Sample Policy Document

READABILITY

POLICY TITLE

SECTION NAME
LOGO Clear Policy Title

PURPOSE

The policy purpose reflects the goal of the policy and the reason why the policy exists. The policy purpose identifies the risk that the policy mitigates. It is consistent with the organizational values, and is expressed in clear language. The purpose is unique to the policy and is not the same as the policy statement.

The reader easily understands the real or potential *natural* consequences of non-compliance.

POLICY STATEMENT

The policy statement clearly expresses the expectation of the policy. The expectations defined in the policy statement(s) are non-negotiable under normal operating conditions, and do not describe the process by which they will be achieved.

The policy statement typically identifies legislated requirements.

SCOPE

The scope identifies all personnel to whom the policy applies, and in cases where the policy applies to non-employees, such as students or contractors, it is indicated. Circumstances where policies apply outside working hours are specified here.

PROCEDURE

(1) Bolded Topic Subheading

The procedures describe the actions that personnel will take to comply with the policy statement.

Procedures are described with enough detail to be easily understood, but without repetition, redundancy, or unnecessary narrative.

Procedures describe the expectations that are mandatory and/or reflect best practice and/or typical expectations; they will not change frequently. Flexible, outcome-driven practices are separated as guidelines, and are not included here.

PAGE NUMBER

Your policy is your brand; mark that branding in an uncluttered header

All instructions are given in the active voice

Numbered pages and a table of contents are important even in electronic documents

Policy subject obvious in title; title in header for clarity across pages

Clear section division

1-1.5" margins all sides unless binding; justify left margin, ragged right margin for readability

Short paragraphs and lots of white space help users read and retain information

Headers improve understanding

Sequence: Policy information appears in order of importance according to the principles of a Just and Safety culture: Purpose, Policy Statement, Scope, Procedures, Help.

There are several recognized readability tests for content. The appropriate score range depends on a document's readership, and will vary by industry for internal documents. Know the readability score of your policy document, and consider it in context.

POLICY TITLE

(2) Next Topic Subheading

Barriers to procedural compliance are considered and resolved before procedures are issued, such that adherence to the procedure is a reasonable and achievable employer request. The required infrastructure, materials, and other system factors required by procedures are in place.

Ideal conditions are not assumed; where applicable, a versatile application of the policy is permitted. An allowance for professional and clinical judgment is woven into the procedure when appropriate and tolerated.

The imposed consequences of non-compliance are not described in the procedure (exception: discipline policy).

HELP

The help section offers user support related to the policy content, such as:

- References to related legislation, overarching policy, or other regulations
- Contact information from subject matter experts (SME), including after-hours contacts where applicable
- Sustainable contact information (listed by titles, not names)
- Resources for situations falling outside the parameters of the policy
- Reference to related training material or supporting documents

Example:

Description of a type of support a policy user may need, specific to a subject included in the policy	E.g. -Reference material (name) -Forms -Title of SME or Contact	-Website address -Document Link or location -Phone number

Approval Signature
Version and Date

PAGE NUMBER

Avoid splitting lists and tables across pages

Blending numbers and letters affects readability

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Number only as needed for reference purposes

Where's all the other metadata? Metadata is the mechanical room of your policy document- it's important, and needs attention and maintenance, but you don't display it to end-users because it detracts from their experience. Host your metadata separate from your policy manual.

Table design in the help section should consider the types of information that need to appear, and present that information in an easily viewable and searchable way. It will be unique to each organization's needs.

Think of your policy document like a warning sign. You want the user to quickly and easily obtain the information they need. Focused content and clean layout give the reader that opportunity