

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

POLICY MANUAL

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POLICY	1000 – Legislative Assembly Policy Framework

Objective To provide a framework for the identification, planning, development, review, approval, implementation, revision, and repeal of new and existing Legislative Assembly policies.

Authority Pursuant to the *Legislative Assembly Management Committee Act* (R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 258), the Legislative Assembly Management Committee has jurisdiction to deal with all matters for the efficient and effective operation and management of the Legislative Assembly, including adopting policies for the administration of the Legislative Assembly and for the conduct of Members of the Legislative Assembly. These policies may be guided by statutory provisions, including, but not limited to, those contained in the *Legislative Assembly Management Committee Act* and the *Members’ Remuneration and Pensions Act* (R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 257).

Key Definitions

“Clerk” means the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly;

“policy” means a statement of intent, governing principles or end result intended to guide future action, which may be accompanied by procedures, directives, standards, protocols, or guidelines, but does not include interim directives;

“Policy Development Work Plan” means an annual work plan prepared by the Office of the Clerk summarizing the review and development of policies by priority, department, and status;

“Speaker” means the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

1. Overall Accountability .01 On behalf of the Legislative Assembly, the Clerk has overall responsibility for the development, administration, maintenance, and stewardship of the Legislative Assembly policy suite. This involves coordinating the consolidation of the Legislative Assembly’s policies into a single manual, ensuring that policies have been thoroughly considered and undergone appropriate development and consideration prior to approval and implementation, ensuring consistent formatting and structure, and ensuring that policies are reviewed and updated periodically, if necessary, to meet changing needs.

2. Principles for Policy Development .01 Legislative Assembly policies shall, as applicable:

- a) comply with relevant statutes and regulations;
- b) reflect current professional standards or best practices;

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- c) promote good governance through appropriate provisions relating to accountability, leadership, integrity, stewardship, and transparency;
- d) promote sound management practices;
- e) promote prudent financial administration;
- f) promote behaviours consistent with the core values of the Legislative Assembly Administration;
- g) promote openness, fairness, transparency, continuity, reasonableness, and efficiencies in the administrative operations of the Legislative Assembly; and
- h) aim to effectively manage organizational risk and performance through robust controls and active management.

.02 The Clerk shall ensure that the policy development and review processes use collaborative approaches to draw on a broad range of input and subject matter expertise throughout the organization, resulting in high-quality advice and creative solutions that support openness and inclusivity while balancing organizational realities and needs.

.03 The following principles shall guide the development and review of Legislative Assembly policies:

- A. **Evidence-based:** policies must be based on sound research and analysis. Sound analysis and data are vital in the policy development and review processes to ensure the adoption and implementation of appropriate policy provisions.
- B. **Relevance:** policies must draw from a broad organizational perspective and be aligned with the Legislative Assembly's priorities and operational needs and the Legislative Assembly Administration's strategic objectives.
- C. **Inclusivity:** policies must respect and promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility with a view to addressing any systemic barriers that may exist within the organization.
- D. **Sustainability:** policies must be viable, risk-aware, and enduring. They must be mindful of and be responsive to operational needs and be appropriately adaptable to evolving environments and realities.
- E. **Coherence:** policies must be written in plain language, drafted in a clear and structured manner using a single format, and use

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a streamlined approach from concept to implementation to ensure an effective and consistent policy suite.

- .04 Policies of the Legislative Assembly must be informed by the policies and practices of the Government of British Columbia and be aligned with best practices in parliamentary and public sector organizations to the extent practicable and appropriate.
- .05 It is recognized that a general rule may not always suit all circumstances or situations that may arise, however, sound judgment, reasonableness, and practicality must be used by all applicable individuals to ensure that the principles set out in this policy are upheld.

3. Policy Structure

- .01 A policy must contain an application provision clearly setting out to whom the policy applies.
- .02 A policy must designate a department of the Legislative Assembly responsible for the day-to-day maintenance and administration of the policy.
- .03 A policy must clearly set out in summary form the responsibilities of all individuals listed in the policy.
- .04 Procedures, directives, standards, protocols, or guidelines may be developed by the responsible department for the administration of a policy. These supporting documents will be overseen by the respective department and are not subject to the approval process outlined in section 5.

4. Policy Development

- .01 The Legislative Assembly Management Committee and its advisory subcommittees may direct the Clerk to develop a new policy or review an existing policy.
- .02 The director of each Legislative Assembly department is responsible for the following in respect of a policy within their scope of responsibility:
 - a) ensuring that the policy is sufficient and meets departmental and organizational requirements;
 - b) developing and maintaining any procedures, directives, standards, protocols, or guidelines necessary for the administration of the policy; and
 - c) ensuring that proper training and support is provided to all those to whom the policy applies.

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.03 The need to develop a new or revised policy may arise as a result of any of the following:

- a) a resolution or directive of the Legislative Assembly Management Committee;
- b) a directive of the Speaker;
- c) to comply with a legal or professional standard requirement;
- d) an operational need or requirement.

5. Policy Approval

.01 Policies of the Legislative Assembly fall into one of the following areas:

- A. **Financial Administration and Management:** policies of a financial nature, including financial rules and procedures, and those respecting asset management and the overall stewardship of Vote 1 funds.
- B. **Governance:** policies on the overall governance and organization of the Legislative Assembly; Legislative Assembly Management Committee rules and procedures; and the use of the Parliament Buildings and the Legislative Precinct.
- C. **Legislative Assembly Administration:** policies applicable to the operations of the Administration, including human resource management.
- D. **Members, Caucuses and Constituency Offices:** policies respecting Members, including remuneration; travel, expenses, and benefits; caucus and constituency offices and expenses; new and departing Members, former Members, and Presiding Officers; and parliamentary associations.
- E. **Other:** policies relating to other areas, including security, information technology, and data management.

.02 The establishment of a new policy or a revised policy must be approved by the appropriate approval authority as follows:

Policy Area	Approval Authority
Financial Administration and Management	Legislative Assembly Management Committee or Clerk*
Governance	Legislative Assembly Management Committee

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Legislative Assembly Administration	Clerk
Members, Caucuses and Constituency Offices	Legislative Assembly Management Committee
Other	Legislative Assembly Management Committee or Clerk*

* Policies that relate to the roles and responsibilities of the Legislative Assembly Management Committee as set out in the *Legislative Assembly Governance Framework* shall be subject to approval by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee. Policies of an administrative nature that relate to the roles and responsibilities of the Legislative Assembly Administration in the fulfillment of its obligations in these policy areas shall be subject to approval by the Clerk.

- .03 Approval of policies under the purview of the Legislative Assembly Management Committee must be evidenced by approved minutes of the Committee.
- .04 The Clerk may make minor editorial or grammatical corrections to policies approved by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee.
- .05 Approval of policies under the purview of the Clerk must be evidenced by signature of the Clerk or the Clerk's delegate.
- .06 Once implemented, policies must be made available to all Members of the Legislative Assembly, staff, and the public.

6. Interim Directives

- .01 If policy direction is required to fill an urgent or time-sensitive need to address a policy gap, an interim directive may be issued by the
 - a) Speaker, acting on the advice and recommendation of the Clerk, for policies that are subject to approval by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee in accordance with section 5; or
 - b) Clerk for policies that are be subject to approval by the Clerk in accordance with section 5.
- .02 An interim directive issued in accordance with section 6.01 may remain in effect for a maximum of six (6) months and shall thereafter lapse, and cannot be reissued, unless

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- a) for an interim directive issued by the Speaker, policy revisions are under active consideration by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee or one of its advisory subcommittees, in which case the interim directive shall remain in place until the matter reaches final decision by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee; or
- b) for an interim directive issued by the Speaker or the Clerk, it is repealed because the interim directive is no longer required or lapses sooner because policy revisions have been instituted to address the substance of the interim directive.

- .03 The appropriate advisory subcommittee of the Legislative Assembly Management Committee must be advised of an interim directive issued by the Speaker at the first opportunity, including the circumstances that led to the issuance of the interim directive.

7. Monitoring and Policy Compliance

- .01 Policy compliance is a shared responsibility among all the Legislative Assembly Management Committee, all Members of the Legislative Assembly and their staff, caucuses, the Clerk, the Clerk's Leadership Group, senior management, and all employees of the Legislative Assembly.
- .02 Directors of Legislative Assembly departments are responsible for promoting policy compliance within their departments, and for reporting non-compliance with a policy to the director of the department responsible for the maintenance of the policy.
- .03 Members of the Legislative Assembly are responsible for promoting policy compliance within their respective caucuses, legislative offices, and constituency offices. Instances of non-compliance must be dealt with by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee or one of its advisory subcommittees.
- .04 Directors of Legislative Assembly departments are responsible for monitoring and reporting to the Clerk or to the Executive Financial Officer and to the responsible member of the Clerk's Leadership Group any instances of non-compliance with a policy designated to their department.
- .05 The Clerk and the responsible member of the Clerk's Leadership Group are responsible for addressing instances of policy non-compliance concerning employees of the Legislative Assembly, including instituting any corrective measures.

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- 8. Policy Review** .01 Legislative Assembly policies must undergo a substantive review at minimum every five (5) years after they are implemented with the primary purpose of ensuring that the policy is current and that it continues to meet its intended objective.
- 9. Policy Exceptions** .01 A policy exception may be granted by the authority who approved the policy in accordance with section 5 unless a delegation of authority in this regard is set out in the policy.
- .02 For policies approved by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee respecting Members of the Legislative Assembly, unless the policy provides otherwise, an exception may be granted by
- a) the Speaker if the cost of the exception is expected to be \$10,000 or less (in considering such a request, the Speaker must consult the Clerk, who shall provide advice informed by the relevant subject matter expertise within the Legislative Assembly Administration, and who must consider the unique circumstances of the request and any precedents that the decision may set); or
 - b) the appropriate advisory subcommittee of the Legislative Assembly Management Committee if the cost of the exception is expected to be \$10,001 or more.
- .03 A decision of the Speaker under section 9.02 is subject to appeal to the appropriate advisory subcommittee of the Legislative Assembly Management Committee, whose decision in the matter is final.
- 10. Policy Repeal** .01 A policy may be repealed by the authority that approved it in accordance with section 5.
- 11. Reporting** .01 On an annual basis, or as requested by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee, the Clerk must provide to the Legislative Assembly Management Committee a prioritized Policy Development Work Plan, including a summary of new and revised policies.
- .02 On a quarterly basis, the Clerk and the Executive Financial Officer must provide to the Subcommittee on Administration and Operations a report on significant instances of
- a) non-compliance with a policy; and
 - b) exercises of discretion to provide for exceptions or exemptions to a policy concerning employees of the Legislative Assembly.

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Contact

Questions regarding this policy may be directed to the Office of the Clerk at OfficeoftheClerk@leg.bc.ca.

Approved and authorized by the Legislative Assembly Management Committee on November 28, 2022.

POLICY HISTORY

Version 1	October 8, 2019
Version 2	May 27, 2021
Version 3	November 28, 2022