

## University Policy Template Sections:

### **Policy Name**

Do not include “Policy” or “Policy on” in title.

### **Policy Number** *(optional)*

- Include an appropriate policy number used in naming policies. This line only includes numerals. Do not include “Policy Number...,” “Policy...,” or “Number...” in this line.
- If a policy number is used, check all other university policies and ensure a number is not repeated.

### **Responsible Office Name** *(required)*

The unit that issues and maintains the policy. The Responsible Office develops the policy and procedures and is accountable for accuracy of its subject matter, issuance, and timely review.

### **Applies To** *(required)*

Whoever is appropriate (any combination): Faculty, staff, students, student employees, graduate associates, unclassified staff, classified civil service staff, bargaining unit staff, volunteers, visitors, vendors, guests, principal investigators, affiliated entities, etc. When feasible “applies to” should indicate more specific applications such as “anyone operating university owned or operated vehicles.”

### **POLICY** *(required)*

States the requirement or provision that is placed on or extended to the university community. The policy statement should generally be very short, usually two to six sentences in paragraph format.

Answers the question: what are we doing?

Example:    Issued:     MM/DD/YYYY  
              Revised:  MM/DD/YYYY  
              Reviewed: MM/DD/YYYY  
              Edited:    MM/DD/YYYY

- The dates that appear under this section should be the most recent dates, including the issue date and the most recent revision, review, and edit date.
- In the case of an edit, the most recent revision date remains on the policy until it is subsequently revised. The most recent “edit” dates goes directly under the current revision date, or if there is a review date, under the current review date.
- The issue dates is always included in this section.
- Do not include multiple revision, edit, or review dates here – all dates appear in the History section.
- Do not include the name of a date (e.g. edit, revise, review) if the document has not yet been edited, revised, or reviewed.
- When a policy is revised, remove the most recent edit and review dates from this section, as they are included in the history and is no longer relevant to this revision.
- The revision and review dates for the policy and procedure are specific to each section, and should reflect the changes made to the specific section of the policy. For example – it is possible for the Policy section to be revised while the Procedure section is edited and vice versa. If there are separate dates for each section, both dates must be reflected in the History section.
- All other historical dates are found in the history section.

## **Purpose of the Policy** (*required*)

States the purpose or goal of the policy, what is driving the need for policy or why it must exist, reason for being, and/or what the policy is supposed to accomplish. Guides and determines present and future decisions and direction, and reflects and defines institutional values. Cites legal, regulatory, stewardship, or other requirements the policy aims to meet. Usually two to six sentences in paragraph format. Answers the question: why are we doing this?

## **Table of Contents (optional; suggested for documents 8-10 pages or longer)**

Formed by using table of contents function.

## **Definitions** (*optional*)

Defines terms that have *specialized* meaning in the policy; commonly understood words should not be included. Bold formatting is used the first time a defined word appears in the policy.

## **Policy Details** (*optional*)

Information that elaborates on the policy. States requirements, conditions, or restrictions that apply. This section expands on the “Policy” statement above. Describes what is required or expected of those to whom the policy applies. The steps that are required to implement the policy are covered in the Procedures section, not here.

- Exclusions (units, persons, and/or situations not covered or governed by the policy), if any, should be listed here.
- Exceptions (instances in which units, individuals, etc., may not fit the criteria for the policy and can apply for an exception to the application of the policy for those special circumstances that do not fit the criteria for the policy), if any, should be listed here with guidance on how to request such an exception. See Helpful Hints Writing Guide for more guidance and specific language.

## **PROCEDURE** (*required*)

Information for implementation, administration, and compliance in a consistent, efficient, and effective way. Outlines the processes, step by step, that need to be followed to comply with the policy. Outlines “how” to implement or follow the policy. Required actions are listed according to the tasks themselves. Contains similar information to the Responsibilities section which outlines required actions according to the office or job function. Procedures are *not* “guidelines,” but instead are requirements for how the policy is implemented or achieved.

- The dates that appear under this section should be the most recent dates, including the issue date and the most recent revision, review, and edit date.

Example: Issued: MM/DD/YYYY  
Revised: MM/DD/YYYY  
Reviewed: MM/DD/YYYY  
Edited: MM/DD/YYYY

- Do not include multiple revision, edit, or review dates here – all dates appear in the History section.
- Do not include the name of a date (e.g. edit, revise, review) if the document has not yet been edited, revised, or reviewed.
- When a policy is revised, remove the most recent edit date from this section, as it is included in the history and is no longer relevant to this revision.

- The revision and review dates for the policy and procedure are specific to each section, and should reflect the changes made to the specific section of the policy. For example – it is possible for the Policy section to be revised or reviewed while the Procedure section is edited and vice versa. If there are separate dates for each section, both dates must be reflected in the History section.

## **Responsibilities (required)**

Summarizes the responsibilities of university offices, positions, or individuals named in the policy. Similar to the Procedures section except that it presents responsibilities according to job function/office, while Procedures presents the responsibilities in chronological order according to task. The Responsibilities section is basically a restatement of every action outline in the policy and procedure, divided up according to who is responsible for it.

## **Resources (required for anything referred to in the policy)**

- Links to all forms, tools, and processes used to implement or required for compliance with the policy.
- Links to all federal, state, or local laws or regulations.
- Background material that is helpful for policy implementation.

## **Contacts (required)**

Lists topics and the corresponding contact information: office name (not an individual's name), telephone (including area code), e-mail, and URL.

## **History (required)**

List every issue, revision, edit, or review date. For policies with a long history, this section will likely have multiple revision, edit, and review dates – they should appear in chronological order. This section includes *all* dates, listed in chronological order. It differs from both the Policy and Procedure sections which only include the most recent issue, revision, edit, and review dates.

**Issued:** First release date of the policy.

**Revised:** Date of substantial content changes. Approval through UPP, evidenced by signoff by the OUCI policy and training director, Legal Affairs, and Responsible Office executive.

**Edited:** Date of style, format, or grammar changes and/or correction of error. No approval is needed through the UPP. *Correction of hyperlinks that do not work is not an edit and no date is recorded for this.*

**Reviewed:** Last date that the policy was reviewed and the content was confirmed to be current, i.e., no changes were made. No approval is needed through the UPP. OUCI policy director needs to be notified.

## **Template Formatting and Conventions:**

### **Outline format**

Policy documents must follow a standard outline format. All paragraphs must be lettered or numbered.

- I.
  - A.
    - 1.
    - 2.

- a.
- b.
  - i.
  - ii.

## **Ohio State Editorial Style Guide Use**

- “University” is lower case except as in The Ohio State University
- Position titles are lower case, e.g. dean, chair, vice president
- Department names are capitalized, e.g. College of Optometry
- Hyphens are used only as required: university-wide, state-owned
- http:// is deleted from web addresses except when needed for a direct link
- Website is one word

The Editorial Style Guide is located [osu.edu/brand/editorial.html](http://osu.edu/brand/editorial.html)

## **Font Style and Size**

Up to the unit; be careful about readability by older audiences and visually impaired.

## **Policy versus Procedure**

The “Policy” section is significantly different from the “Procedure” section. “Policy” states the requirement or provision that is placed on the university community and answers the questions *what* and/or *why*. “Procedure” states what steps need to be taken, and in what order, to meet the policy requirement. “Procedure” answers the questions *what, how, when* and/or *who*.

## **Edit, Revision, and Review**

- “Edits” are style, format, grammar changes and/or corrections or error (e.g., department name as a result of reorganization, other minor, non-substantive mistakes, etc.), and can be coordinated by the policy owner. Fixing a broken hyperlink is *not* an edit and does *not* require an edit date notation. Adding a website *is* an edit that *requires* an edit date notation.
- “Revisions” are substantive changes. Revisions must go through the university policy process, which minimally involves review and signoff by the OUCI Policy and Training Director, Legal Affairs designated attorney, and Responsible Office executive; and endorsement by the SMC and approval by the President’s Cabinet. Edits and Reviews do not go through the process.
- “Review” means the policy was reviewed and confirmed that the content was found to be current. The policy must be adapted to the template and errors can be corrected with the collaboration/agreement of the policy office. This happens minimally every five years.

## **Visual Aids, Graphics, Tables**

Generally, any exhibits or visual aids are meant as supplemental information and are not to be the primary means to relay significant information or policy requirements. Tables and other graphics can make complex information easier to understand but they can pose accessibility difficulties.

Complex tables are strongly discouraged. If they are required for understandability, they must be made accessible either by the Responsible Office or by an outside firm qualified to do so. OHR historically used [Appligent](#).