

DEFINING THE TERMS: Policy, Guidelines, and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

IN A NUTSHELL:

Policy -- our approach to/position on what we do

Guidelines -- how we suggest you do things but no enforcement/penalties if you don't

SOPs -- exactly how you are expected to do things

POLICY

A position statement. A definite course of action, adopted for the sake of expediency, facility, etc.

GUIDELINES

Directions, suggestions, or counseling for preparing a future course of action. Those receiving guidelines may choose whether and to what degree to comply with them, without penalty.

SOPs

Defined and detailed processes for the conduct of a course of action, with clear accountability. Should be reviewed and updated regularly.