

POLICY DEFINITIONS

Practice: The way things are actually done in your library. Practice may or may not be supported by policy statements, regulations, and procedures. Practice is generally conveyed via oral tradition as a part of a new staff member's orientation and it can become very subjective.

The cash handling procedure says that one staff member should count the cash and another should verify the count, but we are small branch so the clerk takes care of it alone.

Policy Element: The term used to refer to the four components of a policy: *policy statements, regulations, procedures, guidelines.*

- **Policy Statement:** A brief, written statement that describes **WHY** the library does something. Policy statements are written from the customer point of view and approved by the library's governing authority.

To facilitate the management of the library and enhance service to the public, all library units will collect and report statistics on a regular schedule.

- **Regulation:** Specific, written rules that further define the policy, describing what must be done to support the policy. They are normally approved by the library's governing authority.

All library fines, fees, and overdue materials must be cleared before a library user may renew his or her card.

- **Procedure:** Written step-by-step descriptions of how the staff will carry out the policy and regulations. Procedures are more flexible than regulations and will change as the tools available to staff change. Frontline staff may be allowed to modify procedures in certain circumstances. Procedures are developed by staff and approved by library managers. They are not reviewed by or approved by the library's governing authority.

The library staff member who books a tour will: (1) Complete the Tour Request Form; (2) Place it in the branch manager's in-box.

- **Guideline:** A description of best practices that provides suggestions for staff on the most efficient ways to implement policy statements, regulations, and procedures. Guidelines are more philosophical than policy statements, regulations, or procedures and often are developed by staff committees. Guidelines are always approved by the library director but are rarely reviewed by the library's governing authority. Typical guidelines include reference guidelines and guidelines for serving people with special needs.

Library staff assigned to provide information services will promptly and courteously greet all customers.