

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
DEPARTMENT ON DISABILITY SERVICES**



POLICY	
Department on Disability Services	Subject: Policy, Procedure and Standard Operating Protocol Development
Responsible Program or Office: State Office of Disability Administration	Policy Number: 2012-DDS-ADMIN-GEN-POL008
Date of Approval by the Director: December 31, 2012	Number of Pages: 4
Effective Date: January 01, 2013	Expiration Date, if Any: N/A
Supersedes Policy (Dated): DDA Policy Development & Template Policy (12/1/2010)	
Cross References, Related Policies and Procedures, and Related Documents: Procedure for the Development of Policies, Procedures and Standard Operating Protocols	

1. PURPOSE

The efficient and effective operation of DDS relies on the timely preparation and distribution of well-formulated policies and procedures that provide clear and accurate direction, guidance and information to employees, managers and all stakeholders. As such, the purpose of this policy is to establish the standards and guidelines by which the Department on Disability Services (“DDS”), will develop, revise, update and disseminate policies, procedures and standard operating protocols.

2. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all DDS administrations, work groups, offices, managers, supervisors and employees requesting approval of a policy, procedure, or standard operating protocol; and all providers within the DDS service delivery system.

3. AUTHORITY

The authority for this policy is established in DDS as set forth in D.C. Law 16-264, the “Department on Disability Services Establishment Act of 2006,” effective March 14, 2007 (D.C. Code § 7-761.01 *et seq.*).

4. POLICY

- A. It is DDS's policy to maintain a comprehensive set of policies, procedures and standard operating protocol ("SOP") that govern operations.
- B. Policies, procedures and SOP will be designed to provide direction, clarify expectations, set quality and outcome standards, and specify DDS's values for DDS staff, service providers, and the people who receive supports and services from DDS.
- C. Policy and procedure development will be guided by people with disabilities, their families, and their advocates, and informed by contemporary ideas about best practices.
- D. It is the policy of DDS to provide policies, procedures and SOP in a format that is recognizable and accessible to stakeholders and employees, with reviews and updates as needed.

5. RESPONSIBILITY

The responsibility for this policy is vested in the Director, Department on Disability Services. Implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the State Office of Disability Administration ("SODA").

6. STANDARDS

Standards are statements that provide additional guidance and/ or offer a principle or basis for making a decision or taking a direction.

- A. Policy Structure - All policies issued in DDS will fit into one of the following structures:
 - 1. Agency Wide Policy: Applicable to all staff and stakeholders in all parts of the agency. These policies generally deal with issues related to general operations (Human Resources, Information Technology, budget, etc.) and are signed by the Director and posted on the website.
 - 2. Developmental Disabilities Administration ("DDA") Policy: Applicable to all staff and stakeholders of DDA and generally specific to DDA operations. DDA policies can also be specific to DDA contractors and service providers. These are signed by the Director and posted on the DDS website under DDA policies.
 - 3. Rehabilitation Services Administration ("RSA") Policy: Applicable to all staff or stakeholders of RSA and generally specific to RSA operations. RSA policies can also be specific to RSA contractors and service providers. These are signed by the Director and Deputy Director for RSA and posted on the DDS website under RSA policies.

4. Disability Determination Division (“DDD”) Policy: Applicable to all staff and stakeholders of DDD and generally specific to DDD operations. DDD policies can also be specific to DDD contractors. These are signed by the Director and posted on the DDS website under DDD policies.
- B. Related Procedures. Detailed procedures are not to be included in the policy document. If a policy requires detailed procedural descriptions, the procedures should be listed in a related document and referenced in the policy heading under “Cross References, Related Policies and Procedures, and Related Documents”.
- C. Standard Operating Protocols (“SOP”). SOP are detailed, specific protocols for DDS employees that govern DDS operations and provide direction on how employees can achieve compliance with DDS’s policies. SOP development shall be guided by the principle that how each DDS employee does his or her job impacts the lives of the people with disabilities that DDS supports.
- D. All DDS, DDA, RSA, and DDD policies, procedures and SOP shall comply with the standardized DDS format, described in the policy, procedure and SOP development procedures.
- E. All DDS, DDA, RSA, and DDD policies, procedures and SOP shall be written using people first, respectful language. Additionally, all DDS, DDA, RSA, and DDD policies, procedures and SOP shall be written in plain English, all terms of art will be defined in the DDS Dictionary Appendix, and no abbreviations shall be used without first including the full name or term with the abbreviation in parentheses.
- F. All DDS, DDA, RSA, and DDD policies, procedures and SOP shall be written using standardized sans serif 12-point font without hyphenation, to increase the readability of the documents.
- G. All policies and procedures must be reviewed by SODA and approved by the Director, and if applicable, appropriate Deputy Director for DDS. SOP related to all of DDS are approved by the Director and reviewed by SODA. Procedures solely related to DDA, RSA or DDD are reviewed by SODA and approved by the appropriate DDS Deputy Director or Chief of Staff.
- H. No unapproved DDS, DDA, RSA, or DDD policies, procedures or SOP shall be distributed either within DDS or externally unless specifically watermarked as a “draft” document.
- I. All approved and current DDS, DDA, RSA, and DDD policies and procedures shall be maintained in an accessible PDF format and will be posted on the DDS website. All approved and current DDS, DDA, RSA, and DDD SOPs will be maintained in an

accessible PDF format and will be posted on the DDS intranet in an electronic manual as a resource for DDS employees.

- J. DDS Deputy Directors and the Chief of Staff are responsible for distributing all relevant policies, procedures and SOP to their staff. All DDS employees are responsible for reviewing, staying current on, and following all relevant policies, procedures and SOP posted on the website and/ or intranet and/or provided by their supervisor.

- K. DDS Deputy Directors and the Chief of Staff are responsible for distributing all relevant policies and procedures to providers within the DDS service delivery system. Providers are responsible for reviewing, staying up to date on, and following all relevant policies, procedures and SOP posted on the website and/ or intranet and/or provided by DDS.

Laura L. Nuss

Laura L. Nuss, Director

12/31/2012

Approval Date