



CITY OF SACO
 Administration
 Saco City Hall
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 Saco, Maine 04072-1538

City of Saco Policy on Policies

1. Purpose

To establish a framework for formulating, approving, issuing, evaluating, revising, amending, updating, rescinding, and maintaining of new and existing policies and procedures and creating a policy numbering system in order to ensure effectiveness, shared understanding and transparency of the administrative protocols that govern the city operations.

2. Background Information

Corporate existence of the City of Saco is defined by the Charter, which sets the Home Rule authority of its Inhabitants and which can be changed only by the voters who approved it. The Charter mandates codification of all laws and regulations adopted by City ordinances into a City Code. In addition to the Charter and Code driven policies there is a variety of other city-wide laws and regulations on the city and department level. The framework seeks to outline the hierarchy and relationship of administrative policies to laws, procedures and forms, and to establish and promote:

- Clarity, transparency and shared understanding of administrative policy protocols
- Appropriate standards for frequency of oversight to administrative policies
- Consistency in definitions, process and format of policies.

3. Policy Scope

To promote effectiveness and transparency of the city administration as well as to encourage staff collaboration Policy on Policies needs to be distributed to all staff and council members and needs to be included in the Employee Handbook and/or Orientation Packet for new hires.

4. Policy Hierarchy, Numbering and Approval Process Requirements

- City policies and procedures are a direct result of City Charter, City Code, general city protocol and department level operations.
- For the purpose of logical organization and uniform policy format all policies are organized according to the hierarchy of their legislative document classification with the same methodology reflected in the Policy Database.

Hierarchy	Legislative Document	Description	Amendment Approval Process
1.00	City Charter	Establishes corporate existence of the City of Saco and mandates codification of all laws and regulations into the City Code.	Requires voter approval per MRSA 30-A, 2012 and 2014
2.00	City Code	Establishes laws governing city's operation as prescribed by the Charter.	Requires affirmative vote of at least 4 out of 7 Council members per City Charter
3.00	City Wide Policies	Establish city wide governance of each department in addition to Code required policies.	Require approval of the City Administrator
4.00	Internal Department Policies	Establish internal procedures specific to each department.	Require approval of the Department Director

5. Conditions which dictate an introduction of a new policy or revising the existing policy:
 - Federal or State law changes.
 - Labor and union contract changes.
 - Existing policy is no longer applicable to current operations.
 - Compliance with periodic review due date of the policy.

6. Proposing a new policy or revising an existing policy process:
 - Staff member or members who identify the need for introduction or an adjustment of a specific policy must begin the process by submitting a Policy Review Checklist to the appropriate Department Head and Human Resources Deputy.
 - Stage 1:
 - Department Head will review the checklist, assign members of the Review Committee, share the checklist with its own personnel and, if deemed necessary, applicable, or recommendable, will forward it to members of other departments to provide comments regarding the impact of proposed changes.
 - Comment period will close after 10 business days.
 - Stage 2:
 - Review Committee will prepare the draft of the policy after considering all the comments and will set a periodic review due date.
 - The Committee will also prepare a tracking sheet of all received comments and provide justification for inclusion or exclusion of each one.
 - Draft will be due within 15 business days and will be forwarded back to the Department Head and HR Deputy.
 - Stage 3:
 - Final approval of the policy introduction or revision will be based on the hierarchy of its legislative reference.
 - Charter Changes must be submitted for public vote.
 - Policies resulting in Code changes must be forwarded by the Review Committee to the City Council for approval.
 - Policies affecting City wide operation protocol must be forwarded and approved by City Administrator
 - Department specific policies brought up by the Review Committee will be reviewed by the Department Head, and will be given
 - If the policy proposals are rejected Stage 2 and 3 needs to be repeated.
 - If approved, policy updates will be reflected in the Database and the Review Committee will be responsible for compliance with the next review date.
 - All policies have to be reviewed at least once every two years.

7. Review Committee Makeup
 - Members of the Policy Review Committee will be appointed by Department Heads.
 - Members should include staff from within the department or employees directly involved in the subject matter of the policy.
 - Additionally, 1 or 2 members from other departments should serve on the committee in order to provide an objective opinion of the policy provisions and question items that might not seem obvious to anyone not directly involved in the policy subject matter.

8. Responsible Department Duties
 - Each Department will be responsible for maintaining and updating of all policies pertaining to its operations as mandated by charter, city code or city-wide administration protocol and established review due dates.
 - Each Department will also be responsible for proposing new policies and for ensuring their compliance.

9. Policy Review Checklist

- City staff and council members are encouraged to report or propose changes to the existing policies or introduce new ones in order to ensure effectiveness of the city operations.
- To ensure consistency and accuracy in tracking changes and additions the author of the policy must submit Policy Review Checklist to the appropriate department representative answering the questions listed below.
- For updates pertaining the existing policies authors are requested to use “Track Changes” and “Strikethrough” option in Microsoft Word to show clearly which words are to be deleted. Questions to be addressed:
 - Policy Number/ID
 - Responsible Department
 - Review Committee
 - Policy Author
 - Background and reasons for revisions.
 - Who are the main stakeholders of the existing policy?
 - Does the current policy accurately state the current practices and is the policy adequately defined?
 - Is there a need for amendment, revision or elimination of the current policy?
 - What is the new or recommended language?
 - How will the policy impact current work flow and operation and what are its benefits as well as potential negatives?
 - What impact will the new/revised policy or procedure have on other existing policies or procedures?

10. Attachments:
Policy Review Checklist

11. Definitions

Home Rule: an amendment to the state constitution which grants cities, municipalities, and/or counties the ability to pass laws to govern themselves as they see fit, in observance of state and federal constitutions. In some states, only limited authority is granted to local governments by passage of statutes in the state legislature. In these states, a city or county must obtain permission from the state legislature if it wishes to pass a law or ordinance which is not specifically permitted under existing state legislation. Most non-home rule states apply the principle known as Dillon's Rule to determine the bounds of a municipal government's legal authority.
