



King County

Executive signature: _____

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Effective Date: _____

1/11/15

I. Purpose

This policy provides a standardized approach to policy development, including: the content elements to be required; the review and approval process; and an approach for centralized coding/indexing, maintenance, and distribution for all King County Executive Policies and Department Policies.

- II. Applicability and Audience** This policy applies to the Administrative Offices and Executive Departments that are organized under the direction of the King County Executive. The audience may include King County offices, departments, officials, employees, boards, commissions, committees, or similar entities as well as contractors and grantees.

The Department of Executive Services, Human Resources Division and Department of Information Technology (KCIT) may also develop Executive Policies; additionally, both have been given authority via ordinance by the Metropolitan King County Council to enact policies independent of the executive policy structure.

Executive Orders are distinct from Executive Policies. The Executive has the unilateral authority to issue Executive Orders. Guidance for the development of Executive Orders is provided in INF-7-5-EP, Drafting and Implementing Executive and Emergency Orders.

III. Definitions

Administrative Offices: The administrative offices shall consist of those agencies of the Executive Branch that provide administrative services for the various agencies of King County government.

Agency: For the purposes of this policy, "agency" means administrative offices and executive departments that are organized under the direction of the King County Executive.

Communications: Communications that support policies or guidelines such as announcements or accompanying statements of principles.

Department Policies: Policies that have applicability and consequences that are limited to a single department of King County's Executive Branch.

Executive Departments: The Executive Departments consist of those agencies of the Executive Branch that are primarily engaged in the execution and enforcement of ordinances and statutes concerning the public peace, health and safety and which furnish or provide governmental services directly to or for the residents of King County.

Executive Policies: Directives approved by the County Executive, for broad purposes and intended to achieve or reinforce compliance with established mandates and are comprehensive in scope.

Guidelines: Statements and instructions that suggest a best practice or approach and which otherwise inform decision making. Guidelines often support adherence to policies but do not carry the weight and authority of policies.

Policies: Statements and instructions derived from policies or laws created by a legislative authority or executive action (e.g., federal law, state law, King County Charter, King County Code, Board of Health rules and regulations, executive policy, court rules etc.), the violations of which may bear consequences.

IV. Policy

A. Developing Policies

1. King County's work is directed by King County Code, Washington State law, federal law, and other legal mandates. Development and revision of policies should be done with great care and must:
 - a) Refer to and support an authority that exists currently in King County Code, state law, federal law, or other legal mandates;
 - b) Not conflict with existing Executive Policy, King County Code, state law, federal law, or other legal mandates;
 - c) Be necessary to achieve compliance or another result not covered by the relevant King County Code section, state law, federal law, or other legal mandates;
 - d) Clearly establish necessary actions, responsible parties, consequences for noncompliance, and implementation and maintenance plans.
2. Any guidance that does not meet the criteria established above is not a policy. There are resources to help with drafting guidance documents that are not policies, but those other guidance documents are not the subject of this policy.
3. Department Policies must also meet the criteria established above, but cover required actions and related consequences that have applicability to a single department. Department Policies must not conflict with existing Executive Policy, King County Code, Washington State law, federal law, or other legal mandates.

B. Coding/Indexing

King County Executive Policies and Department Policies shall be coded and indexed by the Records and Licensing Services Division, Archives, Records Management, and Mail Services Section (ARMMS), or any successor agency responsible for archives and records management functions.

C. Review and Enactment

Key stakeholders must be engaged in the development of King County Executive and Department Policies.

1. Review by the Key Stakeholders:
Proposed policies (whether Executive Policies or Department Policies) shall be routed first to key stakeholders for substantive review and comment. There is no required timeline for this part of the review process, but ten business days is recommended. Proposed changes should be documented either by revisions made to the policy or by inclusion on a list of proposed revisions.
2. Review by ARMMS:
After the key stakeholder review process is complete, the proposed policy shall be routed to ARMMS, or its successor agency that is responsible for archives and records management to be coded and reviewed to ensure proper format. ARMMS review shall be completed within ten business days.
3. Review by the Executive Policy Review Group:
Once the ARMMS review process is complete, Executive Policies shall be packaged for distribution to the Executive Policy Review Group. The distribution should include a comment form, a brief description of why the policy is proposed and a summary of the policy development process to date. The Executive Policy Review Group must be given a minimum of ten business days to conduct its review. Proposed changes should be addressed either by revisions made to the policy or by inclusion on a list of proposed revisions that were considered but not incorporated. If substantive revisions are made to an Executive Policy, this review step should be repeated.
4. Enactment:
Executive Policies become effective after completion of the reviews by the key stakeholders, ARMMS, and the Executive Policy Review Group, and upon signature by the County Executive.

Department Policies become effective after completion of the reviews by the key stakeholders and ARMMS and upon signature by the Department Director.

D. Maintenance

1. The original signed policy shall be transmitted to ARMMS for preservation and publication. When transmitting policies containing content exempt from disclosure, departments must include a citation for that exemption. When necessary to protect the rights, safety, and/or security of any individual, including those civilly confined, redacted versions of Department Policies containing exempt content may be published. Both the signed original and redacted copies shall be sent to the Archives for permanent preservation. The Archives will make the redacted copies available to the public. Only the department that created the policy or its successor agency shall have access to the unredacted original stored at the Archives.
2. Executive Policies and Department Policies must be maintained as current in order to remain relevant and meaningful. All Executive Policies and Department Policies expire five years after the effective date, unless proactively reenacted.
3. The agency that drafts a policy (whether an Executive Policy or Department Policy) is responsible for maintaining it, including:
 - a. Tracking the expiration date for the policy.
 - b. Preparing any revised or replacement policy as needed.
 - c. Providing any necessary communications about the policy change.
 - d. Ensuring that appendices to the policy are kept current.

E. Implementation

All policies must include an implementation plan, to include appropriate communications.

F. Consequences

The best policies will include a statement of consequences for noncompliance.

V. Implementation Plan

- A. This policy becomes effective for Executive Branch agencies on the date that it is signed. The Operations Cabinet is responsible for implementation of this policy.
- B. Operations Cabinet members are responsible for communicating this policy to the management structure within their respective agencies and other appropriate parties.

VI. Maintenance

- A. This policy will be maintained by ARMMS or its successor agency.

- B. Changes to the policy may be proposed by ARMMS or the Operations Cabinet.
- C. This policy will automatically expire five years after its effective date, which is the next standard expiration date for policies promulgated after the date this policy becomes effective. A new or revised policy will be initiated by ARMMS prior to the expiration date.

VII. Consequences for Noncompliance

Policies that do not conform with this policy will not be recognized as directives of the Executive Branch and as such will not have the same force and effect of policies.

Appendices:

None