

REVISING THE ADMINISTRATIVE MANUAL: THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES OF TOMPKINS COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Objective:	To create a process for establishing new administrative policy and procedures; modifying existing administrative policy and procedures; and periodically reviewing and updating policies and procedures in the Administrative Manual.	Policy/Procedure Number:	01-04
Reference: (All Applicable Federal, State and Local Laws)	County Administration, Resolution No. 12 in 1981; and the Tompkins County Charter, Article 3, Section 3.03.I	Effective Date:	January 12, 1981
		Responsible Department:	County Administration
		Modified Date (s):	June 1992; December 2003; January 2008; June 2015
Legislative Policy Statement:	It is the policy of the Tompkins County Legislature to have a manual of Legislative policies and administrative procedures that govern the functioning of the County organization, and to have a process for keeping the manual up to date.	Resolution No.:	03-256; 08-005
		Next Scheduled Review:	December 2020

General Information:

The Department of County Administration is responsible for coordinating and tracking additions or revisions to the Administrative Manual according to the procedures outlined in this policy.

County staff or a member of the legislature can initiate requests for additions, deletions, or updates to the Administrative Manual. All requests must be submitted via the Administrative Manual Change Request process that is accessible via the County Administrative Manual Web page.

To ensure consistency and accuracy, all updates and additions must be prepared using the Administrative Manual Template.

The Administrative Policy Template and Administrative Manual Impact Review Form, mentioned throughout this policy, are accessible online via the County website or by contacting County Administration at 274-5551.

The Department of County Administration will send out an annual notice to all County employees detailing all amendments made to the Administrative Manual during the calendar year.

I. Definitions:

Impact Review—A review conducted by designated department/division personnel for the purpose of assessing the impact of the new or revised policy/procedure on day-to-day operations, critical timelines/deadlines, or existing financial or human resources.

Content Review—A review conducted by the appropriate Legislative Standing Committee(s) for the purpose of assessing the relevancy and appropriateness of the new or revised policy, and ensuring that the wording is clear and consistent with other related policies. Content Review by a Legislative Standing Committee is only required for policy updates.

Policy—A Legislative statement of intention to guide political, management, financial, or administrative decisions and achieve rational outcome(s).

Procedure—A prescribed set of steps, actions, or activities generally needed to obtain consistent results. Revisions need to be presented to the appropriate Legislative Committees for their information.

Procedural Review—A review conducted by the Legislative Standing Committee responsible for policy review for the purpose of confirming consistency, completeness, and clarity in the language and intent of the new or revised policy, ensuring that process steps have been followed according to this policy. A Procedural Review is only necessary for policy updates.

Responsible Department—The department or division within the County organizational structure that is responsible for preparing the appropriate language for new or updated policies or procedures, and for routinely reviewing policies or procedures according to the criteria presented in Section II of this policy. The responsible department is identified in the top quadrant of the first page of the policy template.

II. Policy:

A. Legislative approval (a formal vote) is required for new policies or for changes to existing policy.

B. Legislative approval (a formal vote) is not required for new or revised procedures; however, as a courtesy, revisions need to be presented to the appropriate Legislative Committee (s) for their information and reaction.

C. The Responsible Department will ensure that relevant policies and procedures are introduced, reviewed or updated according to the following criteria:

1. A change in federal, state, or local law has affected existing policy/procedure;
2. A change due to labor contract negotiations has affected existing policy/procedure;
3. The policy/procedure has not been reviewed within the past five years. (Refer to the “next scheduled review date” section of the policy.)
4. The policy/procedure in question no longer reflects actual practice;
5. The need for a new policy and/or procedure has been identified.

III. Procedure:

Section A. PROPOSING NEW POLICY OR REVISING EXISTING POLICY:

The following steps are required for introducing new policy or for revising existing policy:

Step 1. County staff or a member of the Legislature completes an Administrative Manual Change Request (which is accessible online), attaching the proposed new policy or suggested policy revisions. The Department of County Administration will review this information and will determine next steps for “responsible department” designation, processing, and tracking.
Time frame: up to 10 business days

Step 2. The Department of County Administration will forward the request to the Responsible Department for review and to assess the relevance and appropriateness of the new or revised policy.

Step 3. The responsible department makes changes to the new or revised policy language as needed and submits this information to the Department of County Administration. As a courtesy, this information may also be shared with the request initiator. Time frame: up to 15 business days

Step 4. The Department of County Administration will forward the new or revised policy to all Department Heads, who may, if necessary, share the policy with department personnel, for an Impact Review. County Legislators also receive the policy at this stage with an option to provide comments. Time frame: up to 10 business days

Step 5. Each County Department shall designate specific staff within that department to conduct an Impact Review. Any recommended changes or comments should be submitted to the Department of County Administration, using the Administrative Manual Impact Review Form, which is accessible online. Time frame: up to 15 business days

Step 6. The Department of County Administration will prepare a verbatim summary of all Impact Review recommendations and comments received and will send the summary to the Responsible Department for review and any further revisions. Time frame: Up to 10 business days.

Step 7. The Responsible Department will prepare (a) a final draft of the new or revised policy and (b) a corresponding resolution explaining why the policy is being added or changed and will forward these documents to the Department of County Administration for tracking and dissemination. Time frame: Up to 10 business days

Step 8. The Department of County Administration will forward the final draft of the new or revised policy and accompanying resolution to the relevant Legislative Standing (Program) Committee(s) for Content Review. Following Legislative Standing Committee review, the new or revised policy and corresponding resolution will be returned to the Department of County Administration for tracking, regardless of policy change approval status. A representative from the Responsible Department is expected to attend all designated Legislative Standing Committee meetings to present the policy changes and answer questions about the recommended changes. Time frame: Up to 30 business days

Step 9. The Department of County Administration will forward the new or revised policy and corresponding resolution to the Legislative Standing Committee responsible for policy review for a Procedural Review and approval for presentation to the full Legislature. (If the Legislative Standing Committee responsible for policy review is also the relevant program committee, the new or revised policy will go to that Committee for both Content and Procedural Review.) Time frame: Up to 30 business days

Note: Both Legislative Standing Committees must approve the new or revised policy in order for it to be adopted by the full Legislature. If the new or revised policy is not approved, Steps 2-8, or a combination of these, may be repeated until either the policy is approved or tabled for consideration at a later date.

Step 10. The Department of County Administration will submit the new or revised policy, any relevant supporting documentation, and corresponding resolution to the Clerk of the Legislature at least one week prior to the next scheduled meeting of the full Legislature.

Step 11. The Clerk of the Legislature will include the new or revised policy and corresponding resolution in the Legislature Agenda and will notify County Administration of the outcome. Time frame: Up to 10 business days

Step 12. County Administration will track all results, notify all departments as appropriate, and make the final changes to the Administrative Manual as approved. Time frame: Up to 10 business days

Section B. INTRODUCING NEW PROCEDURE OR UPDATES TO EXISTING PROCEDURE:

The following steps are required when revising or updating a procedure(s):

Step 1. County staff or a member of the Legislature completes an Administrative Manual Change Request (which is accessible online), attaching the proposed new procedure or suggested procedure revisions. The Department of County Administration will review this information and will determine next steps for “responsible department” designation, processing, and tracking. Time frame: up to 10 business days

Step 2. The Department of County Administration will forward the request to the Responsible Department for review and to assess the relevancy and appropriateness of the new or revised procedure.

Step 3. The Responsible Department makes changes to the new or revised procedure language as needed and submits this information to the Department of County Administration. As a courtesy, this information may also be shared with the request initiator. Time frame: up to 15 business days

Step 4. The Department of County Administration will forward the new or revised procedure to all Department Heads, who may, if necessary, share the policy with department personnel, for an Impact Review. Time frame: up to 10 business days

Step 5. Designated department personnel will conduct an Impact Review and submit recommended changes or comments, via the Administrative Manual Impact Review Form, to the Department of County Administration. Time frame: up to 15 business days

Step 6. The Department of County Administration will prepare a verbatim summary of all Impact Review recommendations and comments received and will send the summary to the Responsible Department for review and any further revisions. Time frame: Up to 10 business days

Step 7. The Responsible Department will prepare the final language of the new or revised procedure and will forward to the Department of County Administration for tracking and dissemination. Time frame: up to 15 business days

Step 8. The Department of County Administration will, for informational purposes only, share the revised procedures with the relevant Legislative Standing (program) Committee(s) and the Legislative Standing Committee responsible for policy review. The Department of County Administration will also track all results, notify all departments as appropriate, and make the final changes to the Administrative Manual. Time frame: Up to 10 business days