

NDS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project

Policy Development Checklist

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.

This policy checklist is general in nature and is intended to be used as a guide and will need to be changed or adapted to suit each organisation and the supports and services they provide. It provides information and examples to consider, and handy tips and links to other resources to help making the development of your policy easier.

Tips for developing or changing a policy



Keep human rights, safeguarding and dignity of risk at the core of the values of your organisation and policy development.



Gain insights from people with disability and their networks, to ensure your policies and procedures are relevant to your organisation and the people receiving your supports.



Link in with other organisations or seek advice from experts where you do not have the internal resources in a subject area.



Communicate new policies or where there are changes to your policies. Ensure workers have all the information and training needed to effectively implement them.



Gather information from your workforce and ensure workers have avenues to provide feedback on how the policy works in practice.



Consider how you will monitor that your policy is being implemented, how you will monitor how effective it is and how you will foster a culture of improvement.



For information, resources and useful templates see [NDS Sector Readiness - Turning Policy into Practice](#).

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Reason for Policy Development Review

There are many reasons why a policy might need to be developed or reviewed:

- Scheduled review date** to ensure continuous improvement.
- A gap or need** has been identified.
- An incident** has occurred.
- Compliance issues** were identified through an internal or external audit.
- Changes in the NDIS Practice Standards**, NDIS Code of Conduct or other legislation (e.g. Workplace Health and Safety legislation).
- Changes in funding** or funding requirements.

Research and alignment

Researching and preparing for developing your policies could include:

- Researching the compliance information** available.
- Cross referencing best practice information** in the subject area – for example research guidelines from other sectors such as health, behaviour support, aged care or the corporate sector.
- Talking to people with disability and their networks** to provide information based on life experience.
- Engaging with workers** to consider how policies work in practice and what is happening in the delivery of services.
- Aligning the policy with the organisations values** and the strategic plan.
- Ensuring the policy and its expectations**, do not contradict or differ from any other organisational policy.

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- Consider the impact the policy will have on current operational procedures and resources.**
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Accessibility and availability

Making your policy accessible, available, user friendly and easy to implement. This means considering if:

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- Policies and guidelines are written in Plain English** and can be made available in other formats, as needed.
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- Easy read versions and other alternative formats** meet the communication needs of the people you support.
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- The needs of people from different cultures and languages** have been taken into account.
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- Workers have been involved in developing and testing the policy** to make sure it is practical.
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- Everyone who needs to implement the policy is provided with the policy** and there are checks in place to ensure policies are understood and implemented.
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- Feedback is sought from workers and people with disability** and used to continuously improve.
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- Supporting documents such as forms, checklist and guidelines** that will assist people to implement the policy, have been developed and adhere to human rights and the views of the people you support.
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- People with disability** have easy access to the policies and procedures which impact them when they need to access them.
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- Definitions are included** which have meaning for this policy or have a need for some interpretation.
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- Key terms used** in the policy are defined in the same way in any associated procedures and related policies.
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Other things to include:

Scope

State who the policy applies to and who is responsible for it.

- Include workers at all levels of your organisation** and others who have interactions with your organisation such as contract, volunteers and agency workers.

- Include what your organisation's expectations of all workers are** in relation to adhering to your policy and any associated procedures.

Purpose

- The objectives of the policy are documented.**

- The organisation's policy statement on the topic** is included which outlines your organisations commitment and alignment to the NDIS Practice Standards.

Values and principles

Identify the values and principles behind the policy. This could include:

- The values of the organisation and expectation of its workers:** For example, the organisation expects all workers to uphold the rights of people with disability and protect them from harm or disadvantage.

- The rights of people with disability:** Such as the right to be safe and free from harm, exploitation, abuse and neglect.

Also include:

- The relevant policies, procedures or other documents** that this policy relates to. This will make it easier to update relevant material when this policy is reviewed.
- The relevant legislation, policy, guidelines, or other material** that directly relates to the policy.
- Approval and review dates.**
- Who is responsible:** The title and/or the signature of the authorising person. The position/s or team responsible for communicating the policy, monitoring the effectiveness of the policy and updating the policy.



For information, resources and useful templates for developing and implementing your policies and guidelines, see [NDS Sector Readiness - Turning Policy into Practice](#).

Please note: This resource was developed in February 2023 by the NDS Quality and Safeguards Sector Readiness Project. The resource is general in nature and is provided as a guide only. NDS believes that the information contained in this publication is correct at the time of publishing, however, NDS reserves the right to vary any of this publication without further notice. The information provided in this publication should not be relied upon instead of other legal, medical, financial, or professional advice. Please always refer to online documents for the latest versions including the NDIS Practice Standards and advice to providers on the Code of Conduct.