

Policy on Policy

Development and Maintenance of Official College Policies and Related Procedures

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Section 1: Purpose

Virginia Peninsula Community College (VPCC) is under the authority of the State Board for Community Colleges (SBCC) as part of the Virginia Community College System (VCCS). The College follows all official policies, procedures and regulations established by the SBCC and the Commonwealth of Virginia. This policy establishes VPCC protocol for the development, review, approval, implementation, and maintenance of internal policies and procedures that may be mandated by the State Board or are unique to VPCC in assuring integrity, efficiency, efficacy, and equity of college operations.

The SBCC establishes system-side policies, but procedures for implementation are developed by individual colleges to allow them to respond to changes in their internal organizational structures and operations or the external environment of the communities they serve. The relationship between the policy and the procedures must be clear. The SBCC may require colleges to develop a policy or procedures that follow a specific format or require SBCC approval before implementation. Because policies remain relatively stable, but procedures may need more frequent updates, VPCC maintains them as separate but linked documents.

Maintaining a clear, current repository of policies and procedures strengthens the institution helping faculty, staff, and students understand expectations and navigate operational requirements

A comprehensive, well-organized list of policies and procedures sets standards and expectations, improves communication, reduces mistakes, increases productivity, and ensures consistency and compliance with regulations and guidelines.

- 1.1 Constituents may gain a sense of engagement and empowerment with the college and its leadership when assured that decision-making is grounded in authentic, transparent policies and procedures.

- 1.2 Publication of policies and procedures increases the capacity of constituents to understand why and how the college operates, their rights and responsibilities, and personal accountability for success.
- 1.3 1.3 Access to effective policies and procedures limits confusion, conflicts, misunderstandings, and inconsistencies that contribute to inequitable treatment among and between constituency groups.
- 1.4 Effective policy and procedures manual can protect the college from possible legal action associated with a lack of compliance or an increase in vulnerability to information leaks and cyber-attacks.

Section 2: Scope

This policy applies to all policies and procedures that affect all VPCC employees. Departmental rules, regulations, or guidelines that affect only a limited number of individuals, a specific campus, or office do not fall within the scope of this policy but may not conflict with official College policies. Only SBCC mandated regulations, or directives from the VPCC president to address college specific needs shall be considered as official college policies.

This policy creates a standardized framework for developing policies based on the following principles:

2.1 Participatory Governance

Policies will be developed and approved through participatory governance. This model connects members of the college's designated constituency groups to the college's leadership team, giving everyone the opportunity to contribute based on their expertise and roles. The VPCC President has final approval authority for policy creation and revision.

2.2 Structured Proposals

Proposals for new and revised policies will be presented in a structured format that identifies the issue, proposes solutions to resolve the issue, and assigns ownership and accountability for monitoring the lifecycle of the policy development, approval, review, revision, and implementation processes.

2.3 Accessible Policies

Official college policies will be written in clear and concise language. They will be stored centrally and maintained on the college website. Policies will be linked electronically to related procedures and forms, and relevant external mandates or policies, accreditation standards, and legal requirements.

2.4 Ongoing Compliance

Policies and related resources must remain current and compliant with all relevant internal and external mandates, policies, accreditation standards and legal requirements.

Section 3: Definitions

3.1 Policy

A policy is a guiding principle that guides college-wide decision-making. It sets expectations, ensures compliance with laws, regulations, and governing bodies, supports the mission, reduces risk and establishes accountability.

3.2 Procedure

A procedure describes chronological, step by step, specific actions for policy implementation. It assigns responsibility for oversight, ensures accountability for results, creates a reasonable timeline and communication plan.

3.3 Plan

A plan is a coordinated set of actions and procedures designed to achieve a specific outcome. It explains how, when, what and who is involved. A plan may be connected to one or more policies.

3.4 Designated Cabinet Member

The designated cabinet member is appointed by the President to ensure appropriate development of a policy or procedure.

3.5 Constituency Group

The College has specific groups designed to promote participatory governance. The groups are called “constituency groups”. They are a group of employees, faculty, or students that represents and supports the interests of individuals associated with the college based on their roles within the organization of the college. The College’s approved constituency groups include the Faculty Senate, College Support Staff Association, Council of Mid-Level Managers, and Student Government Association.

3.6 Reference

A reference is a hyperlink or citation given in the text of a policy to refer the reader to the original source, related documents, or higher-level authority.

3.7 Policy Request Form

A form used as the first step in initiating action to develop a new policy, propose substantive modifications to existing policies, or request archiving outdated policies.

3.8 Requester

The requestor is a campus community member who initiates action to draft a new policy, modify an existing policy, or archive an outdated policy.

3.9 Writing Team

The writing team is a group of representatives appointed by the designated Cabinet member and charged to draft a new policy or procedure for consideration or to modify an existing policy or procedure.

3.10 Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

An SOP outlines routine steps taken within a division or department to complete routine business operations or tasks. SOPs are not necessarily linked to a specific policy.

Section 4: Process

4.1 Identification of Need

When a request is received, the President will designate responsibility to a member of the Cabinet to lead review of the request based on their area of responsibility, authority, and expertise.

The Designated Cabinet member will consult with the Chief of Staff to review any request. This review shall be conducted based on the criteria set forth in Addendum A.

A list of requested policies and procedures and their status will be made available to employees.

Feedback will be provided to the requestor regarding the outcome of the review.

4.2 Development of Policies

The Designated Cabinet member will assign a writing team consisting of faculty and staff knowledgeable about the issues to be addressed. Care will be taken to ensure appropriate campuswide representation.

Using guidelines described in section 5.4 the writing team will prepare the draft for initial review by the designated Cabinet member. Once prepared, the designated Cabinet member will forward the draft to the Constituency group leaders for review and feedback. Following adjustments based on feedback, the designated Cabinet member will present the final version to the president's cabinet for endorsement and subsequent approval by the President.

4.3 Approval of Policies

The College President has final authority to approve new policies or substantive modifications to existing policies. This is typically completed during a meeting of the cabinet and documented in meeting minutes.

4.4 Review and Updating of Policies and Procedures

The Designated Cabinet member is responsible for reviewing and periodically vetting recommendations for updates to ensure that policies continue to be current, relevant, effective, and compliant with external mandates, laws, and requirements.

Administrative adjustments or minor corrections to existing policies do not require the formal vetting and approval process outlined in section 4. These adjustments or corrections may be completed by the cabinet member or designee, reviewed and endorsed by the executive cabinet, and approved by the college president.

Unanticipated changes in laws, regulations, accreditation processes, or even availability of required equipment may not necessitate changes in existing college policy, but immediate adjustments in procedures, guidelines, or directions for implementing the policy may be required on a timeline too short to complete the formal review and approval process before negatively impacting policy outcomes. The President may delegate authority to the policy's designated Cabinet member to approve a new or revised procedure to become effective immediately for a period of up to six months while it goes through the formal review and approval process.

Any adjustments that change the original intent or significantly alter the outcome of the policy, must be conducted through the process listed in section 4.2.

4.5 Cabinet Responsibilities

Cabinet members, in collaboration with the President's Chief of Staff, shall develop and promulgate procedures to implement all official college policies and will provide oversight for reviewing, vetting, and distributing new and revised policies and procedures.

Cabinet members or their designees shall ensure the accuracy and timely promulgation of official college policies and procedures related to their areas of responsibility or departments. These responsibilities include:

- 4.5.1 Identifying operations within their respective functional areas of responsibility that need new or revised policy or procedures.
- 4.5.2 Recommending appropriate policy statements to the Cabinet for endorsement and the President for approval.
- 4.5.3 Developing, maintaining, and approving procedures for implementing approved policies
- 4.5.4 Conducting periodic review of policies and procedures for their areas of responsibility or departments.
- 4.5.5 Notifying members of the college community who are affected by new policies, procedures, changes, or updates.
- 4.5.6 Assuring compliance with the official policies and procedures within their respective areas of responsibility.

4.6 Management of VPCC Policies and Procedures

The VPCC website is the official repository of all current college policies and procedures and is accessible electronically to all employees, students, and other constituents of the college

community. The President's Chief of Staff maintains official signed copies of all college policies and related procedures, and archived records of outdated policy documents.

The VPCC intranet is the official repository for all current division and departmental level procedures, forms, and reference materials and is available to all employees.

The President's Chief of Staff will maintain the master list of policies and the protocol for assigning policy numbers. An approved copy of each policy, with effective dates for the initial policy and subsequent policy revisions, will be kept on file. Copies of meeting minutes or other means of documenting endorsement and approval will be kept in the same file location. The policies and related procedures will reside in the online Policy on Policies: Development and Maintenance of Official College Policies and Related Procedures on the VPCC website and intranet and will be accessible to all members of the VPCC community for printing copies as needed.

Section 5: References

There are no references to external authorities mandating this policy for Development and Maintenance of Official College Policies and Related Procedures.

The following are internal procedures and forms associated with this policy:

801.01_Procedures_for_Drafting_Policies_and_Procedures_Final_Effective_08.11.26

801.01.A_Policy Request Form_Effective_08.11.26

801.01.B_Policy Template_Effective_08.11.26

801.01.C_Procedure Template_Effective_08.11.26

Section 6: Schedule for Reviews

This policy shall be reviewed annually and updated as needed to reflect changes in law, regulation, system policy, accessibility standards, technology, or College operations.

Section 7: Effective Date and Approval

This policy and accompanying procedures, version 3 of 3, becomes effective upon approval by College President, Dr. Towuanna Porter Brannon on August 11, 2026.

Section 8: Review and Revision History

Revision	Date	Description of Change	Reviewed by	Approved by
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0	01/23/2024	Initial draft proposed by Dr. Lonnie Schaffer, Vice President Steven Felker and the Policy on Policies writing team.	College Council, College Support Staff Association, Council of Mid-Level Managers, Faculty Senate, VPCC Executive Cabinet	Dr. Towuanna Porter Brannon, College President
1	02/11/2025	Revision 1 of 1 proposed by Vice President Steven Felker and Chief of Staff Ada Badgley: added definition(s) and minor administrative revisions.	VPCC Executive Cabinet	Dr. Towuanna Porter Brannon, College President
2	08/11/2026	Revision 2 of 2 proposed by Chief of Staff Ada Badgley: significant language updates to simplify and clarify the policy and procedure, reduction in direct involvement of constituency groups to approve the creation of a new policy or procedure, added a mechanism to publicly share which policies have been requested and the status of that request, added an optional appeal process for any policies that are not moved forward, update to policy and procedure formats, update to policy and procedure request process.	College Council, College Support Staff Association, Council of Mid-Level Managers, Faculty Senate, VPCC Executive Cabinet	Dr. Towuanna Porter Brannon, College President

Next review of this policy will occur on or around August 11, 2027.