3. Definitions**
 - 6.4. Policy: applicable policy statements**
 - 6.5. Procedures**
 - 6.6. Supporting Documentations**
 - 6.7. Related Policies**
 - 6.8. Related Material**
7. Policies will have in-built review dates (generally 1-year for a new policy and 5 years for an established policy) after which they should be reviewed and re-approved.

PROCEDURE

Operationally, the establishment of a Governance Policy, an Administrative Policy and Standard Operating Procedure follows similar processes. Board approval is only required for Governance Policies. Administrative Policies and Standard Operating Procedures may be approved at the Chair or Executive Director as appropriate.

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
1. Policies - New	
1.1 Identification of Need	Board, Directors,
1.1.1 Once a gap is noticed in policy, attention to the gap should be referred to the immediate supervisor.	Employee, Executive Director
1.1.2 Policy proposals will be referred to the Executive Director or to the Policy Committee for review and approval in accordance with this Policy.	
1.1.3 The Executive Director may identify gaps in Administrative Policies and Standard Operating Procedures without referring them to the Policy Committee pursuant to the existence of an applicable Governance Policy.	
1.2 Direction given to establish a new policy	Board, Chair of Policy Committee, Executive
1.2.1 If the Policy Committee establishes that a	



<p>Governance Policy is required it will add the policy to its workplan and seek Board approval of the revised workplan when appropriate.</p>	<p>Director, Policy Committee</p>
<p>1.2.2 The Policy Committee may initiate the development of a new Governance Policy prior to the approval of its revised workplan if directed by the Chair of the Committee.</p>	
<p>1.2.3 If the Policy Committee establishes that an Administrative Policy or a Standard Operating Procedure is required, it will refer the matter to the Executive Director.</p>	
<p>1.2.4 The Executive Director may initiate the development of an Administrative Policy or a Standard Operating Procedure pursuant to 1.1.2 above.</p>	
<p>1.2.5 From time to time, the Executive Director may refer the preparation of an Administrative Policy to the Policy Committee.</p>	
<p>1.3 Review of relevant literature, similar policies at other institutions and best practices (This review should be documented).</p>	<p>Employee, Executive Director, Policy Committee or its Sub-Committee</p>
<p>1.4 From time-to-time, the Committee may decide to consult content experts, identified from the list of resources maintained by the Policy Committee, to seek their input on the proposed policy.</p>	<p>Employee, Executive Director, Policy Committee or its Sub-Committee</p>
<p>1.5 Draft policy using ACO Policy Template</p>	<p>Executive Director, Employee, Policy Committee or its Sub-Committee</p>
<p>1.6 Present draft of new policy to relevant Board Committees, Members, Participants for consultation and review if appropriate.</p>	<p>Executive Director, Chair of Policy Committee</p>
<p>1.7 Present new Governance Policies to the appropriate level of approval Board/Chair (Co-Chair)/Executive Director and seek approval.</p>	<p>Executive Director, Chair of Policy Committee</p>
<p>1.8 Post new approved policy on the website and policy directory.</p>	<p>Executive Director</p>
<p>1.9 Add to policy log.</p>	<p>Chair of Policy Committee</p>
<p>1.10 Inform the ACO Community of the new policy.</p>	<p>Board, Executive Director</p>



2 Policies - Revised

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| 2.1 | Review of relevant literature, similar policies at other institutions and best practices (This review should be documented). | Employee, Executive Director, Policy Committee or its Sub-Committee |
| 2.2 | From time-to-time, the Committee may decide to consult content experts, identified from the list of resources maintained by the Policy Committee, to seek their input on the proposed changes to a policy. | Employee, Executive Director, Policy Committee or its Sub-Committee |
| 2.3 | Present draft of new policy to relevant Board Committees, Members, Participants for consultation and review if appropriate. | Executive Director, Chair of Policy Committee |
| 2.4 | Present new Governance Policies to the appropriate level of approval Board/Chair (Co-Chair)/Executive Director and seek approval. | Executive Director, Chair of Policy Committee |
| 2.5 | Post new approved policy on the website and the policy directory. | Executive Director |
| 2.6 | Update and document in policy log. | Chair of Policy Committee |
| 2.7 | Inform ACO Community of the revised policy, where changes of a significant nature have occurred. | Board, Executive Director |

3 Tracking of Mandatory Review of Policies

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| 3.1 | Six months prior to the mandatory review date of a policy, the Chair of the Policy Committee advises the Policy Committee or the Executive Director where applicable of upcoming policy due for review and tracks replies to ensure policy is reviewed and documented in policy log. | Chair of Policy Committee |
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4. Policy no longer required

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| 4.1 | Provide the concerned parties the reasons for deleting the policy and indicate any actions required as a result of deleting the policy. | Chair or Policy Committee, Executive Director |
| 4.2 | Bring forward a recommendation to the appropriate level of approval Board/Chair (Co-Chair)/Executive Director to delete the policy. | Chair or Policy Committee, Executive Director |
| 4.3 | Advise concerned parties of approval to remove policy from website and policy directory. | Executive Director |



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|-----|--|---------------------------|
| 4.4 | Remove the policy from the website and the policy directory. | Executive Director |
| 4.5 | Update and document in policy log. | Chair of Policy Committee |
| 4.6 | Communicate to the ACO Community. | Board, Executive Director |

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

ACO Bylaws: http://aco-cso.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Policy_Bylaws.pdf

RELATED POLICIES

At the time of authorship, there were no referencable policies.

RELATED MATERIALS

ACO Bylaws: http://aco-cso.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Policy_Bylaws.pdf

ACO Mission Statement: To provide support, prevention, education and outreach services from an integrated anti-racism anti-oppression social justice framework that promotes the holistic wellbeing of those living with, affected by, impacted by and at risk of HIV/AIDS in Ottawa.

ACO Vision: A world in which the human rights and dignity of people living with, affected by, impacted by and at risk of HIV/AIDS, are respected and realized; and where societal attitudes, laws and policies facilitate HIV prevention efforts, holistic care, treatment and support.



AD 01: Appendix 1 – Guidelines to Writing Policies

These guidelines are meant to help you write policies that are easy to use and understand.

1. Write a policy in a clear, concise and simple language. This is not the time to impress with your command of language. Use everyday language that the reader will easily understand.
 - Use common words (e.g. use instead of utilize)
 - Use active voice, present tense
 - Avoid the use of jargon, unnecessary technical expression and fancy vocabulary
 - Write as you would speak, editing out informal words or phrases
 - Avoid the use of acronyms. If acronyms are needed, use the full title/term once before using the acronym
2. Keep the structure simple.
 - Use gender-neutral language - use their instead of he/she
 - Use short sentences (maximum 15 words)
 - Use short paragraphs (maximum 100 words)
 - Use numbering for easy referencing
 - Be consistent - repetition of familiar words increases comprehension
3. Be specific – Mean what you say and say what you mean.
 - If an action is mandatory, use must or will
 - If the action is recommended or optional, use may
 - Use negative words sparingly
4. A policy must be factual. Double check for accuracy.
5. Don't include information that will be quickly outdated, e.g. names of persons.
6. In writing policies:
 - Be as brief as possible. Lengthy or complex information should be included in an appendix
 - Use third person
7. In writing procedures:
 - Use one action verb per step
 - Start with a verb
 - Assign the action



AIDS Committee of Ottawa

Since 1985, ACO has worked to offer support, education and prevention services to the Ottawa Community.



Le comité du sida d'Ottawa

Depuis 1985, CSO a travaillé pour offrir des services de soutien, d'éducation et de prévention à la communauté d'Ottawa.

AD 01: Appendix 2 – ACO Policy Template



AB XX

[Title of Policy]

Classification:

Responsible Authority: [Position, Department]

Author: [Position, Department]

Approval Authority: Board of Directors

Date First Approved: YYYY-MM-DD (date of original policy)

Date Last Reviewed: YYYY-MM-DD (date last reviewed and approved by Board)

Mandatory Review Date: YYYY-MM-DD (5 years for existing policies & 1 year for new policies)

PURPOSE

A concise statement (one or two sentences) on why the policy/procedure exists and what it is designed to address. This statement should not contain background information or detailed explanations.

This section can also reference legislation, Ministry directives or guidelines, or collective agreements, etc. which provide a broad framework for which this policy operates and with which the policy needs to comply.

SCOPE

This states the people or groups of the ACO community to which the policy and procedure applies. For example: "This policy applies to all regular full time staff". If there are exceptions, it should be stated.

DEFINITIONS

This includes an explanation of terms and abbreviations used within the policy and procedure.

Word/Term	Definition
[Word]	[Definition]
[Word]	[Definition]

POLICY

A policy is *strategic*. It is a position statement which explains ACO's stand on a subject and how ACO intends to operate. A policy can range from a philosophy, standard or legislation to specific rules. It is designed to regulate organizational action and conduct by describing the rules of what will or will not be done. This should be brief and direct.



PROCEDURE

A procedure is *operational*. It is a set of critical steps to be followed to achieve the intent of the policy intent. It is the usual method of handling things. The steps, usually expressed as a list, are succinct, factual and to the point. It also states who is responsible for each step. Detailed descriptions and background information are not to be included in the procedure.

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
1. Heading	
1.1 Sub Heading (if needed)	
1.1.1 Step to be taken	Position responsible
1.1.2 Step to be taken	Position responsible
1.2 Second Sub Heading (if needed)	
1.2.1 Step to be taken	Position responsible
1.2.2 Step to be taken	Position responsible
 2. Heading	
2.1 Step to be taken	Position responsible
2.2 Step to be taken	Position responsible

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Forms that are generated by the procedure should be listed and included as an appendix.

Appendix 1 Name of Appendix

Appendix 2 Name of Appendix

RELATED POLICIES

Any other relevant ACO policies should be listed – for example, does this impact HR? Discipline policies? Volunteer Policies? Privacy Documents?

RELATED MATERIALS

Any other relevant documents, such as Ministry binding directives, legislation or collective agreements should be listed.



AB 12: APPENDIX 1

NAME OF APPENDIX

[Content]

Subsequent pages (if any), should have the Policy Number and Appendix Number in the left side of the header, for example, **AB 12: Appendix 1**, and page number in the right side of the header.