**Rochester Community and Technical College**

**Policy and Procedure Development**

Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC) Policies and Procedures are officially sanctioned rules and processes for the College. Policies and procedures are used to empower employees with the direction and consistency they need for successful process improvement. A policy must be reviewed and discussed through the appropriate meet and confer processes before receiving final approval by the President. This document explains the development and key points for Policies and Procedures, and provides a template for policy creation and review.

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| **Policies:*** Describe the rules that apply throughout the College and are guides to decision making under a given set of circumstances.
* Range from a philosophy to a specific rule, and reflect the College’s mission, vision, or values.
* Include **WHAT** the rule is, **WHY** it exists, **WHEN** it applies and **WHO** it covers.
 | **Procedures:*** Describe the critical steps taken to achieve the policy intent.
* Are brief, concise, factual and to the point, and usually expressed using lists. (*i.e. series of steps*).
* Include **HOW** to achieve the necessary results.
* Refer the reader to related documents, forms, work instructions/department rules.
 | **Guidelines:*** Provide **SUGGESTIONS**, or best practices, and are not usually requirements, but are strong recommendations.
* Considered a good idea.
* Reactive to change and continuous improvement.
* Must be shared with stakeholders.
* Not specifically part of a policy or procedure.
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| *Many departmental/divisional procedures and guidelines, although useful and important, do not meet the criteria above, and therefore are not considered College Policies.*  |

**Process:** The Office of the President manages the development, amendment, repeal and approval of all RCTC Policies and Procedures. Any individual or constituency group with an interest in contributing ideas/thoughts may submit a policy or procedure proposal. The President may also convene task forces or seek consultation from any department to develop a proposed policy or procedure change. Before the adoption of any change in College policy or procedure other than a technical change, the policy draft must be discussed with appropriate bargaining and/or student groups in a meet and confer setting (this does not include forms). Policies shared at Faculty Shared Governance Council or Academic Affairs and Standards Council will not be implemented until completion of a first and second reading.

**Publication:** The Office of the President shall maintain policies and procedures in hard copy format and publish policies on the College’s website. Policies shall also be made available to the public upon request.

**Format:** College policies and procedures must be written in accordance with style and format standards, and must include date of implementation, date of approval, and date of revisions (if applicable). *A template is attached*.

**Other Considerations**:

* Use gender-neutral language – use “their” instead of “he/she.”
* Use short sentences and short paragraphs.
* Use common words (i.e. “use” instead of “utilizes.”)
* Use active, rather than passive language.
* Use “must” or “will” if action is mandatory,” and use “may” if action is permissive, and avoid the word “shall” unless there is a legislative requirement that prescribes its use. (This word causes confusion between whether an action is mandatory or recommended.
* Use department names, rather than position titles (if possible).
* Use links to generic web pages rather than specific web pages (if possible). For example, refer to “Student Administration Forms” rather than the specific URL for the form.
* Avoid the use of acronyms. If acronyms are necessary, use the full title/term first before using the acronym.
* Avoid the use of jargon, unnecessary technical expressions and fancy vocabulary.

**Periodic Review:** Policies are only as effective as the relevance and accuracy of their information. To ensure policies stay current and relevant, all policies will be reviewed on a cycle of a minimum of every three years unless deemed otherwise by responsible division. Key questions to be asked during the review are: Is the policy still relevant, accurate, and legal? Have certain technologies and processes changed since the policy was created? Does the policy correctly convey the mission, vision, and goals of the College? Upon review, summary documentation will be submitted to the Office of the President.

***POLICY TEMPLATE***



## POLICY TITLE (RCTC Policy #)

**Part 1. Policy Statement:** *This section should be a concise statement of “what” the policy is intended to accomplish. Keep the policy statement as brief and understandable as possible. Simply worded policy statements are more easily understood and therefore are more effective*.

**Part 2. Rational or Purpose:** *This section should include a brief statement as to the “why” the College is adopting the policy. Each policy must support RCTC’s mission, vision, or values. This section may also contain background information or explain legal, regulatory, or other factors that led to the development of the policy.*

**Part 3. Scope:** *This section should set important parameters such as to whom will the policy apply (i.e. students, faculty, staff, and/or guests)*.

**Part 4. Definitions:** *This section should consolidate the terms contained within the policy and define those words. It should attempt to convey messages in simple, yet precise terms; excessive definitions may make a policy document unreadable or subject it to greater scrutiny*.

**Part 5. Procedures:** *The statement should include one or two sentences describing how to accomplish a task or reach a goal. More detailed explanations may be addressed through a separate procedure that is associated with the policy*.

**Part 6. Forms:** *If there are forms associated with the policy, this section should list the forms. If the forms are web based, this section should link the form to the website*.

*Date of Implementation: This should be the date the policy is to be implemented*

*Date of Adoption: This should be the date the policy is approved by the President*

*Responsible Division: This should be the Chief Officer responsible for the operational interpretation of this policy and responsible for conducting the periodic review of the policy.*

*\*Not all “Parts” need to be included in a policy. Please use only those sections necessary for the specific policy.*