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*AFVS Policies & Templates are intended as general guides in relation to the topics covered, and should not be relied upon as a substitute for appropriate legal policies and templates. No liability can be taken for actions taken, or not taken, based on their use and the information contained within them.*

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## POLICIES THAT ARE NEEDED BY THE BOARD OF A CHARITY

This is a list of policies that a charity might hold. Some of the policies are required by law and are essential; others are policies that might be appropriate for some charities but not needed by others to enable them to be effective. For example a charity that hires out rooms in its building should have a robust policy to keep it safe and secure. Increasingly, Insurers are expecting their clients to have appropriate policies in place. If a policy they expect to see is absent or deficient it can affect cover in the event of a claim.

The Charity Commission, in its annual reporting requirements, asks whether you have particular policies in place. If a serious incident is reported an early question will be to ask to see any relevant policies.

This list is not in any particular order of importance. I suggest that you use it as a checklist to identify what is needed by your charity. If necessary enlist our help to bring you up to speed.

Some policies will overlap with other policies, particularly risk, safeguarding, employment.

1. Safeguarding. It's essential to have a general policy in place, together with a child and vulnerable adults protection policies.
2. Data Protection (GDPR). A whole suite of policies is required by the ICO, covering all your data from website to manual records kept at home.
3. Risk. A detailed risk assessment is required covering all aspects of the charity's operations
4. Health and Safety. Required if 5 or more staff employed.
5. Fire Safety. This will cover what to do to minimise fire risk and what to do if there is a fire.
6. Lone Working. To cover staff and volunteers

7. Finance and Accounting. At the very least a Financial Controls Policy.
8. Trustee Responsibilities, and Code of Conduct.
9. Room Hire. To cover terms and conditions, alcohol etc.
10. Volunteers. A policy is advisable together with an appropriate agreement in respect of each volunteer. Important that it is understood that there is no employer/employee relationship, but that rights and responsibilities on both sides are clearly defined.
11. Conflict of Interest. Some of this will be contained in the governing document but a separate policy will lay down clear guidelines on how a conflict can be identified and managed.
12. Conduct of Meetings. Primarily to cover board meetings, but can cover operational meetings. Much of this will be covered in the governing document
13. Complaints. This is a must. If you don't have one, the ICO or the Charity Commission would be concerned in the event of a complaint being made.
14. Staff. Where staff are employed it is important that you have the whole range of policies needed. A staff handbook regularly updated will cover this.
15. Food Hygiene. if there is a kitchen or area where food is prepared an appropriate range of policies is required, with any certification needed.
16. Reserves. You should have one even if it's aspirational.
17. Ethical Investment. Not essential but may be sensible if you hold investments.
18. Confidentiality
19. IT and Social Media. particularly Data retention, disposal and destruction, and Access and storage of electronic information. These policies will overlap with staff policies and GDPR
20. General Governance. This might cover memberships if you have members, relationship between board and executive. Board Payments and expenses.
21. Board Meeting Annual Cycle. This is useful to have to make sure that nothing is overlooked in the schedule of a busy board.
22. Corporate Credit Card
23. Whistleblowing Policy

24. Anti-bribery and corruption. Acceptance of hospitality and donations.
25. First Aid Policy
26. Scheme of Delegation.
27. Anti-money Laundering Policy.
28. Insurances Policy
29. Anti-Fraud Policy
30. Regulations: the board has the power to make its own regulations in respect of matters not covered in the governing document, particularly concerning operational issues. Any regulations made should be minuted by the board.

This is an extensive list which will no doubt be added to from time to time. Some of the policies are covered in one side of A4; others such as risk will need to be detailed and extensive. If you need help with anything, we are here to offer guidance and practical help. Be proportionate to your size and operational complexity; what's needed by a big charity may not be needed by a smaller charity. Policies should be signed off by the board and reviewed annually. Some policies will come from above if you are part of a wider network. For example Trussell Trust has a handbook providing policies and operational guidelines and requirements for individual foodbanks. Churches part of a denomination will have their own sets of policies and guidelines.

We are also on hand to review your policies to make sure that they are fit for purpose. For example we recently reviewed a charity's equality policy which was well put together but would not have been accepted if it was challenged.

***John Truscott, whose mission is Creative Organisation for Effective Christian Ministries has put together a detailed paper on church policies.***

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**Daryl Martin – Revised March 2019**

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