

Policies and Procedures Style Guide

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Introduction

This style guide is a set of rules for the county to use so that all policies and procedures meet the same standards of formatting. Using a style guide makes the work of an organization easier because all policies and procedures will be consistent and correct. Referencing the policies/procedures will be easier because elements are always in the same order. The rules in this style guide are specific to Weber County, so they can be changed if the needs of the county change.

A template for writing policies and procedures is available for use to make writing easier. All formatting is included in the template. The template can be found <link>.

The guide is broken into sections to make using it easier. The guide starts with sections on layout and numbering. Next, you will find sections on each part of a policy/procedure including: front matter, title, table of contents, headings, body, and back matter. At the end of the guide, you will find general guidelines on capitalization, grammar and punctuation, and page numbering.

Document Layout

The following are the formatting requirements for the entire document.

- Use one-inch margins.
- Use single spacing.
- Begin text on the line below the heading.
- Leave one line between the bottom of text and a new heading.
- Always use black type.

Page Numbers

- Number every page in the bottom, right corner.
- Use 10 pt., Arial
- The page number will consist of two lines:

  Policy #.#
  Page #

File Names

Use the following format for file names when saving files:

Policy #.#

Numbering Policies/Procedures

Consistency in numbering policies/procedures will make writing, understanding, and navigating them easier.

- In order to facilitate the addition of future policies/procedures that are directly related to current policies/procedures, all policies/procedures will be numbered with a decimal.
  7.1
  7.2
  7.3
- No policy will be numbered with a zero.
  Correct: 7.1
  Incorrect: 7.0
- Sections and subsections will use added decimals.
- In the text, always use the full number including the policy number, section number, and subsection numbers.
  7.3.1
  7.3.2
  7.3.2.1
- Never use a zero in a section or subsection number.
  Correct; 7.1.1
  Incorrect: 7.1.01
- Separate paragraphs do not need a number of their own if they are clearly part of the discussion under the section heading. (See also: "Lists" on page 6, and "Headings" on page 4.)
- Every numbered section and subsection needs a descriptive heading explaining what is in that section. (See also: "Headings" on page 4.)
  9.4.4 Per Diem, Meal Expenses, and Meal Reimbursement
- Use alphabetized or bulleted lists to reduce the number of numbered subsections. (See also: "Lists" on page 6)

Front Matter

The following should appear at the beginning of every policy/procedure:

- In the top, left corner of the first page of every policy/procedure put the following:

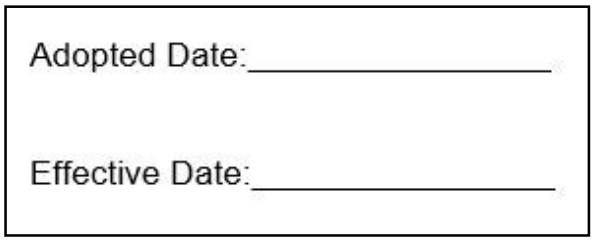


Figure 1 Front Matter

- Type or write in the appropriate dates using the month/day/year format.
- Write out the full year.
- Use 12pt., Arial.
- Leave two blank lines between elements to allow room to write in the date.
- Leave two blank lines and enter the title of the policy/procedure. (See also: "Titles of Policies and Procedures" below.)

Titles of Policies and Procedures

Every policy/procedure should have a clear title explaining what it is about.

- Always put the title on the same page as the front matter. (See also: "Front Matter" above.)
- Center the number of the policy/procedure on a line by itself. (See also: "Numbering Policies/Procedures" on page 2.)
- Center the title on the next line.
- Use headline capitalization. (See also: "Titles of Written Work" on page 9.)
- Use 20 pt., Arial, bold.

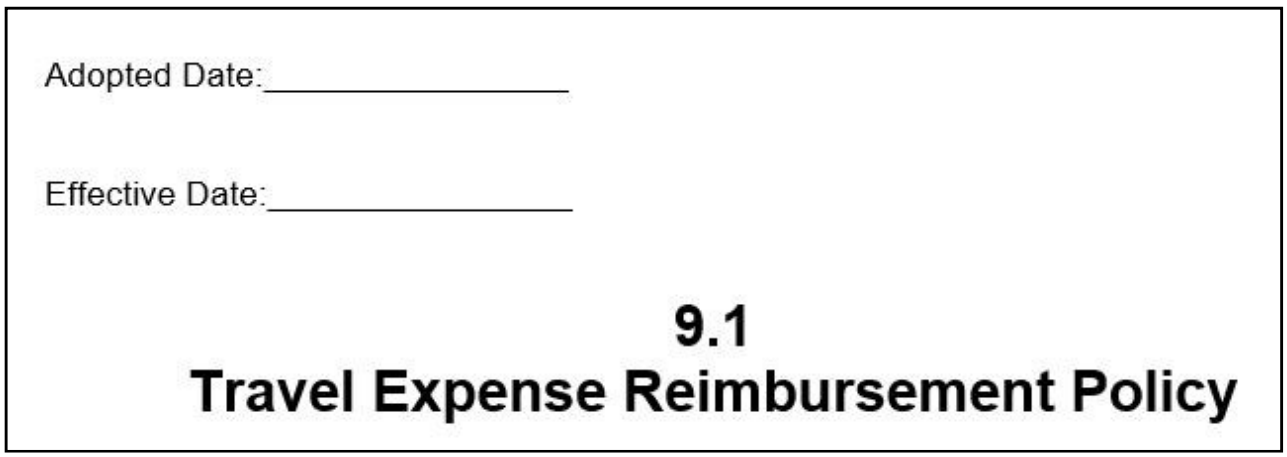


Figure 2 Front Matter with Title

Table of Contents

A table of contents makes finding specific information easy. Include a table of contents for every policy/procedure, no matter the length.

- Leave two blank lines under the title and begin the Table of Contents.
- A table of contents will be automatically created if the template is used. To populate the table:
  - Click on "Table of Contents."
  - Click "Update Table."
- Use a section heading, "Table of Contents." (See also: "Headings" on page 4.)
- Do not number the table of contents as a section of the policy/procedure.
- Use 12 pt., Arial.
- Left align the section number followed by the section heading.
- Indent subsection numbers.
- Include all section and subsection numbers with their headings.
- Use dots as leaders to the page number.
- Right align the page number where the sections can be found.

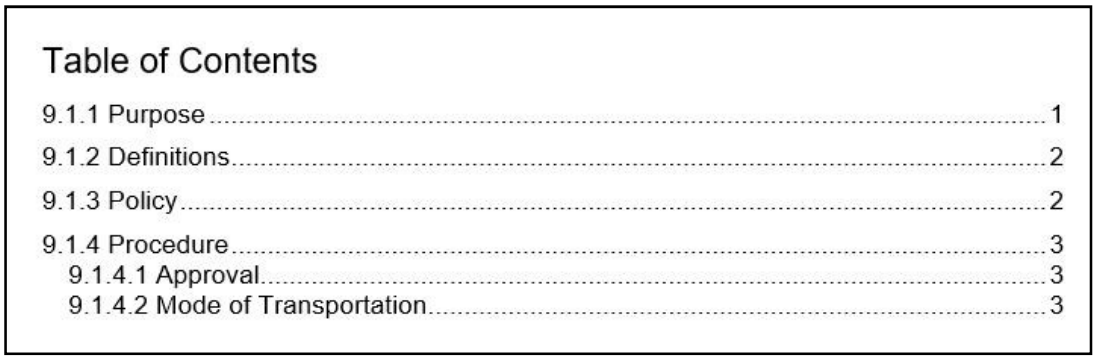


Figure 3 Table of Contents

Headings

Headings are used to divide the document into logical sections. They also clearly describe the information that is found in that section.

- Each heading must begin with the complete section number, including policy number, followed by a space. (See also: "Numbering Policies/Procedures" on page 2.)
- Headline capitalization should be used for headings. (See also: "Titles of Written Works" on page 9.)
- Every paragraph does not need its own section number.
- Always include a section number with a heading.
- Clearly describe what is in a section in the heading.

Section Headings

- Left align section numbers.
- Use 16pt., Arial, bold.
- The first four sections should appear in this order: Purpose, Definitions, Policy, and Procedures.
- All documents should include sections for Purpose, Definitions, Policy, and Procedures even if there is no text in them.
- Begin the text of the section on the line below the heading.

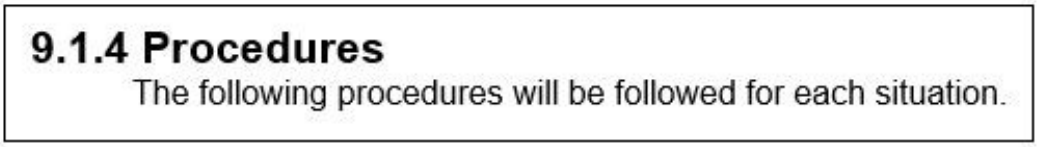


Figure 4 Heading with Text

Subsection headings

- Subsection headings may be used to further divide information, especially for lengthy policies and procedures.
- Use 12pt., Arial, bold.
- Left align subsection numbers followed by a space.
- Begin the text of a subsection on the line below the subsection number and heading.

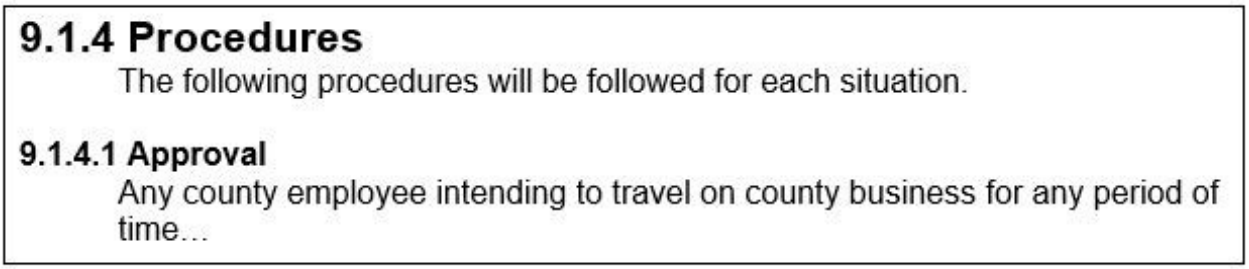


Figure 5 Heading and Subheading

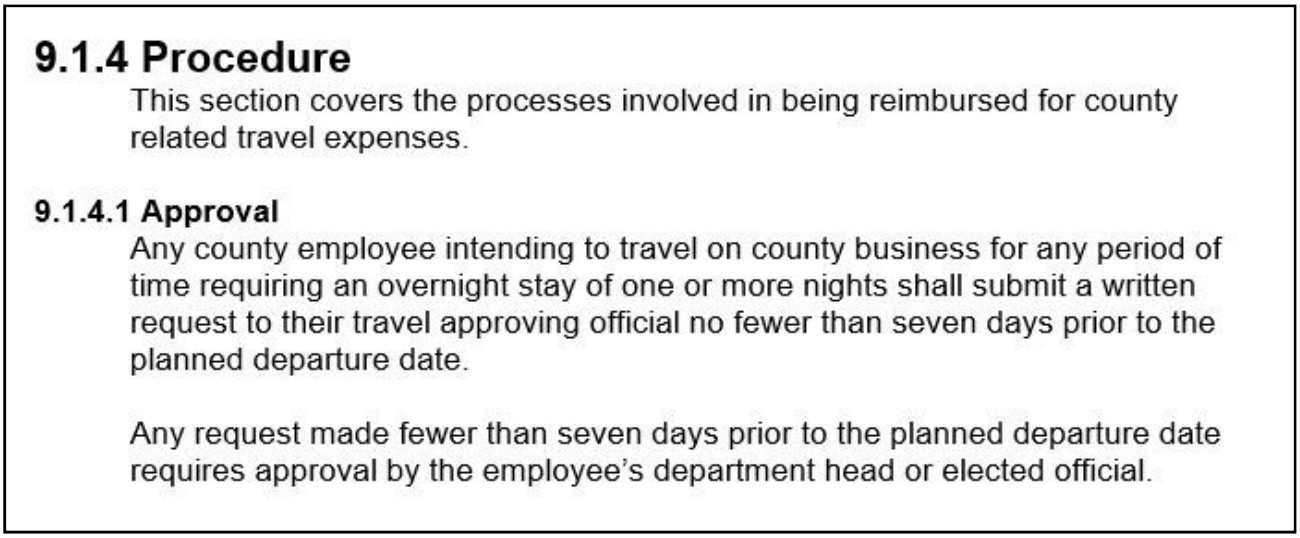
Body

The body of the policy/procedure consists of sections of text divided and described by headings and subheadings. The body contains paragraphs and lists.

- Use 12 pt., Arial.
- Left-align all text.

Paragraphs

- The entire body of all paragraphs should be indented ½ inch.
- Do not further indent the first line of a paragraph.
- Leave one blank space between paragraphs.
- Avoid having a single line of a paragraph on a page.
- Where possible, paragraphs should be short in length to facilitate easier reading.
- Multiple paragraphs may be housed under a single heading.
- Paragraphs under a single heading should not be numbered. (See also: "Headings" on page 4.)



9.1.4 Procedure

This section covers the processes involved in being reimbursed for county related travel expenses.

9.1.4.1 Approval

Any county employee intending to travel on county business for any period of time requiring an overnight stay of one or more nights shall submit a written request to their travel approving official no fewer than seven days prior to the planned departure date.

Any request made fewer than seven days prior to the planned departure date requires approval by the employee's department head or elected official.

Figure 6 Paragraphs

Lists

- Lists are used to highlight important points or sequences. They must have at least two items. Where possible, use lists instead of section numbers.
- List items should be written in parallel form, meaning each verb in the list should be in the same form.
  Correct: Eating, cooking, and cleaning
  Incorrect: Eating, to cook, being clean
- Short lists, four short items or fewer, may be written in sentence form. Lists inside sentences are divided by commas. The penultimate item is followed by a comma, a coordinating conjunction, then the last item in the list. (See also: "Commas" on page 10.)
  The committee shall consist of the Sheriff, the County Clerk, and the County Attorney.
- Long lists (five items or more items) should have each item listed on a separate line.
- The letter or bullet of primary items is aligned with the paragraph text.
- The letter or bullet of secondary items is indented under the primary items. (See also: "Ordered Lists" and "Unordered Lists on page 7.)

Ordered Lists

- Ordered lists consist of items that must be done in sequence.
- Primary items in an ordered list will be numbered using upper case letters starting with "A." This will avoid confusion with the numbered sections and subsections in the document.
- Secondary items in an ordered list should use lowercase Roman numerals beginning with "i."

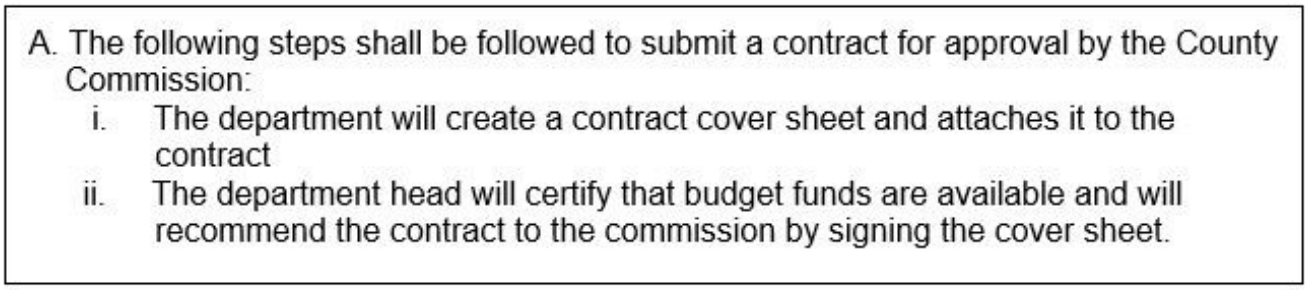


Figure 7 Ordered List

Unordered Lists

- Unordered lists have no specific sequence.
- Use a bulleted list.
- Primary items in an unordered list will use solid bullets.
- Secondary items in an unordered list will use open bullets.

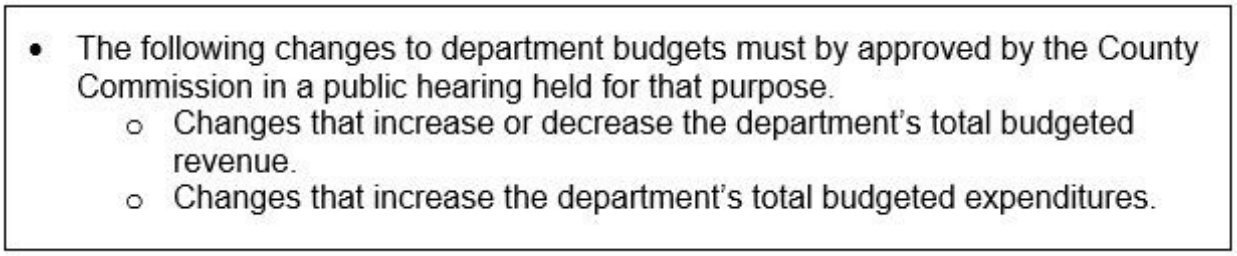


Figure 8 Unordered List

Definitions

- Use a bulleted list to define words, acronyms, and initialisms.
- Bold the term being defined, but not the definition.
- Put terms in alphabetical order.
- If there are no terms in the policy that need to be defined, write, "There are no definitions for this policy" under the heading.

Back Matter

The following should appear at the end of every policy/procedure:

Reviewed and approved as to form and as being consistent with current law.

By:_____

Date:_____

Passed and adopted on _____ by the board of Weber County Commissioners.

_____
Replace this text with the name and position of person signing for the board

Attest: _____
Replace this text with the name and position of person attesting the document

Figure 9 Back Matter

- Start back matter on a new page to ensure all the information remains together.
- Leave two blank lines between elements to allow room for signatures.
- Left align text.
- Use 12 pt., Arial.
- Write or type in the appropriate names, titles, and dates.
- Use the month/day/year format.
- Write out the full year.

Forms and Attachments

- All forms and attachments will start on the page following the back matter.
- Page numbers will continue from the policy/procedure to the forms/attachments.
- Each form/attachment will be on its own page.

Writing Guidelines

This section addresses general rules for capitalization, grammar and punctuation, gender neutral writing, and page numbering.

Capitalization

The following section includes information about capitalizing proper names, titles used by people, and titles of written works.

Proper Names

- The first letters of the names of people are capitalized.
- An initial is capitalized followed by a period and space.
  Fred G. Smith
  H. Jennifer Jones
- The word "county" is capitalized when it is used as part of the whole name of the county. When used generically, it is not capitalized.
  Weber County officials will discuss the issue when they meet.
  When county officials meet, they will discuss the issue.

Professional Titles

- The first letter of major words in a title are capitalized.
  County Attorney
- The word "office" is not capitalized.
  office of the County Attorney
  County Attorney's office

Titles of Written Work (Headline Capitalization)

- Capitalize the first letter of each major word in the title.
- Always capitalize the first and last words in the title.
- Never use all capitals for a title.
  Requesting and Collecting Reimbursement for Purchases

Grammar and Punctuation

The following section contains information about general grammar and punctuation usage including:

- Commas
- Semicolons
- Colons
- Tense
- Apostrophes
- Numbers
- Gender neutral writing
- Page numbers

Commas

- Use a comma before a coordinating conjunction (and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet) that links two independent clauses (a group of words with a subject and a verb that can stand alone).

  The committee shall make the rule, but the County Clerk will enforce it.

- Use a comma to separate items in a list in a sentence.
- Always use a comma before the coordinating conjunction and the final item in the list.

  The committee shall consist of the Sheriff, the County Clerk, and the County Attorney.

Semicolons

- Use a semicolon to connect two independent clauses (a group of words with a subject and a verb that can stand alone) that are not connected by a coordinating conjunction (and, but, for, or, nor, so, yet).

  The committee shall make the rule; the County Clerk will enforce it.

Colons

- Use a colon to introduce a list. A list of four or fewer items can be written in sentence form. A list of five or more items should be listed on separate lines. (See also: "Lists" on page 6.)

  The staff member shall be responsible for the following items: writing an agenda, taking minutes, and getting approval of the minutes.

Tense

- Write in future tense.

  The employee shall submit the request before the deadline.

Apostrophes

- Apostrophes are used to show possession. Use the noun, followed by an apostrophe and an "s" to show possession.
  It shall be the committee's job to determine the agenda.
- Never use an apostrophe to make a noun plural.
  Correct: The committees will all report to the board.
  Incorrect: The committee's will all report to the board.
- To make plural noun ending in "s" possessive, put the apostrophe after the plural "s."
  Correct: The County Commissioners' handbook.
  Incorrect: The County Commissioners's handbook
- "It's" with an apostrophe always means "it is."
- "Its" without an apostrophe always shows possession.
  It's the only way it will work.
  The committee will write its own agenda.

Numbers

- Always use numerals to number the sections of a policy/procedure.
  10.1.3
- In writing text, always spell out numbers less than 10.
- Use numerals for numbers 10 and larger.
  The committee will consist of four people.
  A sample of 500 people will be needed.

Gender Neutral Writing

- Never use a gender specific pronoun unless referring to a specific person.
- It is acceptable to use "they," "them," and "their," as singular pronouns in order to avoid making a gender reference.
- It is acceptable to use "his/her," "her/his," "he/she," "she/he."
  William will give his report to the committee.
  The County Clerk will give their report to the committee.
  The County Clerk will give his/her report to the committee