

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

As with any organization there are a great many policies and procedures that support the functions of the organization. Given that the transitional housing program forms part of a larger organization, some of the policies apply to the organization as a whole and are not specific to the transitional housing program.

In many agencies, the policies are decided upon by the board (in consultation with senior management) while the procedures are developed by the staff. In others, policies –especially operational policies—are developed by the staff. Policies are goal-oriented and provide overarching principles, guidelines or frameworks for conducting the business of an organization. Procedures are more specific and provided detailed directions and instructions including who does what, how and when.

Policies tell people what to do. Procedures tell them how to do it.

In developing your policies it is good to ask the follow questions:

- » What is the issue, problem or opportunity for which we need a policy? Can we define it?
- » Do we have a policy that does/should address this issue, problem or opportunity?
- » Do we need an effective guide for our actions and decisions in this area?
- » What do we intend this policy to do?
- » What outcomes do we expect to see?
- » What is the purpose of this policy?
- » Why do we need this policy?

As you develop your policies, consider what areas you need to develop policies in. For most agencies these include: financial, administrative, space management, human resources, safety/security and operations.

In the resources for this section you can find a number of example policies from both Covenant House Vancouver and Covenant House Toronto that may prove helpful in the development of your own policies.

Each policy and procedure is divided into several key components and these provide a good format to follow in the development of your policies:

- » Policy or Policy Statement
- » Overview (sometimes excluded)
- » Purpose
- » Procedure

[See online resources.](#)