

It's Time to Think Policies

Creating policies can be overwhelming! Let us help you by providing some initial policy information that will get you started. We trust this resource will serve you in a practical way.

POLICY DEFINITION

A policy is an organization's official position on a certain subject. Church policies should be consistent with its mission and values and must be approved by the Church Board and noted in the Board Minutes. Policies differ from procedures in that a policy is a rule for your church to follow in order to achieve compliance, whereas a procedure is an instruction on how a policy is followed. It is usually a specific and detailed explanation of how the church wants something to be done.

Having policies is crucial both for the protection of the charity and for providing guidance to staff and volunteers about how the ministry wishes to conduct itself. Good policies also save time because they capture high-level decisions that allow organizations to delegate decision-making more effectively.

GETTING STARTED

Building a Policy Framework

It is helpful to build a framework for organizing your policies before you start to draft individual policies. To begin creating that framework, determine what policies apply to your church. Include the 'must have' policies suggested by the Canadian Council of Christian Charities noted below.

Policy Approval

Determine the approval and revision process. When a new or revised policy is presented to the Church Board and approved, it should be noted in the Board Minutes. The Board Minute number makes an excellent reference point back to the date of approval if it is included in every policy.

Creating the Policy

To protect your church, make sure decisions and actions align with your church and government standards. If applicable, Procedures may be included below the Policy. Please note that changes to procedures do not require Board approval.

Compiling your Policy Manual

All policies (past, present, and future) should be assembled in one file with a Table of Contents and notations of when it was adopted, amended, etc. There could also be a file for outdated or expired/cancelled policies.

'MUST HAVE' POLICIES

- Abuse Prevention
- Benevolent Fund
- Conflict of Interest
- Donor Directed Funds
- Employment Standards
- Ethics
- Fire Safety Code
- Health & Safety
- Human Rights
- Investment
- Lifestyle
- Privacy
- Whistleblower

POLICY EXAMPLE

Church Name

Policy Section: (i.e., Human Rights)

Policy Name: (i.e., Conflict Resolution)

Adopted: [Board Minute]

Approved by: [Board Name]

Revised: [Board Minute]

Approved by: [Board Name]

Expired: [Board Minute]

Approved by: [Board Name]

POLICY:

[add approved policy]

PROCEDURE:

[if applicable]

Please note that the sample templates are a general guideline to assist EOND Churches. The information does not constitute legal or other professional advice. Each church organization is different, so your internal policies should be customized for your setting.