

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF

Official Policy, Forms and Practice

4-7 Page 1 of 4

Policy

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) Policy Manual shall be the primary staff tool covering legal requirements and agency mandates and shall be used as a reference for informed decision-making.

All new DCF policy or revisions to existing policy shall be approved in concept by the DCF Senior Administrators at the Senior Administrator Meeting (SAM) prior to moving forward with the first draft, unless otherwise authorized by the Commissioner.

The Policy Manual may be supplemented with official DCF forms and Practice Guides.

All official DCF policies, forms and Practice Guides shall be issued through the Policy Unit.

Proposing New or Revised Policy

Any Senior Administrator may propose a policy concept to SAM by notifying the designated Policy Unit lead, who shall work with the individual who is proposing the concept to get the concept added to the next SAM agenda.

Senior Administrators include:

- members of the Executive Team;
- Directors or other Division heads as identified by the Executive Team;
- Facility Superintendents; and
- Change Management leadership.

In addition:

- if the policy concept is in response to legislative changes at the state or federal level, it shall be presented to SAM by the Chief of Staff and the Agency Legal Director;
- if the policy concept originated with a Community of Practice (COP), the COP shall gain the approval of Change Management (CM) and CM leadership shall present the concept to SAM;
- if the policy concept originated with the CTKIND group, it shall be presented at SAM by the Policy Unit liaison to CTKIND;
- if the policy concept originated with a DCF facility staff member or committee, it shall be presented at SAM by the facility Superintendent; or
- if the policy concept has originated with any other DCF employee at any level, the concept shall be passed through the employee's chain of command, modified as appropriate, and presented to SAM by any SAM member.

The policy concept shall be discussed at SAM and, if approved, a Policy Sponsor shall be appointed by SAM and a tentative timeline shall be developed.

The Policy Unit designee shall ensure that this information is relayed to Change Management and the Policy Sponsor and, thereafter, track progress and provide legal advice and technical assistance as needed.

Note: The Commissioner, at her discretion, reserves the right to adjust the policy promulgation process on a case-by-case basis.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF

Official Policy, Forms and Practice

4-7 Page 2 of 4

Responsibilities of Change Management Change Management leadership shall designate the relevant Community(ies) of Practice that will be involved in developing the draft.

Responsibilities of the Policy Unit The Policy Unit shall be available to provide legal consultation, advice regarding the intersection of the proposed policy with existing policies and regulations and to provide technical assistance.

The Policy Unit shall maintain the Policy Manual, post all changes and updates to the DCF website and ensure that all policies are reviewed for potential revisions at least once every two years.

Responsibilities of the Policy Sponsor The Policy Sponsor shall be responsible for leading the development of the first draft with the identified COP(s). The Policy Sponsor shall also consult with the Administrative Support Committee (ASC) as described below.

In addition to the COP(s), the Policy Sponsor shall consult with:

- the Director of Clinical and Community Consultation and Support (for Trauma Group review);
- the Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs (for Racial Justice review);
- the Director of the Revenue Enhancement Division (for State IV-E plan implications);
- the Quality Improvement Council (QIC); and
- any other identified stakeholders.

Note: If there is disagreement regarding proposed edits, the Policy Sponsor and stakeholder shall discuss a compromise with the Administrative Support Committee.

Responsibilities of the ASC The Administrative Support Committee shall be responsible for tracking the progress of all policy in development and communicating with the Policy Sponsor as necessary. A request for an extension of time from the Policy Sponsor must be approved by the Commissioner.

The Administrative Support Committee shall include:

- the Director of the Academy for Workforce Development;
- an Office of Legal Affairs Policy Unit designee;
- the Director of Change Management; and
- a representative from the CTKIND project.

For non-substantive policy changes, the ASC, in its discretion and to promote efficiency, may adjust the promulgation process as needed on a case-by-case basis.

The First Draft

The first draft shall include:

- the policy;
- any related Best Practice Guidance or other materials cited in the text;
- any related forms (new or revised);
- the QIC's proposed quality assurance plan; and
- an implementation plan, which shall include a proposal for staff training.

The first draft shall be delivered to the Policy Unit with all outstanding issues resolved and carefully proofread and edited.

Upon delivery of the first draft from the Policy Sponsor, the Policy Unit designee shall edit and format the first draft as needed, send it to all Senior Administrators and ensure that it is included on an upcoming SAM agenda for *First Read*.

Best Practice Guides and Forms

The Policy Sponsor may also develop a Practice Guide, educational materials or similar documents, to expand on related practice, procedures or protocol.

New DCF forms must be related to the policy in development and shall be created or revised by the Policy Sponsor at the same time as the policy is developed.

Note: DCF forms may be updated at the discretion of the Policy Unit manager, will be assigned a form number corresponding to the new policy, and will be converted to fillable PDF's before being published on the web.

First Read

At First Read:

- the Policy Sponsor or designee shall provide SAM with a short presentation on the draft policy;
- SAM members shall ask preliminary questions and make preliminary comments;
- the QA and implementation plans shall be approved or adjusted; and
- a date for Second Read shall be set.

Second Read

Prior to Second Read, all SAM members shall provide comments to the Policy Unit designee, who will collate them and send them back to SAM.

At Second Read:

- all outstanding issues shall be resolved;
 - final edits shall be identified;
 - the final draft shall be approved; and
 - an effective date shall be set.
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OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF

Official Policy, Forms and Practice

4-7 Page 4 of 4

Final Approval and Promulgation

After approval at SAM, the Policy Unit designee shall make all final edits and forward to the ASC for finalization of implementation details.

The Policy Unit shall forward the final draft to the Commissioner for final approval.

The Policy Unit shall post all approved policies, practice guidance and forms on the DCF website and communicate any changes to the CTKIND team.

Updating Policy

The Policy Unit shall ensure that all policies are updated as needed. If a policy has not been reviewed for two years, the Policy Unit shall alert SAM that it requires review.
