Pol_014	Policy Development

This policy provides guidance in how the organisation is to create, implement and review operational policies, procedures and supporting documents.

Operational policies, procedures and supporting documents provide an essential framework for management of the organisation.

Record of policy development

Version	Date approved	Date for review
2020/2	September 2022	September 2024

Responsibilities and delegations

This policy applies to	Board of Directors, All Staff, Volunteers, Contractors
Policy approval	Quality & Risk Committee

Policy context - this policy relates to:

Standards	NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators
Legislation	National Disability Insurance Scheme Act
References	National Disability Services
Organisation policies	Operational Governance Quality Management
Forms, record keeping, other documents	Organisational Strategic Plan Policy Review Schedule Policy Register

Definitions

Policy	A statement of principles or position that is intended to guide or direct decision-making and operations that supports the achievement of the organisations vision and objectives.
Procedure	The act, method or manner for doing something, sequence of steps to follow
Supporting documents	Written information attached to provide back-up or depth to agreed up on or discussed items

Procedures

1. Key considerations

Alignment with organisational plans
All operational policies and procedures are developed to align with the organisation's strategic, operational, and (where relevant) business plans.

Use of plain English/plain language
All operational policies, procedures and supporting documents are to be written using plain English/plain language.

Copyright
Operational policies, procedures and supporting documents acknowledge any source material used in their development and contain no copyright material without express written consent of the copyright owner.

2. Identify policy need

The need for a policy may be identified by any employee, volunteer or governing body member arising from:

- changes to funding arrangement
- changes to the external environment which impacts on the organisation
- changes to government policy or legislation
- new or revised organisation strategic plan
- new or revised organisation activities, programs or practices
- new or revised risk management strategies
- a critical incident

3. Assign responsibilities

Responsibilities are assigned based on:

- a person's role and relationship to the policy issue
- a person's knowledge, skill and capacity to undertake the work
- external policy or legislated requirements

Responsibilities to be assigned include:

- Lead author/developer - undertake research and analysis, preparation of drafts, consultation and final writing of the documents
- Support author/developer – support research and analysis, preparation of drafts, consultation and final writing of the documents
- Draft reviewer – provide comment on draft documents

- Approvals and final endorsement – provide initial and final endorsement/sign off
- Distribution/communication – ensure final documents are communicated and implemented
- Record management – maintain records of policy development and filing

4. Research and analysis

Research on the policy topic is undertaken by the lead and/or support author/developer to inform the development of the policy.

Issues to consider include:

- Compliance with external regulations and legislation
- Best practice guidelines and standards
- Alignment with the organisation's strategic plan
- General content of the policy and what it is aiming to achieve
- How it may impact on current operational policies and procedures
- The individuals and/or groups that may be affected by the policy
- What accompanying procedures and supporting documents are required
- Policy implementation needs
- Matters to be addressed to support successful policy implementation

5. Draft policies and procedures

The lead author/developer and/or support author/developer is to prepare draft policies, procedures and supporting documents based on key considerations, findings from research and analysis undertaken, and the identified desired practice.

All policies and procedures are developed using the standard policy template and procedure template.

6. Consultation and feedback

Draft policies, procedures and supporting documents are made available to relevant and/or selected staff in order to obtain engagement and input.

Sufficient time is allowed for staff to provide comment on the draft documents, generally at least two weeks.

Feedback can be provided through:

- Written response
- Individual discussion
- Group discussion/consultation/workshop

All comments are to be assessed and acknowledged by the authors/developers.

It may be appropriate to provide feedback to staff that have made comments on how their comments have been considered in the revised/final document.

7. Preparation of final documents

Final policies, procedures and supporting documents are prepared by the lead author/developer, incorporating staff comments and suggestions and any new information that arises.

Where there has been significant change to the policy intent and content from the draft version, second consultation with staff is undertaken.

If changes to content have been less significant, the final documents are considered ready for review and endorsement by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Quality & Safety Leader.

8. Review and endorsement

All policies are to have final review by either the Board of Directors or the Quality & Risk Committee

All policies are to be endorsed by either the Board of Directors or the Quality & Risk Committee.

Procedures and supporting documents are to have final review and endorsement by the Quality & Risk Committee and are considered 'draft' until the related policy has been endorsed.

9. Implementation

Following policy, procedure and supporting document endorsement, the lead author/developer completes policy front page details, i.e. approval date, date of issue and date for review, and the related procedures and supporting documents are to be made final.

Final policies, procedures and supporting documents are to be:

- forwarded to all staff via email
- noted at the next staff meeting
- added to the Life Choice website (staff access portal)
- internal policy and procedure register

10. Review

All policies, procedures and supporting documents are subject to a cycle of review as identified on both the policy and in the Policy Review Schedule.

Policies may be reviewed outside these identified schedules as required.

Review of policies, procedures and supporting documents are led by the policy lead author/developer or other identified staff member and should consider the following:

- Whether the policy has achieved its purpose and outcomes
- Concerns or implementation issues identified throughout the life of the policy
- Current relevance to the organisation's operations (including other policies)
- Inclusion of new information
- Consistency with current external or other regulatory requirements

11. Record management

Electronic copies of all final policies, procedures and supporting documents are to be filed in the Policies and Procedures folder in the Shared Docs drive

Old or outdated policies and procedures are to be stored in the relevant archive folder

A hard copy of current operational policies, procedures and supporting documents is located at Reception in the Hervey Bay office.

End of document