



Moving Public Transportation
Into the Future

Developing Policies and Procedures

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Why Do We Need Policies & Procedures?

- ◆ Without out them daily operations would be chaotic.
- ◆ Our riders would not understand how the system works.
- ◆ Our employees would have no guidance.
- ◆ Our financial loss would be great due to inefficiency, ineffectiveness and probable law suits.
- ◆ We would be out of business.





First steps

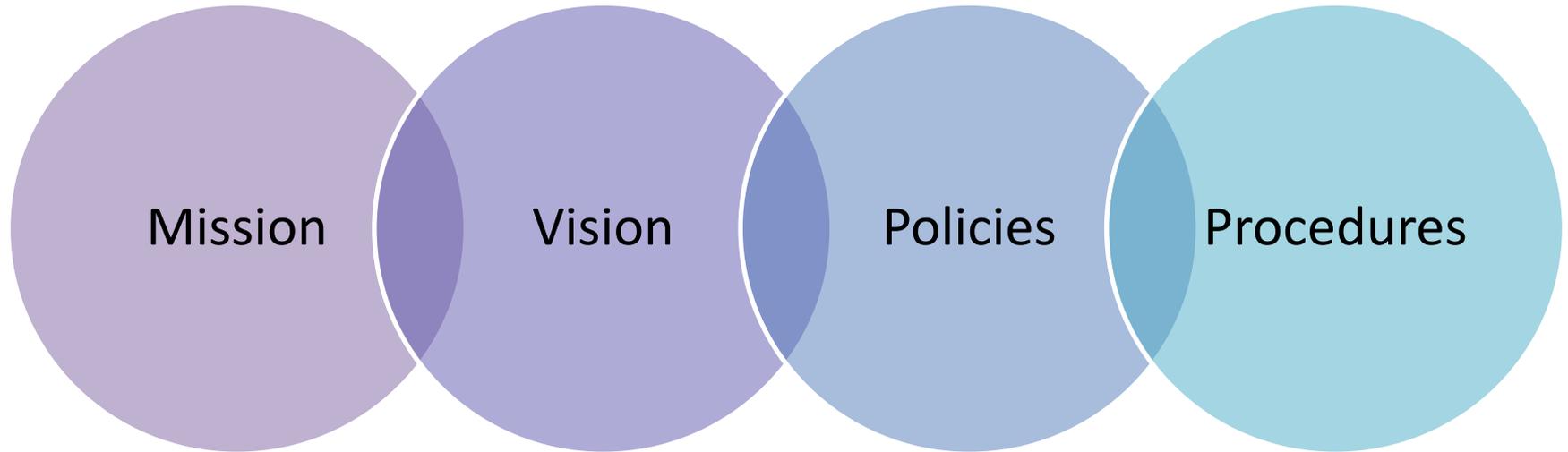
Why is our system here?

Who do we serve?

How do we plan to be successful?

What value do we bring to our community?

Components Needed



What we do
and for whom

Hope to
achieve

How we plan
to do it

Actions to
support policy

Components Needed

Mission –
Provide safe,
reliable
transportation
service for our
community

Vision – Employ
the highest
quality
employees with
the best
equipment

Policy – No
vehicle will be
placed in
revenue service
if deemed
unsafe

Procedure – All
operators will
conduct a pre-
trip inspection
prior to revenue
service





Mission Statement

The Rapid

Our mission is to create, offer, and continuously improve a flexible network of regional public transportation options and mobility solutions.



We at Metro Transit deliver environmentally sustainable transportation choices that link people, jobs and community conveniently, consistently and safely.

Mission Statement



Mission Statement (Actual)

The mission of Southwest Airlines is dedication to the highest quality of Customer Service delivered with a sense of warmth, friendliness, individual pride, and Company Spirit.

Vision Statement (Actual)

To become the world's most loved, most flown, and most profitable airline.





What are Policies?

- ◆ Policies are guidelines that regulate organizational action.
- ◆ They control the conduct of people and the activities of systems.
- ◆ It explains the organization's stand on a subject and why there's a rule about it. (somewhat)
- ◆ It tells how the organization intends to operate.



Fare Policy

Fare Payment Policy (for transit employees)

Passengers are responsible for payment of their fares. Exact cash fare, a ticket or a transfer is required. Drivers are not to provide change. If a passenger refuses to pay a fare, the driver should deny service to the passenger.



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- ◆ Who is impacted by this policy?
- ◆ Are there alternatives to this policy?
- ◆ Is this policy creating the need for additional policies?



Policies

There will always be some level of disagreement on policies from the reason for needing it to the way it's worded, implemented or enforced.

Is there a purpose to the policy or does it just seem like a good idea?



Policies

Are policies developed with exceptions?

Policy:

Under no circumstances will the driver enter someone's residence.

What if's should be discussed as part of the development process and incorporated in the policy and/or communication and training.



Ambiguity in Policies

“It is our intent to provide the safest transportation service in the industry.”

- ◆ Is this a policy statement? Vision Statement? Mission Statement?
- ◆ It influences the way employees do their jobs.
- ◆ But it is also ambiguous, not telling employees how to provide the best customer service.
- ◆ When, where, and how much ambiguity depends on the subject matter.



What are Procedures?

- ◆ The implementation of policies or the “how to”.
- ◆ Procedures are action oriented.
- ◆ They outline the steps you expect people to take and the sequence in which to perform those steps.
- ◆ They point out the consequences of failing to comply and help to understand:
 - The seriousness of the matter and their responsibilities for it.



Vehicle Breakdown Procedure - Dispatch

1. Upon receiving communication of vehicle problem determine the level of assistance needed by asking the following questions.
 1. Do you have passengers on-board?
 2. Are you parked in a safe location?
 3. Are you able to determine the cause of the breakdown?
 4. What is your location?
2. Once this information is received send the appropriate assistance and replacement vehicle if needed.
3. Driver must fill out an incident report describing the events leading up to the breakdown and turn in to dispatch along with the maintenance log book and towing receipt.



Ambiguity and Subjectivity

- ◆ Procedures are more specific than policies but can still be ambiguous to allow the dispatcher to make professional judgment calls based on the information obtained.
- ◆ There is no way to be completely objective.
- ◆ You don't want employees to use their personal standards to interpret policy directive or procedural steps. You want them to use sound professional judgment.

Professional vs. Personal Judgement

Professional

- ◆ Based on training
- ◆ Adherence to policies and procedures
- ◆ Industry experience
- ◆ Agency standards
- ◆ Know when to apply modifications

Personal

- ◆ “How I was raised”
- ◆ May go against regulations
- ◆ Applied inconsistently
- ◆ Disregards training
- ◆ Safety risk



Scenario #1

85 year old Gertrude Shawn was returning from her dialysis appointment and ABC Transit was dropping her off at her apartment building. It had been snowing for the last couple of hours and her building's side walk had not been shoveled.

ABC Transit is a curb-to-curb demand response service. Drivers are instructed not to take unnecessary risks.



Scenario #1

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What would you expect the driver to do?



Scenario #1

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What factors should the driver consider when deciding proper action?



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Would a policy amendment be required as a result of this scenario?



DCT Procedure

3.3 TRIP SCHEDULING PROCEDURES

For scheduling trips, the following procedures are to be followed:

- Dispatcher fills out a trip request form when passengers request trips
- Trip information is also received from sponsoring agencies
- Dispatcher creates driver schedules, which are composites of trips scheduled directly by DCT and trips scheduled by sponsoring agencies; there are different trip request/schedule forms depending upon the sponsoring agency
- The driver schedules are put into the driver boxes.
- For the very early pull-outs leaving from the Cambridge location before the office is open, the driver schedule is put into the appropriate vehicle for the driver.

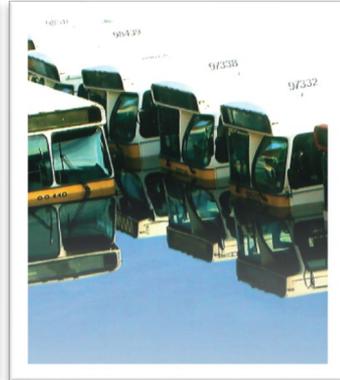


When You Need Policies and Procedures

- ◆ Do not create a policy or procedure because it seems like a good idea. They need to accomplish something.
- ◆ They should be proactive instead of reactive.
- ◆ You need a policy or procedure for any issue that is important or benefits from clarification.

Avoid Reaction: First Ask These Questions

- ◆ Has such an incident ever happened before?
- ◆ Is it really likely to happen again?
- ◆ Is this an isolated, once every twenty years occurrence?
- ◆ Are the consequences of the mistake so serious (financially, legally, or operationally) that you need to be sure it never happens again?



What's Important

◆ Issues for Transit System

- Safety
- Efficiency
- Riders
- Finances
- Productivity
- Staffing
- Liability
- Regulations

◆ Issues for Employee

- Benefits
- Hours
- Working Conditions
- Job Security
- Family
- Personal Goals
- Personal Principles
- Satisfaction

• Issues for Passenger

- Safety, Reliability, Customer Service, Cleanliness, Respect, Accessibility, Ease of Use



What Needs Clarification

- ◆ Certain issues need clarity and policies and procedures are needed if the subject matter:
 - Is lengthy
 - Is complex
 - Is routine but nonetheless essential to successful operations
 - Affects the employee's ability to function
 - Affects the employee's status
 - Affects the employee personally
 - Involves significant change or high volumes of change
 - *See Appendices 1-4*

Written vs. Unwritten

- ◆ You can't write a policy and procedure for everything.
- ◆ Consider leaving a policy or procedure unwritten when:
 - It involves organizational culture and norms.
 - It cannot be consistently enforced.
 - It is potentially offensive or intrusive.
 - It simplifies. Everyone understands the rules, they work well without formalizing them, and it one less piece of paper.

Written vs. Unwritten



RESPECT YOUR CO-WORKERS:

OFFICE REFRIGERATOR ETIQUETTE

DO...

- ✓ KEEP TRACK OF WHAT IS YOURS - LABEL YOUR ITEMS CLEARLY WITH YOUR NAME
- ✓ REMEMBER TO THROW AWAY SPOILED FOOD
- ✓ CLEAN UP ANY LEAKS AND SPILLS

DON'T...

- ✗ DON'T LEAVE FOOD UNCOVERED
- ✗ DON'T ADJUST TEMPERATURE SETTINGS OR LEAVE THE REFRIGERATOR DOOR OPEN LONGER THAN YOU NEED
- ✗ DON'T MOVE OR TAKE ITEMS THAT ARE NOT YOURS

REMEMBER, THE OFFICE REFRIGERATOR IS FOR EVERYONE'S USE. BE CONSIDERATE!

When to Write the Unwritten Rules

- ◆ Sometime the unwritten rules that have been working well informally begin to break down.
- ◆ This happens most when:
 - An organization grows
 - Change increases
 - Complexity arises
 - Regulations change
- ◆ You're asking for trouble if you ignore these signals – proactive movement is needed.

Write it Down When Encountering

- ◆ Common Accidents/Incidents
- ◆ Changes
- ◆ Complaints (rider or employee)
- ◆ Confusion
- ◆ Financial loss in an area
- ◆ Frequent questions
- ◆ Inconsistency
- ◆ Security exposure
- ◆ Negative publicity
- ◆ Misunderstandings
- ◆ New laws or regulations
- ◆ Sensitivity or volatility
- ◆ Stress or Frustration
- ◆ Technology changes
- ◆ Negative Trends
- ◆ Unique interpretations of unwritten policies or procedures

Policy & Procedure Updates

- ◆ Technology
 - Cyber Security
 - Social Media
 - Data Continuity
- ◆ Fleet
 - Vehicle Replacement
 - Electric Vehicles/Charging Stations/Maintenance
- ◆ Employee Safety
 - De-escalation
 - Managing threats





What Readers Want to Know

- ◆ If you don't capture the readers interest, they quit reading.
- ◆ There must be something in it that interests them.
- ◆ Here are some of the common questions your employees or passengers have and what you can do about them:



What Readers Want to Know

- ◆ Why am I being required to do this?
- ◆ What will this do to me? For me? Will it make my life easier or harder?
- ◆ Will I get enough training, time, money, and staff to do what's required?
- ◆ What do I do if I don't understand or get stuck?
- ◆ Will I have a chance to voice my concerns and problems?
- ◆ What if it doesn't work?
- ◆ Will I be blamed if this goes wrong?



Manuals and Handbooks

- ◆ The best way to document and distribute your policies and procedures is through the use of a manual, or handbook.
- ◆ This document should be apart of your “new employee” orientation and training.
- ◆ Updates can be done through addendums circulated to employees and passengers and added to refresher training.
- ◆ Employees should sign off that they understand the policies and procedures of the company.
- ◆ Passenger policy changes may require advance notice of change or phased approach.

Level of Detail

- ◆ The level of detail must be both sufficient and appropriate to your subject and your audience.
- ◆ If the subject is complex, level of detail should be high.
- ◆ Are you writing for your employees or the passengers?
- ◆ Consider the audience.

Getting Started

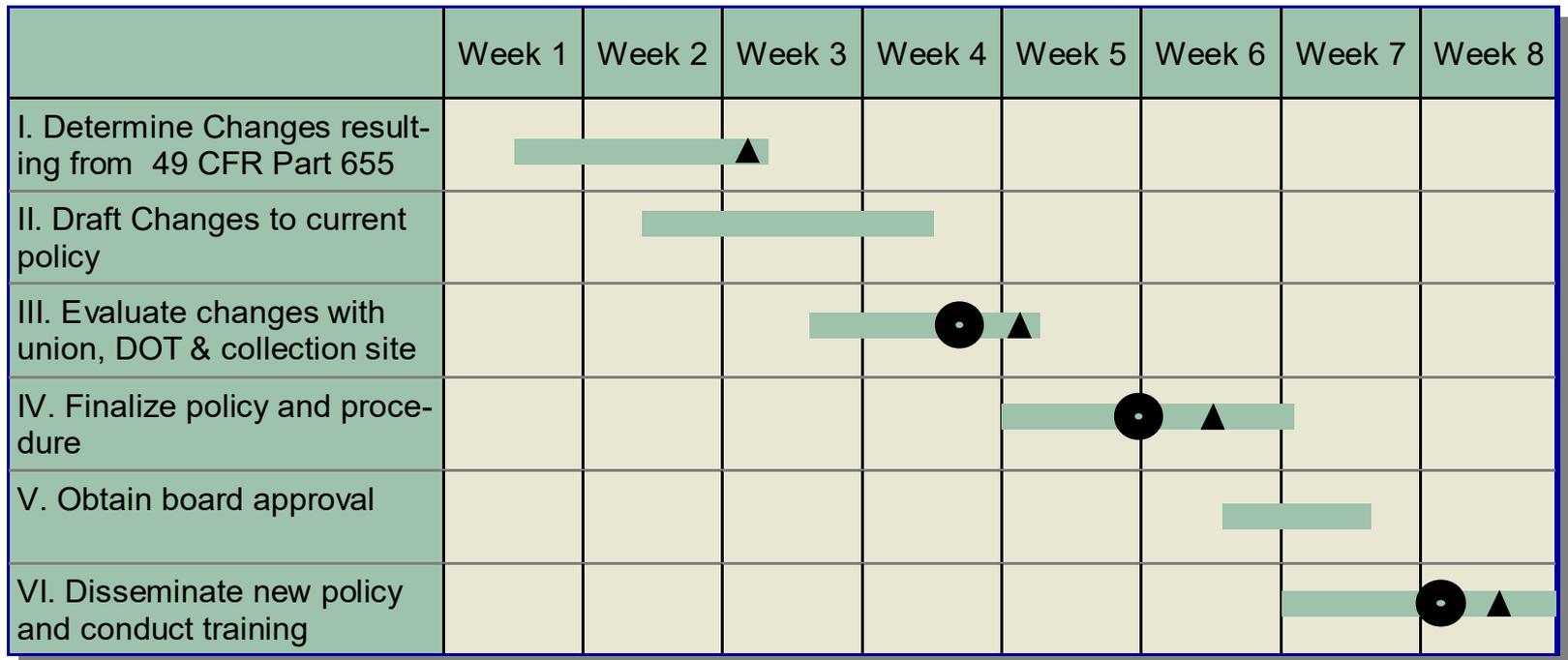
- ◆ The development process includes
 - Planning
 - Analysis
 - Research
 - Prewriting
- ◆ Transit is a fluid environment with time constraints – allot appropriate time.
- ◆ The subject will influence the detail needed and the staff to include.

Planning

- ◆ Keep the plan simple – it should include tasks, sequence and deadlines. (Gant chart)
- ◆ Use a team to help with the development of the policy and procedure.
- ◆ Is your plan realistic? Are the deadlines reasonable based on the team's workload?

Sample Gant Chart

Revising Drug and Alcohol Policy



▲ Advisory Committee Meeting

● Deliverable

Analysis

- ◆ Begin with an analysis of the “what” and the “why” of the project so that you understand both its nature and the reasons behind it.
- ◆ Be sure you understand the goal of the finished policy or procedure.
- ◆ Know the audience reading this document.
- ◆ Know the conditions where this will be read.
- ◆ Is this an operational item or an emergency item?

Research

- ◆ You must determine how much research is needed based on the subject.
- ◆ Meet with individuals to discuss the subject and content.
- ◆ Meet with employees or riders that will be directly affected by this policy or procedure.
- ◆ Talk with other transit agencies, associations or subject matter experts to see how they have responded to the issue.

Prewriting

- ◆ Make sure you have all the information first before writing the first draft.
- ◆ Identify which information should be included in the writing.
- ◆ Keep in mind the document must be organized in a systematic fashion and should flow easily for the reader.
- ◆ Do not overwhelm with details or scenarios.



The Law

- ◆ One wrong policy can open your transit system to an incredible financial loss.
- ◆ Know the laws and regulations.
- ◆ Litigation can originate from passengers as well as employees.
- ◆ Inconsistent treatment of passengers or employees from the stated policy can result in unfair labor practice charges, discrimination lawsuits, and charges of negligence.
- ◆ Policies can be viewed as an implied contract in some states.

The Law

- ◆ Use disclaimers to allow changes to be made at managements discretion.
- ◆ Disclaimers can be used on schedules and ride guides alerting the riders that the schedule, fares and hours of service are subject to change.



The Law

RLS provides these materials solely as examples of best practices and they have not been reviewed or approved by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). RLS disclaims all warranties and liabilities. Agencies must customize the content to their specific needs and consult with their state Department of Transportation and the FTA before relying on these materials to ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations.



The Law

GTFS Schedule Data

CUE Bus offers schedule data in General Transit Feed Specification (GTFS) format for use in transit apps. Download GTFS data.

Note: By downloading the data, users acknowledge that the data is provided "as-is" without technical support, and that while CUE and the City of Fairfax strive to provide the best data possible, CUE and the city do not provide any warranties concerning data accuracy.

The Law

- ◆ The specific writing techniques and content considerations that can help you avoid legal trouble fall into six categories:
 - Word your policies and procedures carefully.
 - Check the content.
 - Reserve management's right to discretionary action.
 - Preserve your right to make changes.
 - Consider the informal or unwritten rules.
 - Use and enforce the rules.



Communicating New Policies

- ◆ The employee or passenger will be more likely to *read* a document that is appealing to look at despite the content.
- ◆ Avoid visual clutter and *fonts* that are hard to read.
- ◆ Marketing professionals can help with information being prepared for the public. That audience has a wide range of visual values.



Communicating New Policies

- ◆ Notifying employees about a policy or procedure can be done one or all of three ways.
 - Announce it in person
 - Communicate it in writing
 - Send it by e-mail
- ◆ Notifying the public can be trickier. Balance technology communication with traditional information dissemination.



Regulation Changes

Failure to make changes that impact compliance may result in a compliance finding, funding loss, injury, lawsuits or loss of community trust.

Know the process.

Regulation Changes

Federal Rule Changes

1. Advanced Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPRM) 

2. Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) 

1. Comment period to make known impacts 

2. Typically, 60-90 days for comments 

3. Period of time before Final Rule 3-12 months 

4. Final Rule begins once in print 

5. Usually an implementation window 





ADA Reasonable Modification

- ◆ Who does this change impact?
- ◆ What changes must we make along w/policy?
- ◆ Who should be involved in the process?
 - In-house
 - Outside of transit
 - How do we involve them?
- ◆ What are our milestones for the new policy(s)?
- ◆ How do we communicate the new policy(s)?
- ◆ How do we monitor our policy(s) for effectiveness?



When to Revise a Policy or Procedure

- ◆ Regularly scheduled reviews
- ◆ As needed review and revision
- ◆ A balance of both
- ◆ Develop a review or standards committee to include those responsible for implementing or following policy.
- ◆ Clarify changes through highlights or notations
- ◆ Require signatures for policy updates and don't forget to modify other policies if needed and provide training.



Questions?

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