

STATE OF ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES SENIOR AND DISABILITIES SERVICES POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL	SECTION: 1 Administration	Number: 1-2	Page: 1
	SUBJECT: POLICIES AND PROCEDURES DEVELOPMENT		
	APPROVED: /S/ Rebecca Hilgendorf, Director		DATE: 3/17/08

Purpose

To provide a method for communicating, and a readily accessible source of, information regarding management of internal agency operations and administration of SDS programs.

To standardize SDS Policies and Procedures format and content.

To delineate responsibilities for development and implementation of SDS Policies and Procedures.

Policy

Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) recognizes a need to establish policies and procedures (P&Ps) as a framework for the day-to-day management of internal agency operations and for the administration of SDS programs. This framework consists of a set of documents describing responsibilities and processes for performing operational and administrative duties. Because SDS values openness and transparency in government, all P&Ps are posted for public review on the State of Alaska website.

SDS program managers draft or monitor the development of P&Ps for their areas of responsibility, and serve on the SDS P&P Committee. SDS staff whose duties are part of an operational or administrative process are subject matter experts who serve as consultants, and when assigned, draft P&Ps which conform to a standard content and writing format to promote readability and comprehension. After a draft P&P has been written, the SDS Policies and Program Unit processes the P&P from that point to finalization.

When P&Ps integrate program beneficiary and provider responsibilities, SDS invites public participation in the development process which may include formation of a workgroup. The P&P Committee determines when a P&P is ready for posting in draft form for a 30 day public comment period. SDS considers all comments before finalization, and develops an implementation plan for each new or revised P&P.

Responsibilities

A. **SDS Staff** are responsible for:

1. initiating P&Ps or proposing P&P topics;
2. discussing the proposed P&P with his/her program manager;
3. drafting a P&P when assigned or approved to do so; and
4. serving as a subject matter expert when his/her duties are addressed by the P&P.

B. The **SDS Program Manager** is responsible for:

1. serving on the P&P Committee;
2. initiating, or discussing with staff, P&P proposals in subject areas encompassed by his/her position;
3. drafting the P&P or assigning development to a staff person;
4. reviewing and commenting on need for revisions during the various stages of the drafting process; and

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5. working with the P&P Unit to determine appropriate placement and numbering consistent with the P&P Manual contents.

C. The **Draft Writer** is responsible for:

1. drafting a P&P;
2. forwarding the draft and related documents to the P&P Unit;
3. working with the P&P Unit to clarify content; and
4. reviewing the revised P&P for accuracy.

D. The **P&P Unit** is responsible for:

1. processing the draft P&P;
2. sending the revised P&P to the program manager for review and comment;
3. sending the final draft P&P to the P&P Committee;
4. after P&P Committee approval, posting the draft for public comment;
5. revising the P&P to incorporate public recommendations approved by the P&P Committee;
6. finalizing the P&P by adding headers and numbering;
7. submitting the final P&P to the SDS Director for signature; and
8. compiling P&Ps in the SDS P&P Manual.

E. The **P&P Committee** is responsible for:

1. monitoring the progress of P&P development;
2. evaluating public comment regarding P&Ps;
3. recommending changes and/or additions to P&Ps;
4. reviewing the final draft P&P prepared by the P&P Unit;
5. approving submission of the P&P to the SDS Director for signature, and
6. developing an implementation plan for the P&P.

Procedures

A. P&P Subject Areas

1. SDS management processes which include, but are not limited to:
 - a. internal agency operations; and
 - b. expenditure of SDS annual budget funds.
2. SDS program administration processes which include, but are not limited to:
 - a. approval or denial of some benefit to an individual;
 - b. payment to providers of program services;
 - c. certification of providers of program services;
 - d. SDS forms; and
 - e. protective services for adults.

B. P&P Format

1. P&Ps contain the following sections:
 - a. Title
 - b. Purpose

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- c. Policy
- d. Authority (when indicated)
- e. Definitions (when necessary)
- f. Responsibilities
- g. Procedures
- h. Attachments (if cited in P&P content)

2. Except for the policy section, all information is presented in outline form using the following letter/number arrangement:

Section title (bolded, no letter or number)

- A. Capital letter
 - 1. Number
 - 2. Number
 - a. Small letter
 - b. Small letter
 - i. Small Roman numeral
 - ii. Small Roman numeral
- B. Capital letter

C. SDS P&P Process

- 1. Any SDS staff may initiate a P&P.
 - a. The initiator discusses need, scope, and proposed content with his/her program manager.
 - b. The program manager drafts or assigns someone to draft the P&P.
- 2. The draft writer
 - a. develops a document using the *Guidelines for Writing SDS Policies and Procedures* (Attachment A);
 - b. after completing the P&P, reviews content with the program manager; and
 - c. forwards the draft and related documents to the P&P Unit when the program manager approves.
- 3. The P&P Unit
 - a. processes the draft, taking any or all of the following steps:
 - i. editing or amending the draft,
 - ii. reformatting the draft,
 - iii. contacting subject matter experts or the draft writer to clarify points in the draft, and
 - iv. returning the document to the draft writer for additional development;
 - b. sends the processed draft to the program manager for review and comment;
 - c. revises the draft to incorporate any recommendations of the program manager;
 - d. sends the revised draft to the P&P Committee for review and comment;
 - e. further revises the draft to incorporate any recommendations of the P&P Committee;
 - f. posts the P&P on the State of Alaska website for public comment;
 - g. revises the draft to incorporate recommendations from the public, after evaluation and approval by the P&P committee;

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- h. finalizes the P&P adding headers and numbering; and
- i. sends the final P&P to the SDS Director.

4. The SDS Director signs and dates the P&P in the space provided in the P&P Header.

D. Public Participation.

- 1. The P&P Unit
 - a. posts the draft P&P on the State of Alaska website,
 - b. notifies the public by e-mail with an SDS e-alert, and
 - c. invites comment for a 30 day period.
- 2. P&P Workgroups.
 - i. SDS may form a workgroup to facilitate the development of a P&P.
 - ii. Participants will be reimbursed for travel, and lodging, and receive a per diem fee.

E. P&P Implementation.

- 1. The P&P Committee develops an implementation plan for each new or revised P&P.
- 2. The implementation plan identifies
 - a. all parties to be advised of the P&P content;
 - b. the method best suited for efficient distribution of the P&P; and
 - c. the training needs of those with responsibilities for procedures outlined in the P&P.

F. P&P Manual

- 1. SDS P&Ps are compiled in the SDS Policies and Procedures Manual (P&P Manual).
 - a. Only P&Ps with the SDS Director’s signature are placed in the P&P Manual.
 - b. P&Ps numbers follow the outline of the *SDS Policies and Procedures Manual Table of Contents* (Attachment B).
- 2. Effective dates.
 - a. Unless otherwise specified, the effective date is the date the P&P is signed by the SDS Director.
 - b. An effective date other than the date of approval is noted in the Effective Date cell of the alternate P&P Header.

Attachments

- 1. Attachment A: Guidelines for Writing SDS Policies and Procedures
- 2. Attachment B: SDS Policies and Procedures Manual Table of Contents

Guidelines for Writing SDS Policies and Procedures

General

1. For the purposes of writing for the SDS Policies and Procedures Manual, keep the following in mind:
 - a. a **policy** is a statement of the **SDS position** regarding a given subject, and
 - b. a **procedure** is a **step in the process of implementation** of an SDS policy.
2. To gauge the need for or the value of a particular P&P, consider its usefulness as a means to:
 - a. consistency in day-to-day operations,
 - b. continuity of services,
 - c. training employees on how to do their jobs,
 - d. promoting a self-directing workforce, and
 - e. creating transparency in SDS processes.

P&P Development

1. Differentiate between policies and procedures.
 - a. Policies address **what** is required and **why**, *but not how* it is accomplished.
 - b. Procedures address **who** does what **when** and **how**, *but not why* it is done.
2. Plan an approach to development.
 - a. Identify the probable users of the P&P under consideration.
 - b. Interview probable users to identify needed content and steps of processes, if necessary.
 - c. Diagram/create a flow chart of the steps in a process, and who is responsible, from start to finish.
 - d. Write a summary of the actions identified on the flow chart.
 - e. Draft a P&P based on the summarized actions, describing what the users do at each step.
3. Structure the P&P so that the reader can focus on the information needed to make a decision or to follow the process required to accomplish a task.
 - a. Use an outline format, rather than paragraphs: the outline and associated white space help the reader to see how the information is organized.
 - b. Use headings to introduce key points.
 - c. Sequence information in a logical, reading order to create a flow of understanding for each topic.
4. Write for readability.
 - a. Use simple, clear language to make the P&P easily followed by users and easily understood by new employees.
 - b. Use the active voice and the present tense to communicate that the P&P is a set of instructions; for example, *SDS sends a notice* rather than *A notice will be sent by SDS*.
 - c. Use the same references or terms consistently throughout the P&P to preclude possible reader uncertainty; for example, use the term *recipients* rather than referring also to *consumers* or *clients*.

P&P Content

1. Title.
 - a. Write to convey a sense of the subject of the P&P.
 - b. Make it short—keep in mind the limited space available for the subject in the P&P Header.

2. Purpose.
 - a. Summarize the objectives of writing or the rationale for the P&P.
 - b. As an aid to formulating purposes, consider these questions:
 - i. What operational issue or need is addressed by the policy?
 - ii. What administrative or regulatory process is addressed by the policy?
 - iii. Are these issues, needs or processes incorporated in objectives which provide reasons for the P&P?
3. Policy
 - a. Write a statement which expresses *the SDS position* on the subject under consideration.
 - i. Specify what SDS does to fulfill its responsibilities as an administrative agency.
 - ii. Articulate the principle underlying SDS actions related to the subject.
 - iii. Summarize what is to be done and why without indicating how it is done.
 - iv. Include information sufficient to form a framework for the actions set out in the procedures section.
 - b. As an aid to formulating policies, consider the following questions:
 - i. Is the SDS position, and what it is to accomplish, stated?
 - ii. Is the scope of the policy clear?
 - iii. Does the statement summarize policy only and not procedures?
 - iv. Is the statement consistent with the listed authorities?
4. Authority
 - a. Identify the source of or the basis for the SDS policy under consideration.
 - b. List related laws, regulations and policies.
5. Definitions. Include when
 - a. words would be unfamiliar to probable users of the P&P;
 - b. words refer to new, uncommon, or specialized usage; or
 - c. words have different meanings in different contexts.
6. Responsibilities
 - a. Write so that a user can readily identify every step of the process for which he/she is responsible.
 - b. Describe the steps of the process without going into detail about procedures.
 - c. Use titles and unit names rather than employee names.
7. Procedures
 - a. Write to inform the user *how to implement* the stated SDS policy.
 - i. Include all actions or steps necessary to complete a process and reach policy objectives.
 - ii. Present actions or steps in sequence, from start to finish.
 - iii. Describe actions or steps in detail sufficient for probable users to complete a process.
 - b. As an aid to formulating procedures, consider the following questions.
 - i. Do the procedures describe how to implement the stated policy?
 - ii. Are all the actions or steps necessary to carry out the policy included?
 - iii. Does the section include procedures only and not policy?
8. Attachments
 - a. Include forms, diagrams, reports, guidelines, etc., which are part of the P&P process.
 - b. All attachments which are included should be mentioned or discussed in the P&P.

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