
Policy for Creating and Maintaining Internal EPA Mission Support Policy

Directive No: OMS-2023-0001

*Issued by the EPA Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for Mission Support,
Pursuant to Delegation 1-19*

Policy for Creating and Maintaining Internal EPA Mission Support Policy

1. PURPOSE

This policy documents the requirements for creating, updating, and maintaining new and existing internal mission support Policy at EPA. Compliance with this policy enables consistent development of new documents, and uniform management of existing documents, in order to maximize effectiveness for customers and stakeholders and ensure compliance with the law. Throughout this document, “Policy” is used as an all-encompassing term for enforceable, documented EPA authority in the form of manuals, orders, policies, procedures, standards, or bulletins. This policy specifies how new Policy should be initiated and approved, including the structure and content requirements for those documents.

2. SCOPE

The scope of this policy covers all enforceable, documented authority generated by Office of Mission Support (OMS) offices relevant to internal-to-EPA practices and staff (including, but not limited to: orders, manuals, policies, procedures, standards, and bulletins). This policy applies to all EPA personnel who develop, update, and/or maintain Policy related to the protection of EPA's facilities and critical assets nationwide, acquisition activities (contracts), grants management, human capital, information technology, and information management activities (excluding authority concerning the Freedom of Information Act). EPA personnel is defined as EPA employees, contractors or grantees who have a relationship with EPA through employment, contract or grant, respectively, and who have user and email accounts on EPA networks.

3. AUDIENCE

The audience for this policy is all EPA personnel responsible for creating, updating and maintaining Agency-wide policy administered by the Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for Mission Support, Deputy Assistant Administrators for Mission Support, or EPA's Chief Information Officer.

4. AUTHORITY

- Reorganization Plan No. 3 of 1970 – [U.S.C. App.; Pub. L. 98–80, 84 Stat. 2086](#)
- Federal Delegation of Authority – [U.S.C. 302; Pub. L. 89–554, 80 Stat. 379; Pub. L. 94–183, 89 Stat. 1057](#)
- EPA Delegation of Authority – [1-19 Directives](#)
- [OMB Memorandum M-15-14: Management and Oversight of Federal Information Technology](#)

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5. POLICY

This policy serves as the Agency authority for new and existing internal mission support Policy at EPA.

Requirements:

- A. All new and updated documented EPA authority (i.e., Policy) generated by OMS offices and relevant to internal-to-EPA practices and staff must adhere to this policy.
- B. All new and updated documented EPA authority (i.e., Policy) generated by OMS offices and relevant to internal-to-EPA practices and staff are subject to an Agency-wide comment period requirements.
- C. All updated documented EPA authority (i.e., Policy) generated by OMS offices and relevant to internal-to-EPA practices and staff and containing significant changes to content (other than those defined below) are subject to an Agency-wide comment period. The following are examples of non-substantive updates to policy that would not require an Agency-wide comment period:
 - i. Typographical corrections (e.g., spelling, grammar, capitalization, spacing)
 - ii. Updates to expired web links or URLs
 - iii. Formatting changes (limited to font, bulleting, or numbering)
 - iv. Transitioning a Policy to the current approved template
 - v. Definitions, acronyms, or abbreviation revisions
 - vi. Updated references to other EPA Policy or current versions of external documents
 - vii. Organization name changes
 - viii. Addition of mandated legislative or technical language not subject to EPA discretion (e.g., OMB)
- D. All comments received during the Agency-wide comment period must be addressed as part of the official record, however it is not mandatory all comments be accepted or incorporated by the Approving Official.
- E. The Approving Official may approve, sign, publish, and remove Policy generated by OMS offices and relevant to internal-to-EPA practices and staff regardless of recommendations against doing so.
- F. The Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator for Mission Support, the Deputy Assistant Administrator for Mission Support, and the Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) have delegated authority from EPA's Administrator to approve, sign and maintain records for internal mission support Policy, except for Policy concerning information technology, information management, information quality, other information-related topics, and the Freedom of Information Act.
- G. Only the Chief Information Officer (CIO) has delegated authority from EPA's Administrator to approve, sign and maintain records for Policy concerning information technology, information management, information quality, and other information-related topics, except for Policy concerning the Freedom of Information Act.
- H. OMS will establish a process for the Agency-wide Comment period. During this process, Office and Regional representatives will have the opportunity to review and recommend policy for approval/disapproval.
- I. All new and updated documented EPA authority (i.e., Policy) generated by OMS offices and relevant to internal-to-EPA practices and staff must be published in a sanctioned template.

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- J. All new and updated documented EPA authority (i.e., Policy) generated by OMS offices and relevant to internal-to-EPA practices and staff must be reviewed annually, or earlier if necessitated by legislative or statutory requirement.
- K. All Information Security related Policy requires reviews and updates within a year of issuance of relevant National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) publications.
- L. All approved and signed EPA authority (i.e., Policy) generated by OMS offices and relevant to internal-to-EPA practices and staff must have a singular link/home accessible through the Office of Mission Support's authorized centralized repository location.
- M. Employees are prohibited from posting additional copies of Policy on the intranet/internet anywhere but the authorized location. Offices may link to the Office of Mission Support's centralized repository.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**Approving Official**

An Agency official with codified delegated authority from the EPA Administrator to approve, sign, publish, and remove documented EPA authority (i.e., Policy).

Principal Deputy Assistant Administrator

An approving official with codified delegated authority from the EPA Administrator to approve, sign, publish, and remove internal Policies concerning mission support, except for Policy concerning information technology, information management, information quality, other information-related topics, and the Freedom of Information Act.

Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO)

An approving official with codified delegated authority from the EPA Administrator (and at the discretion of the PDAA) to approve, sign, publish, and remove internal Policies concerning mission support, except for Policy concerning information technology, information management, information quality, other information-related topics, and the Freedom of Information Act. The CHCO also serves as a DAA under the PDAA.

Chief Information Officer (CIO)

An approving official with codified delegated authority from the EPA Administrator to approve, sign, publish, and remove Policy concerning information technology, information management, information quality, and other information-related topics, excluding the Freedom of Information Act. The CIO also serves as a DAA under the PDAA.

Deputy Assistant Administrator (DAA)

An approving official within the Office of Mission Support, reporting directly to the PDAA, with codified delegated authority from the EPA Administrator to approve, sign, publish, and remove Policy concerning mission support, information technology, information management, information quality, and other information-related topics, excluding the Freedom of Information Act.

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Reviewer

An individual or group comprised of individuals (sanctioned by the Office of Mission Support's Program Evaluation & Policy Division) with documented direct/delegated authority to:

- Speak on behalf of their organization and commit resources towards implementing a directive within their organization
- Act as a liaison for soliciting comments within their organization during the formal comment period
- Review and comment on a new or proposed directive; and
- Recommend a new or proposed directive for signature

The primary responsibility of the Reviewer is to assess if a new or proposed update to a Policy can be implemented within their Assistant Administrator (hereinafter AA-ship) or Region.

7. RELATED INFORMATION

- [Chief Information Officer Strategic Advisory Council \(CIO SAC\) Charter](#)
- [2100 Information Resource Management Policy Manual](#)
- Delegation 1-84, [Information Resources Management](#)

8. DEFINITIONS

Agency-wide Comment Period: A formal defined range of time during which a designated EPA liaison from each AA-ship and Region has the opportunity to submit input and/or recommend a directive for approval before the Approving Official makes a final decision on a new Policy or proposed update to an existing Policy. The designated liaisons are not required to be subject matter experts (although, it is helpful), however they must have the authority to commit resources towards implementing the policy within their AA-ship or Region. The purpose of the Agency-wide Comment Period is to determine if a new or updated Policy can be implemented as proposed within an AA-ship or Region.

Clearance: The act or process of getting official authorization to promulgate new Policy or an update existing Policy. At EPA, this process involves many activities including: review, modification, validation, recommendation, transfer, removal and approval of mission support Policies to ensure that content is accurate, up-to-date, relevant, and federally compliant.

Directive: The EPA sometimes uses "Directive" as a collective term for policies, procedures, standards, manuals, and orders.

"Policy": Documented requirements issued by an Agency head (or delegate thereof) for implementing important, high-level internal direction and mandates that guide organizational decisions and actions. The EPA sometimes uses the word Policy as an all-encompassing term for enforceable, documented EPA authority in the form of manuals, orders, policies, procedures, standards or bulletins.

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Types of “Policy”:

- **Bulletin:** A bulletin is issued to dispense information on new or updated requirements that must be immediately shared, prior to it being incorporated into a new or existing Policy. Bulletins are not subject to an Agency-wide comment period.
- **Policy:** A policy contains the overarching rules that describe agency requirements and determine how the Agency will comply with external federal mandates and internal agency requirements. A policy is an enforceable Agency-wide document.
- **Procedure:** A procedure supports a policy by documenting and describing how a policy is implemented. The procedure specifies high level sequence of actions necessary to follow to achieve the overarching policy’s purpose and successfully comply. A procedure is an enforceable Agency-wide document.
- **Standard:** A standard documents and explains requirements of a policy in terms of defining measurable criteria and a baseline for compliance through the possible use of numbers, conditions, and specifications. A standard is an enforceable Agency-wide document.
- **Manual:** A manual is a portfolio of documents combining multiple closely related policies, procedures, standards, processes and/or guidance into one document. Manuals are generally not produced at the agency anymore; however existing manuals are still in effect and enforceable Agency-wide. Note: The Guidance portion of a Manual is not enforceable, as Guidance is not enforceable policy.
- **Order:** An order is a document that describes the role and authority assigned to an individual or group to complete certain tasks or assume responsibilities for the purpose of implementing policy. An order is an enforceable Agency-wide document.

Types of Non-Directives:

- **Guidance:** Guidance documents are detailed recommendations that help users comply with and complete the requirements of an overarching order, memorandum, policy, standard, procedure or bulletin by providing acceptable means or best practices for complying with requirements. Guidance documents are not enforceable, and not subject to Agency-wide clearance processes.
- **Memorandum:** Under exigent circumstances a memorandum may temporarily be used to initially establish a federally mandated agency requirement if a Policy cannot be drafted by the associated federal due date. A memorandum is temporarily enforceable and can only be issued by the EPA Administrator or an agency head with delegated authority to issue policy.

9. WAIVERS

The OMS Policy Program may approve waivers/exceptions to this Policy. Exceptions are for specific instances while waivers are for entire sets of policy requirements. The exception or waiver must be consistent with statutes, the applicable regulations, Executive Orders, and collateral Agency policy. Exceptions and waivers will be granted only in extraordinary circumstances such as, but not limited to, document integrity, or other enterprise-wide records stewardship concerns.

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10. DIRECTIVE(S) SUPERSEDED

None.

11. CONTACTS

For more information, questions, or comments about this policy, please contact the Office of Mission Support (OMS) Policy Team at PolicyCentral@epa.gov.

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U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Mission Support