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# EMPLOYMENT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Free for everyone

A list of the policies and procedures that define, regulate and inform how you and your organisation operate and information on how to develop a policy.

An organisation should have the policies in place to explain how they will deal with issues when they arise and to show that they operate in a fair and consistent way towards all employees.

Induction is a good way of making policies known to new employees, volunteers and trustees, but they also need to be systematically reinforced in a variety of contexts.

In our Tools & Resources section NCVO members can access [free example HR policies](#) to help you produce a clear set of employment documents for your organisation.

## Essential policies

All organisations regardless of size need, as a minimum, the following policies and procedures.

- Recruitment and selection process
- Equal opportunities policy
- Dignity at work including [Harassment and bullying](#) (CIPD factsheet)
- Discipline and grievance procedures including gross misconduct list: [Grievance and disciplinary](#) (factsheet from Acas)

- [Health and Safety](#) (where five or more staff are employed)
- Code of conduct - organisational 'rules' specific to your organisation
- Sickness absence including pay rates, reporting arrangements, monitoring absence, dealing with short/long term absence
- Annual leave including public holidays, carrying forward leave, requesting holiday, pro rata entitlement for part-time staff
- Rules regarding other types of absence including unauthorised absence
- Family policies including parental rights such as maternity, paternity, adoption, parental, dependent's leave [Maternity leave](#) (Acas)
- Statutory rules on retirement
- Statutory flexible working arrangements
- Pay and pensions information including the treatment of deductions from pay
- [Disclosure and Barring Service](#)

Some of the above will be directed and covered by the drafting of the statement of employment particulars (commonly known as the contract of employment) which is also an essential document.

## 'Good to have' policies

- Board responsibilities, conduct at board meetings, composition of the board and committees and the selection of new trustees, role profiles, confidentiality, speaking to the media, conflict of interest, etc
- Finance (internal financial procedures including money laundering under the Proceeds of Crime Act), investments and reserves
- Capability and performance policy
- Performance appraisal procedure and policy
- Training policy
- [Redundancy](#) (Acas)
- [Whistle-blowing](#)
- Diversity policy
- Non-statutory family domestic and compassionate leave rules
- Email and internet use including the use of social networking sites and blogs, mobile phones, charity phones
- [Data protection](#)
- Induction (contained within or separate to a Learning and Development policy)
- Claiming expenses
- Flexible working
- Bereavement leave
- Career breaks
- Other leave eg jury service, time off for public duties etc.

- Volunteering eg clarifying the purpose of volunteering in the organisation, expenses, etc.
- Child protection
- Risk management.

## How to develop a policy

To develop a policy you must:

- decide whether this is an area where the board or the executive committee should be determining policy
- arrange for a sub-group, member of staff or individual trustee to produce a draft policy for discussion
- discuss (including consultation with trustees, employees, volunteers and service users as applicable) and agree the final version
- in the case of board policy, ensure the entire board ratifies the document and builds in a date for review.

**Source:** adapted from [The Good Trustee Guide](#) (NCVO).

## What should an employment policy include?

A basic policy structure includes information about:

- **application:** describes to whom the policy or procedure applies
- **purpose:** sets out why the policy is in place and its aims (ie a safe workplace)
- **sanctions:** sets out how, for example, the misuse of alcohol or drug will be treated, ie misconduct or bad enough to be gross misconduct
- **advice:** outlines what support you will provide either directly or indirectly
- **review process:** includes the date of issue and date for review.

## Defining a good policy

A good policy has a definite purpose and is:

- easily understood and written in plain, jargon-free English
- linked to your strategy
- flexible and can adapt to change
- suited to the culture of the organisation
- developed through the involvement of employees and interested stakeholders
- communicated to all relevant people.

## Sample policies

It can be hard to write a policy from scratch. There are a number of websites which contain sample policies you can download. These are intended as guidance only.

- In our Tools & Resources section NCVO members can access [free example HR policies](#) to help you produce a clear set of employment documents for your organisation.
- [Policies and procedures](#) (LVSC)

[Acas](#), [CIPD](#) also provide guidance.

It can help to look at other organisations' policies and use them as a basis to develop your own. The most effective policies however are written in your style and language and are relevant to your organisation's needs.

Ensure that you know where to access up to date information and current entitlements/legislation. Umbrella organisations such as NCVO offer email updates on developments and upcoming changes.

## Implementing a policy

When implementing your employment policy you must:

- consult employees on the terms of the policy before it is finalised
- make sure employees understand what the policy means, how it applies to them and what will happen if they do not comply
- ensure employees sign a short form to show that they have seen and understood the policy; retain this document as evidence
- reinforce policies through training sessions/group discussions, with reminders that ALL employees are expected and required to adhere to policies and procedures
- train your managers to fairly and consistently carry out the rules in your policies
- ensure that policies are live documents, have a date set for their review – and to which you adhere.
- agree where policies will be kept and how they can be accessed by staff, trustees and volunteers. Methods can include paper copies in a folder or on an intranet, on notice boards etc.

**Source:** Published with permission from Cass Centre for Charity Effectiveness. This material is taken from [Tools for Success: doing the right things and doing them right](#)", published in October 2008. Download or buy your copy from [Cass Centre for Charity Effectiveness](#).

## Useful links

- [HR Policies](#) – which to consider and why/how to introduce them - CIPD

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