

LIHEAP Tribal Policy Manual Development

Division of Energy Assistance (DEA)
Office of Community Services (OCS)
Administration for Children & Families (ACF)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Agenda

Review and Discuss:

- LIHEAP Tribal Policy Manual Benefits
- Key Components Found in a Tribal Policy Manual
- Distinguishing Between a Policy and a Procedure
- Policy Writing Basics

Activity:

- Develop, revise, or update a policy section of your LIHEAP Tribal Policy Manual
- Questions and answers



Tribal Policy Manual

- ❖ How many have LIHEAP Policy Manuals?
- ❖ How are they used?
- ❖ How often are they revisited?



Tribal Policy Manual Purpose

- A LIHEAP Tribal Policy Manual is one developed specifically to address **your** LIHEAP program development and implementation.



LIHEAP Tribal Policy Manual Benefits

- Serves as a workplan
- Sets standards
- Ensures consistent and timely client service
- Guide for implementing LIHEAP
- Orientation tool for new staff
- Defensible policy for decision-making
- Tool to demonstrate compliance
- A way to involve leadership

The Law and Its Requirements

- LIHEAP Authorizing Legislation
- 16 Assurances
- Plan Requirements (e.g., Application Due Date)
- Energy Crisis Intervention
- Weatherization
- Contingency Funds
- Waste, Fraud, and Abuse
- LIHEAP Benefits Not Income
- Nondiscrimination
- Limitation on Use of Grants
- Leveraging Incentive Program
- REACH Program
- Carryover and Re-Allotment
- Reports

Key Components of a LIHEAP Policy Manual

- **Program Characteristics**
- **Policies and Procedures**
- **Monitoring**
- **Financial Information**
- **Required Reports and Schedule**
- **Quick Reference Section**
 - Important Contacts
 - Audits
 - Important Due Dates
 - Amendments
 - Limitations on Funds
 - Administrative Costs
 - Carryover Funds
 - Weatherization Program Funds
 - Heating, Cooling, Crisis Program Funds
 - Leveraging Incentive Program Funds

Policy Decision Areas

- Choosing Eligibility Criteria
- Definition of Households
- Defining Income (e.g., Self-Employment Income)
- Excluded Income
- Deductions from Income
- Time Period for Measuring Income
- Adjusting Poverty Income Guidelines
- Setting Payment Levels
- Designing a Payment Matrix
- Vendor Payments and Agreements
- Payments to Wood Vendors
- Establishing a Crisis Intervention Program
- Establishing a Weatherization Program

Policy versus Procedure



Policies guide the way people make decisions.

Procedures are actionable and outline steps to take and the order in which they need to be taken.



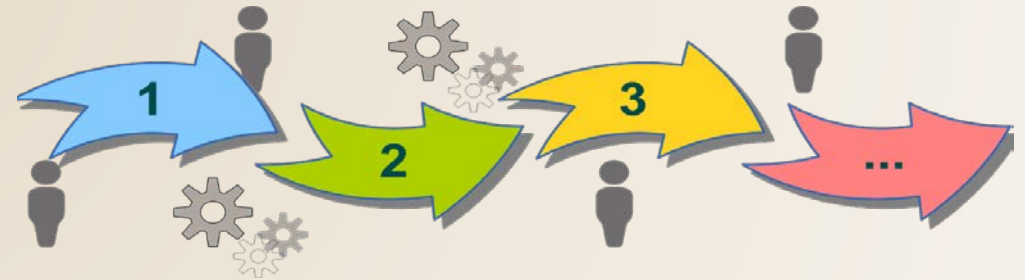
Sample Policy



The tribal energy reduction policy under our weatherization program includes implementing community and household assessments, as well as provides direct outreach to clients upon application and contains household energy conservation techniques.

Sample Procedures

- At intake, a brochure is provided and explained to eligible households describing basic conservation techniques and information.*
- The tribe will set aside up to 5 percent for home energy needs reduction efforts, including client needs assessments.*
- A needs assessment is conducted by the tribal weatherization technician as soon as eligible households are identified.
- The weatherization technician submits all assessment completed on Friday of each week to the LIHEAP program manager for review and approval.



Policy Writing Basics

1. Obtain and review format and style standards for your organization's manual.
2. Gather and analyze information.
3. Prepare the rough draft.
4. Review the draft for accurate and complete content.

Policy Writing Basics

5. Review the draft for mechanics.
6. Assemble the manual with its accompanying forms, appendices, etc.
7. Have a fellow expert or intended end user review the manual without explanation by the writer.
8. Rewrite sections requiring revision.
9. Establish a review and update procedure.

When are Procedures Necessary?

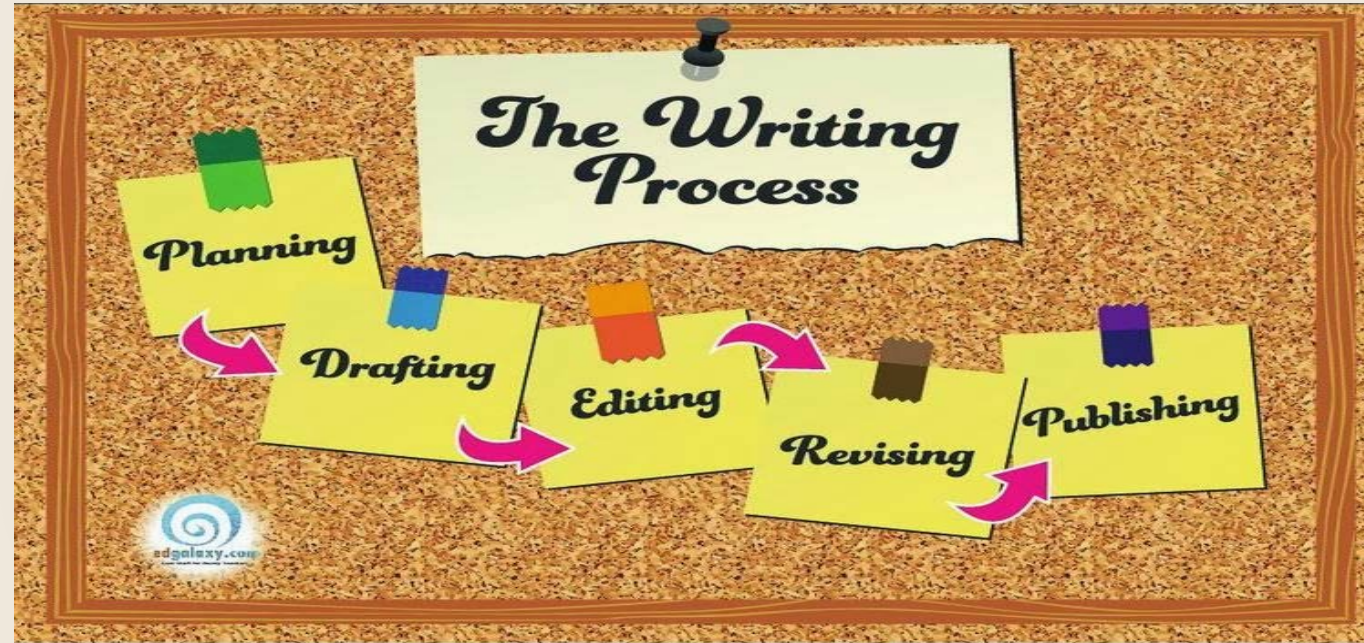
- When a process is one of the following:
 - Lengthy
 - Complex
 - Routine (but adherence to rules is essential)
 - Demands consistency
 - Involves documentation
 - Involves significant change
 - Has serious consequences if done incorrectly

Writing a Procedure

- Procedures should include what staff members need to know, not just what they want to know.
- Be sure procedures have the right level of detail.



Writing a Procedure



Step 1: Gather Information

Step 2: Start Writing

Individual Work on LIHEAP Policy and Procedure Development

- ❑ Coordination and Collaboration with Finance/Accounting Department
- ❑ Eligibility, Income Documentation, and Verification
- ❑ Fair Hearings
- ❑ Model Plan
- ❑ Reporting
- ❑ Risk Management



Group Share

Take 15 minutes to share policy outcomes with your table.



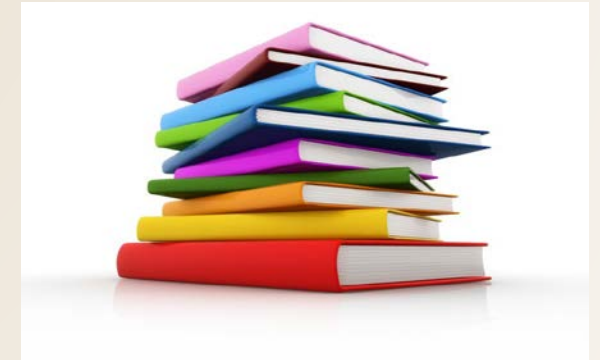
Tribal Policy Development Wrap-Up

- How did it feel working on a policy area?
- Did you feel you had enough information to begin writing?
- Do you feel you got a head start at looking into the development or update of your LIHEAP Tribal Policy Manual?
- Questions?



Resources

- User Guide to Writing Policies, University of Colorado, Office of Policy and Efficiency
- Writing a Procedure – Problem Solving Skills from MindTools.com
- Campbell, Nancy J. *Writing Effective Policies and Procedures – A Step- by-Step Resource for Clear Communication*, New York: AMOCCM, 1998
- The Writing Center Inc.; writing@writingcenter.com
- The LIHEAP Grantee Resource Guide
<https://liheapch.acf.hhs.gov/tribal-manual>



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