



Policy Development Checklist

Aim: This checklist outlines the process that can be used to develop or review the content of any organisational policy. It includes information about why a policy is needed, research requirements and contents as well as practical considerations to support implementation.

Use this checklist whenever you develop or review a policy. Remember to include people with disability, families, carers, support workers and other stakeholders to ensure your policies and procedures are relevant to your organisation's expected culture and practices.

Tips

- It may be useful to consult with external people or organisations to seek expert advice on specific topics.
- It may be useful to develop a communication strategy that identifies everyone who needs to be aware and comply with the policy, and how this will be communicated to the organisation.
- Ensure staff members have been trained who must comply with the policy or monitor its implementation.
- If staff are not compliant with the policy, ask them why. This may need to be reviewed, or staff may need to be educated to understand why it is important and how it should be implemented.
- Ensure sufficient time is provided for staff, people with disability, their families and carers to comment on draft documents. Also provide alternative formats, when requested or the need for them has been identified.
- See the [National Standards for Disability Services toolkit](#) for useful templates of key policies and procedures around Standard 1, 4 and 6, supporting resources and a [policy template](#).

Reason for Policy Development or Review

- Scheduled review date to ensure continuous improvement.
- A gap/need has been identified.
- A serious or critical incident has occurred, requiring an urgent review.
- Policy needs to be aligned within the human rights framework and the National Standards for Disability Services.
- Policy needs updating due to changes in the operating environment which affect how the policy works, what it covers or who is responsible for implementation
- Policy needs updating due to changes in laws, regulations or government policy. The NDIS rules and the Quality and Safeguarding Framework require specific actions by organisations that must be included in organisational policies and procedures.
- Policy needs updating due to changes to funding or funding requirements.

Research and Analysis

- Other policies have been checked to ensure a new policy is required.
- Research has been undertaken to inform the development of the specific policy. For example researching the use of positive behaviour strategies in the development of a policy on reducing restrictive practices.
- Research has considered compliance requirements related to external regulations, legislation and policy.
- Staff, people with disability, their families and carers are engaged to provide advice based on life experience or staffing/service experiences.
- Best practice and relevant professional standards have been considered. For example you have had expert clinical input on policy regarding positive behaviour strategies.
- Policy is aligned with the organisation's strategic plan.

Practical Considerations

- The policy is written in plain English and can be made available in alternate formats upon request.
- Consider developing Easy Read versions and other alternative formats of your policies based on the communication needs of the people you support.
- The policy is developed taking into consideration the needs of stakeholders from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds (CALD).
- The policy has been developed and tested with staff that are responsible for implementing it to make sure it is practical.
- The policy has been distributed to those expected to implement it and follow up feedback will be sought to ensure the policy is understood and applied.
- Supporting documents, such as forms, checklists or guidelines that will assist staff to implement policy have been developed in consultation with relevant stakeholders and are in line with best practice and human rights.
- The provisions of this policy do not contradict any other organisational policies.
- Consideration has been given to the impact of the policy on current operational procedures, and whether it reflects the values of the organisation including human rights.
- The policy promotes continuous improvement, involvement of stakeholders and a culture that promotes safeguarding, person centred approaches and dignity of risk.

Administrative Information

- Policy includes the implementation date when the policy becomes active.
- Contact person - the position responsible for managing and reviewing the policy and answering questions about the policy and related procedures.
- Relevant legislation or other regulatory obligations.
- Related organisational policies/documents. For example: code of conduct, risk management plan, human resources policy, co-design policy or consultation procedures.
- Policy includes a list of stakeholders who were consulted in the development and/or review of the policy and supporting documents such as people with disability, families, advocacy organisations or support workers.
- Policy identifies what constitutes a breach of the policy and what the consequences are.
- Policy includes a review date – recommended every two years.

Purpose

- The objectives and principles of the policy are documented.
- The organisation's policy statement on the topic is included.

Scope

- The scope of the policy lists all staff positions with responsibility for implementing the policy.
- The position/s or team responsible for communicating the policy and monitoring the effectiveness of the policy.
- The position responsible for updating the policy.

Definitions

- Any key terms and definitions used in this policy are defined and described in the policy document. Definitions are consistent with relevant legal definitions.
- Key terms used in this policy are defined in the same way in any associated procedures and related policies.