



## Sample Policies and Procedures for Community-Based Literacy Organizations



# Sample Policies and Procedures



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## Acknowledgements

### Sample Policies and Procedures for Community-Based Literacy Organizations

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## Introduction

Policies, policies, policies! Every time we turn around there is someone looking for a policy: your Board of Directors asks you for a succession planning policy, your Employment and Training Consultant wants you to enhance your risk assessment policies, the Federal (or Provincial) government requires you to have a new policy in place to conform to new laws, or your insurance company needs you to develop certain policies before they will insure you.

We all agree that policies are important! After all, you need well-written policies to:

- Ensure conformity to legislation and the organization's mission, purpose and values
- Demonstrate that the organization efficiently operated in businesslike manner
- Clarify roles, responsibilities, expectations, accountability and restrictions
- Provide for the safety and the fair, equal treatment of employees, clients, learners and volunteers
- Ensure consistency in decision-making and the development of operational procedures
- Provide a framework for program planning
- Foster stability and continuity, maintaining the organization's direction even through change
- Provide some legal protection by showing "due diligence"
- Prevent any doubt about how particular situations/issues should be handled

However, it can be hard to find the time for policy development. In response to this need, Community Literacy of Ontario (CLO) polled Ontario's community literacy agencies to ask about your policy needs. Based on requests from agencies, CLO has gathered various sample policies into this new resource for you to adapt and customize to suit the particular needs of your organization.

The following sample policies are provided:

- Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities Policy
- Emergency Policy
- Fee for Service Policy
- Partnering Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Record, Retention and Destruction Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Succession Planning Policy
- Training Support Policy
- Volunteer Screening Policy

**We hope that our new resource, "Sample Policies and Procedures for Community-Based Literacy Organizations" will support you in the important work you do.**



## Policies Versus Procedures

When developing policies, it is sometimes easy to veer mistakenly into the territory of procedures. Although policies and procedures go hand-in-hand, they are distinct. The chart below compares the two.

Policies	Procedures
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are written statements that tell people "what is to be done" and "why it's done"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tell people the, "when to do it", "how to do it" and sometimes "who will do it"</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are developed by an organization's top management (Board of Directors or senior staff)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are developed by lower-level management and those involved in procedure</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are in broad terms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are detailed steps or actions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Change infrequently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May change often</li> </ul>

The following statement sums up the policy and procedure comparison, *"I see policies as the rules, or laws, of an organization, whereas the procedures are the processes used to enact the policies."* (Sandy Kemsley, <https://column2.com/2007/10/policies-procedures-processes-and-rules>)





### Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities Policy

ABC Learning Centre follows the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality of opportunity for people with disabilities. ABC Learning Centre strives for excellence in serving all customers including people with disabilities.

#### *Definitions*

**Disability** is any degree of physical disability or infirmity; a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability; a learning disability, an inability to understand or use symbols or spoken language; or a mental disorder.

**Barriers to accessibility** are obstacles that make it difficult or not possible for people with disabilities to do the things most people are able to do.

**Assistive devices and technologies** are those whose purpose is to maintain or improve an individual's functioning, independence, and participation. Assistive devices may increase mobility, vision, hearing or communication. Examples include wheelchairs, hearing aids, visual aids and specialized computer software/hardware.

#### *Directives*

1. ABC Learning Centres will identify and remove barriers to access for people with disabilities by developing an "Accessibility Plan". This plan will be reviewed and updated annually and will comply with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and any other law or legislation respecting non-discrimination.
2. People with disabilities may use their personal assistive devices when accessing our services or facilities. In cases where the assistive device presents a significant and unavoidable health or safety concern, other measures will be used to ensure the person with a disability can access our services or facilities.
3. We will communicate with people with disabilities in ways that take into account their disability. We will work with the person to determine what method of communication works for them.

## Sample Policies and Procedures



4. We will welcome people with disabilities with service animals. A service animal can be identified through visual indicators, such as its harness or vest, or when it helps the person perform certain tasks. When we cannot easily identify that an animal is a service animal, our staff may ask a person to provide documentation (template, letter or form) from a regulated health professional that confirms the person needs the service animal for reasons relating to their disability.
5. A person with a disability who is accompanied by a support person will be allowed to have that person accompany them to our services and facilities. Fees will not be charged for support persons.
6. If there is a planned or unexpected disruption to services or facilities for customers with disabilities, ABC Learning Centre will notify customers promptly. This clearly posted notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated length of time, and a description of alternative facilities or services, if available.
7. Training about accessible customer service will be provided to all employees and volunteers. Training will include: the purpose and requirements of the AODA; ABC Learning Centre's Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities policies; how to interact and communicate with people with various types of disabilities; how to interact with people with disabilities who use an assistive device or require the assistance of a service animal or a support person; how to use any equipment or devices available on-site that may help provide services or facilities to people with disabilities.
8. Customer feedback will help us identify barriers and respond to concerns. Procedures will be established for ABC Learning Centre to welcome, receive and respond to feedback on how we provide accessible customer service.
9. ABC Learning Centre will notify the public that documents related to accessible customer service are available upon request. These documents will be in an accessible format. Alternatively, upon request, in a timely manner and at no additional cost, communication support for the documents will be provided.

The Ontario Government has set up a site with many resources to help organizations and businesses to meet the regulations and timelines of the Accessibility of Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). The titles and sub-titles offer links to helpful tools. [www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-rules-businesses-and-non-profits](http://www.ontario.ca/page/accessibility-rules-businesses-and-non-profits)



### Emergency Policy

This policy is to ensure emergency response and the resumption and recovery of ABC Learning Centre's operations and essential activities during a critical event.

The primary goals of the Emergency Policy are:

- To protect lives, property and information
- To prevent or minimize the impact of emergencies and to maximize our effectiveness in responding to inevitable occurrences
- To provide for the continuity of operations in pursuit of ABC Learning Centre's mission



### Definitions

- **Business Continuity:** The ability to continue key operations without stoppage, in spite of critical events.
- **Business Continuity Plan:** A plan to keep the business operating and recover/restore partially or completely interrupted critical functions.
- **Critical Events, Hazards or Threats:** may be *Natural* (e.g., flood, tornado), *Accidental* (e.g., fire, contamination), *Health Related* (e.g., epidemic, pandemic), *Commercial* (e.g., loss of critical services like power or water), or *Wilful* (e.g., vandalism, theft, arson).
- **Emergency:** An unusual and dangerous situation needing immediate action to control and return to a safe condition.
- **Emergency Plan:** A collection of procedures, plans and resources that are developed, collected and kept ready for use in the event of an emergency or crisis.
- **Risk Assessment** is the identification and evaluation of the levels of risk involved in a situation/event/threat and the determination of an acceptable level of risk.
- **Stakeholders:** Those people and organizations that may affect, or be affected by, or think they are affected by, a decision or activity of ABC Learning Centre.





## *Directives*

### **1. Risk Assessment**

- a. Risk assessments will be completed to determine the amount of risk related to a critical situation or a recognized hazard or threat.
- b. Assessments will consider the potential injury, loss or interruption and the probability that the injury, loss or interruption will occur. These factors will determine the risk priority of impact vs. probability
- c. Assessment methods may differ depending on the type of risk (financial, environmental, health, etc.)
- d. If an activity, service or threat is considered to have significant risk, then an Emergency Plan and/or a Business Continuity Plan will be developed.

### **2. Emergency Plans and Business Continuity**

- a. Emergency Plans: Emergency Plans ensure the safety of everyone in the affected site. Emergency Plans should include the following emergency information:
  - i. Evacuation plan – all staff will know and be able to implement the plan
  - ii. Names and contacts for persons with responsibilities, e.g. first aid officers, coordinators
  - iii. Notification of emergency services
  - iv. First aid treatment and assistance
  - v. Fire alarms and extinguishers
  - vi. Communication procedures
  - vii. Training and testing of plans and procedures (drills)



- b. Business Continuity Plans To ensure that the organization as a whole remains viable in the event of crisis ABC Learning Centre will maintain one or more Business Continuity Plans, describing:
  - i. Priority/critical services/activities
  - ii. Time-lines for recovery of each service/activity
  - iii. Response strategies and actions to be taken in the event of a critical event.
- c. Emergency and Business Continuity Plans will anticipate a variety of probable scenarios ranging from ABC Learning Centre-specific to regional crises.
- d. When legally mandated or appropriate, ABC Learning Centre's Emergency and Business Continuity Plans will connect with, and assist community partners and authorities, both in plan development and during critical events.
- e. Plans will not supersede or contradict any laws or governmental regulations.
- f. Plans should be periodically tested for viability and to better prepare staff/stakeholders.

### 3. Emergency Policy Review

This Emergency Policy and its plans will be reviewed bi-annually with all staff

The Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety offers a number of Health and Safety documents to help prepare plans, etc. Some examples are the *Emergency Planning guide*, *Management Checklist* and *Hazard and Risk*. A list of the resources can be found at [www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms).

You might also find useful some of the example plans and risk assessment tools that are found on FEMA, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's site. [www.fema.gov/media-library/resources-documents/collections/357](http://www.fema.gov/media-library/resources-documents/collections/357)



### Fee for Service Policy

In order to ensure that ABC Learning Centre directs resources to its mission and mandate, all services provided outside of these goals will be done either at full cost recovery or to generate a surplus. ABC Learning Centre will provide such services to respond to the needs of the community or as an opportunity to generate revenue to support ABC Learning Centre's growth and sustainability.



#### *Directives*

- 1 This policy does not cover any previously funded activities, including but not limited to Literacy and Basic Skills services funded through Employment Ontario, Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development.
- 2 This policy covers activities of various natures, from photocopying to consulting work.
- 3 Fees will be charged to fill requests for activities that are outside the scope of the regular work of ABC Learning Centre, but serve the needs of the community – thus, balancing public service with a wise use of ABC Learning Centre's resources.
- 4 Delivery of any service must consider the capacity of staff and resources to handle it.
- 5 Procedures for costing and collecting of "fees for service" will be developed by the Executive Director. However, it is understood that procedures cannot describe the specific manner in which to address all the different situations that may be encountered. Therefore, procedures will provide a general process in which to successfully deal with the vast majority of requests.
- 6 When requests are made which fall outside of the general procedures, the Executive Director, with assistance from appropriate staff, will evaluate requests and determine how they fit into ABC Learning Centre's scope and staff workload. Estimates will be developed as to how much time and other resources the activity would require and when the work could be incorporated into ABC Learning Centre's schedule. Some requests may be denied.

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- 7 The expenses for all “fee for service” activities must include an appropriate cost for administration and overhead. Fees for service will be established on the following basis:
  - a Recognition of the value of staff professional expertise
  - b Recognition of the real cost of staff time
  - c Recovery of non-salary expenses associated with the delivery of services (e.g. photocopying)
  - d Recognized commercial practices and market standards
- 8 All fees for service will be reviewed annually or when significant changes occur which may affect costing.



### Partnering Policy

Partnerships place formal obligations and risks upon ABC Learning Centre. Therefore, ABC Learning Centre will enter into partnerships only if the conditions in this policy are met and the partnership fits ABC Learning Centre's mission and mandates.



### Advisory groups, reference groups and task forces

- ABC Learning Centre clearly distinguishes between *Partnerships* (in which ABC Learning Centre has formal obligations, roles and responsibilities) and *Advisory groups, reference groups, task forces, etc.* When ABC Learning Centre participates in advisory groups, reference groups, task forces, etc. there are no formal obligations placed on our organization. Participants are there only to give advice and feedback. ABC Learning Centre board and staff participate in advisory groups, reference groups, task forces, etc. based on their capacity to participate and the needs of education/employment sector(s) and our service communities.
- No formal agreements or board permission are necessary to participate in advisory groups, reference groups, task forces, etc. since ABC Learning Centre is not formally bound nor does it have any legal obligations based upon its participation. Participation by any staff member will happen at the discretion of the Executive Director.

### Partnerships

- ABC Learning Centre will not consider entering into partnerships without a formal business plan or a project proposal being prepared by the organization requesting a partnership or by ABC Learning Centre itself. This documentation must include the roles, responsibilities, goals, timeframes, project finances, financial compensation, project management strategy, staffing plans, etc.
- ABC Learning Centre will not enter into any partnerships if the project's goals do not clearly fit with our mission statement and our mandates.

## Sample Policies and Procedures



- ABC Learning Centre will not enter into any partnerships unless it has both the board and staff capacity to effectively participate in the partnership.
- The organization requesting the partnership must develop a formal draft partnership agreement that clearly spells out roles, responsibilities, timelines, communication process, staffing and finances. All partners will review and amend this agreement as appropriate and will formally sign this document before any partnership begins. The agreement must include ABC Learning Centre's right to dissolve a partnership if a partner is not adhering to the agreement.
- Communication is critical to the success of any partnership. The party requesting the partnership must develop a plan for how information will be shared over the duration of the partnership. This plan must be reviewed and approved by ABC Learning Centre. Partnering organizations will provide ABC Learning Centre staff with update reports at mutually agreed upon timeframes.
- The organization requesting the partnership must have a sound track record in project management and organizational management.
- The following "*Partnership Checklist*" will be filled out by ABC Learning Centre staff. If the risk is deemed, by the Executive Director, to be low (financial, reputation, capacity, etc.) after filling out the checklist, the Executive Director may proceed with the partnership without board approval. However, if there is a medium to high degree to risk, then board approval is needed. Financial Policy guidelines must be adhered to regarding signing authority and limitations.
- If a partnership is deemed to be failing, the partnership agreement will be mutually reviewed to determine whether the principles are being adhered to. Based on this review, ABC Learning Centre board and staff will decide what action to take (remedial action or discontinue the partnership).



ABC Learning Centre's Partnership Checklist	Yes / No
1. Has a formal business plan or project proposal been prepared by the organization requesting a partnership and shared with ABC Learning Centre?	
2. Based on this business plan or project proposal, does ABC Learning Centre see an appropriate, manageable and beneficial partnership role for our organization?	
3. Does the proposed initiative clearly fit with ABC Learning Centre's mission, mandates and goals?	
4. Will a partnership provide significant benefits to ABC Learning Centre and the community?	
5. Has a draft partnership agreement been prepared by the organization requesting the partnership? Does ABC Learning Centre approve of the terms and conditions of the partnership agreement?	
6. Has ABC Learning Centre's proposed role in the partnership been clearly articulated in writing? Are we comfortable with that role?	
7. Does ABC Learning Centre have the board and staff capacity and any other required resources to fulfill our proposed role in the partnership?	
8. Will ABC Learning Centre's involvement in the proposed initiative maintain ABC Learning Centre's reputation?	
9. Does a high level of organizational trust exist between ABC Learning Centre and any proposed partners?	
10. Will ABC Learning Centre receive adequate compensation for its role / work in the partnership?	
11. Do the proposed partners have complementary visions and missions?	

## Sample Policies and Procedures



<p>12. Does the proposed partner have a sound track record in managing their organization?</p> <p>Is there clear evidence that that the organization has the capacity to carry out this project / initiative?)</p>	
<p>13. ABC Learning Centre believes in ongoing communication: internally, with the literacy/employment field(s), with funders and between any partners. Is there a communication plan for the project that is agreeable to ABC Learning Centre? Does the proposed partner have a strong track record in effective communication?</p>	
Overall assessment and recommendation:	
Name of person filling out this form:	
Date:	
Areas of significant concern and action (if any) that can be taken to correct the concerns:	
Is this a low-to-high risk partnership that needs to go to the board for formal approval? What level of financial approval is required?	
<p>Recommendation on proceeding with this proposed partnership:</p> <p>Yes: _____ No: _____</p>	
Approved by:	
Additional comments:	





### Privacy Policy

ABC Learning Centre respects the privacy of our members, clients, volunteers, staff, donors, sponsors and stakeholders.

We are committed to ensuring that appropriate measures and safeguards are in place to protect specific information that is held for the purpose of the program. We adhere to all legislative requirements with respect to privacy. We do not rent, sell or trade mailing lists.



### Directives

#### 1. Accountability

- ABC Learning Centre will ensure that all private information is protected.
- Information will not be transferred to third parties without the consent (express or implied) of the individual.
- The Board of Directors will designate an individual to be responsible for ensuring privacy and compliance with the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) and all other privacy legislation. This person will also be responsible to implement procedures and train all employees and volunteers.

#### 2. Identifying Purpose

- We understand that some of the information we hold on members, clients, volunteers, staff, donors, sponsors and stakeholders is private, which is why we collect personal information only for the following purposes:
  - i. To establish and maintain a responsible relationship and provide ongoing service and support.
  - ii. To conduct appropriate screening procedures for those volunteers and staff who may find themselves in a position of trust with the clients of the organization
  - iii. To develop, enhance, market or provide opportunities consistent with the program mandate.



- iv. To maintain, manage and develop our programs and operations, through statistical review, solicited feedback and support.
- v. To meet program and government requirements.

### 3. Consent

- Members, clients, volunteers, staff, donors, sponsors and stakeholders do have choices and can refuse or withdraw consent for us to keep and use information. They may request that their name be removed from our various lists; they can refuse to provide personal information to us; and they may withdraw consent at any time. In all cases this may limit ABC Learning Centre's ability to provide appropriate service and support to these individuals.

### 4. Limiting Collection

- The collection of personal information will be limited to that which is necessary for the purposes identified by the organization. Information will be collected by fair and lawful means.

### 5. Limiting Use, Disclosure & Retention

- Personal information will not be used or disclosed for purposes other than those for which it was collected, except with the consent of the individual or as required by law. Personal information must be retained only as long as necessary for the fulfilment of those purposes.

### 6. Accuracy

- At all times, we strive to keep personal information accurate and up-to-date for the purposes identified above.

### 7. Safeguard

- Personal information will be protected, and/or disposed of, by security safeguards appropriate to the sensitivity of the information. Access to information will be on a "need to know" basis only.



### 8. Openness

- ABC Learning Centre will make readily available to interested parties specific information about its policies and practices relating to the management of personal information.

### 9. Individual Access

- Upon request, an individual will be informed of the existence, use, and disclosure of his or her personal information and will be given access to that information. An individual will be able to challenge the accuracy and completeness of the information and have it amended as appropriate.

### 10. Challenging Compliance

- ABC Learning Centre will investigate all privacy complaints and respond appropriately. Complaint procedures will be kept in place and available to all members, clients, volunteers, staff, donors, sponsors and stakeholders.

The Federal Government provides some information and resources to help with PIPEDA compliance at [www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/privacy-laws-in-canada/the-personal-information-protection-and-electronic-documents-act-pipeda/pipeda-compliance-help](http://www.priv.gc.ca/en/privacy-topics/privacy-laws-in-canada/the-personal-information-protection-and-electronic-documents-act-pipeda/pipeda-compliance-help)

The Fact Sheet on the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs on Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act also provides a useful reference. [www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/facts/05-049.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/facts/05-049.htm)



# Record Retention and Destruction Policy

Federal and provincial laws require organizations to have policies and procedures to govern the storage, retention and discarding of corporate, financial, program and personal information.

Furthermore, it is good business practice that we do not retain this information for longer than required for its purpose, for continuity or by legislation.



## Definitions

For this policy, the terms *information, records and documents* include paper-based, electronic document/files, e-mails and media files (sound, video, digital images, etc.).

The *Records Retention Schedule* is a list of the minimum retention periods for information and records.

The Records Administrator is the person in charge of the administration of this policy, the development of a Records Retention Schedule and the implementation of the policy's subsequent processes and procedures.

## Directives

1. The Executive Director of ABC Learning Centre will act as, or appoint someone on his/her behalf to act as, the Records Administrator. The Records Administrator will:
  - a. develop and make modifications to the Records Retention Schedule
  - b. develop procedures for destroying types of records that are not listed in the Record Retention Schedule, to ensure efficient operations
  - c. ensure that this policy and the Records Retention Schedule comply to best practice and all federal and provincial laws, especially considering tax laws, personal privacy laws and incorporation laws
  - d. monitor the compliance of ABC Learning Centre's staff and volunteers

## Sample Policies and Procedures



2. ABC Learning Centre will ensure that safeguards are maintained to protect the confidentiality of any private information.
3. At a minimum, ABC Learning Centre will meet all legal requirements, for maintenance and destruction of information.
4. Wherever possible, client, personnel, board and administrative records will be safely stored or backed-up to guard against destruction by fire and other threats.
5. ABC Learning Centre's information must be safeguarded and should only be disclosed to outside parties with proper authorization. Any subpoena, court order or other request for documents must be directed to the Executive Director.
6. Any records of ABC Learning Centre in possession of an employee must be returned to the Executive Director upon termination of employment.
7. All paper documents with any private, personal or financial information included will be destroyed by mechanical shredder before they are discarded. Electronic data contained on hard drives will be erased and overwritten (electronically shredded). Electronic data contained on all other media will be erased and overwritten (electronically shredded) or destroyed by the physical destruction of that media.
8. Exception: If ABC Learning Centre is served with a subpoena or any employee becomes aware of a litigation, governmental investigation or audit that may concern ABC Learning Centre's records, then those records must be preserved until legal counsel or the Board of Directors determines that those records are no longer needed.

For a very comprehensive policy example with a record retention schedule of key record-keeping holding periods and maintenance requirements check out the Building Officials Association of BC document at <http://boabc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Policy-Records-Retention-and-Destruction.pdf>

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada has their Record Retention Procedures which include record retention timeframe examples: <https://mssociety.ca/about-us/policy-directions-and-procedures/record-retention-procedures>



### Social Media Policy

ABC Learning Centre believes in using social media in a way that informs, inspires and shows respect for people.

To ensure a professional online presence, ABC Learning Centre's social media accounts will follow these procedures:



- No staff member or volunteer may create any kind of a social media account in ABC Learning Centre's name without approval from management.
- Only people approved by ABC's management may make social media postings on behalf of ABC Learning Centre.
- ABC Learning Centre's management will ensure that all social media accounts have proper security and privacy controls.
- It is the responsibility of ABC Learning Centre's management to ensure that all postings made by ABC are appropriate.

All social media postings made by ABC Learning Centre will:

- Show respect for human dignity
- Respect the spirit of the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Respect ABC's core values
- Respect people's privacy and confidentiality

## Sample Policies and Procedures



ABC Learning Centre considers the following types of postings by us or others on our Facebook page or other social media sites to be unacceptable:

- Defamatory or offensive postings, including swear words or verbal abuse
- Postings that are racist or sexist in nature or are a violation of human rights
- Postings that are against the spirit of the Ontario Human Rights Code
- Postings that are politically partisan or sectarian in nature
- Postings from external individuals or organizations that are intended to solicit business for an external individual or company
- Spam comments
- Such comments will be removed from our social media accounts
- Repeat offenders will be warned and, if necessary, banned from our social media accounts

Establish and follow a strong social media policy. For examples of what to include, be sure to see CLO's [Cyber Risks newsletter](#)



### Succession Planning Policy

Changes in personnel who fill key roles, including the Executive Director, employees and Directors of the Board, will occur. Therefore, ABC Learning Centre needs to prepare for these changes, whether they are planned or unplanned, temporary or permanent.



To ensure the stability and accountability of the organization, ABC Learning Centre must be able to re-fill key roles effectively and promptly, until the staff member can return or a new permanent replacement is in place.

### Definitions

*Succession Plan* is a plan to guide the organization in the event of key personnel taking a leave of absence or departing, due to health, retirement, career change, etc.

### Directives

1. Succession planning will be a working partnership between management (Board/Executive Director) and employees, to define each employee's role and current priorities.
2. In consultation with appropriate personnel, the Executive Director will conduct a succession risk-assessment around all positions in the organization and establish appropriate succession plans for each. These plans will be reviewed annually.
3. Executive Director:
  - a. The position of Executive Director is central to the organization's success. It is important to prepare for either a planned or unexpected change, by ensuring that the roles and functions of the Executive Director are well understood and the various duties are cross-trained amongst staff and Directors of the Board.



## Sample Policies and Procedures



- b. In the case where an Executive Director begins thinking about leaving the organization, ABC Learning Centre will focus on developing a time-lined plan for communicating the transition to staff and stakeholders, conducting a review, building organizational capacity and sustainability and recruiting/hiring a new Executive Director.
- c. The Board will also assess the permanent leadership needs of the organization to help ensure the selection of a qualified and capable leader who is representative of the community, a good fit for the organization's mission, vision, values, goals, and objectives and who has the necessary skills for the organization.
- d. Interim Executive Director - To ensure that there is no interruption in the organization's day-to-day operations, while the Board of Directors assesses the leadership needs and recruits a permanent Executive Director, the Board may need to appoint provisional leadership. The Interim Executive Director shall ensure that ABC Learning Centre continues to operate without disruption and that all organizational commitments are fulfilled.

HRCouncil.ca is an excellent resource for everything Human Resources related in Not-for-Profits. Their section on **Succession Policy** is a great example

<http://hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/planning-succession.cfm>

Literacy Link South Central created a helpful **Succession Planning Guide** for Literacy and Basic Skills Agencies. It is full of helpful charts, checklists and resources to help you plan for employee turn-over. See:

[www.llsc.on.ca/sites/default/files/2012%20SUCCESSION%20PLANNING%202014%20EDO%20Apr\\_Finall.pdf](http://www.llsc.on.ca/sites/default/files/2012%20SUCCESSION%20PLANNING%202014%20EDO%20Apr_Finall.pdf)



### Training Supports Policy

Training Supports are “flow-through” funds that may be provided to individuals to remove financial barriers to their participation in the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) Program. Training Supports assist these learners primarily with transportation and childcare costs.



#### *Directives*

##### **1. Eligibility Criteria**

In order to be eligible to receive Training Supports, claimants must:

- a. Be eligible for and be enrolled in the LBS Program
- b. Have a current annual gross income of less than the maximum set by the Board of Directors, from time to time.
- c. Not be eligible to receive money to pay for childcare or transportation from more than one government source during their participation in the LBS Program.

##### **2. Application And Assessment**

- a. Learners requesting Training Supports must complete and sign a Training Support Agreement Form.
- b. ABC Learning Centre staff will be responsible for confirming eligibility and approving requests for childcare and transportation support, as well as for completing appropriate documentation for audit purposes.
- c. Training Supports are limited funds and, therefore, not guaranteed to all eligible learners. Priority will be given to learners with the greatest need for assistance.
- d. An individual learner may qualify for both childcare and transportation assistance.



### 3. Allowable Claims

#### *a. Childcare:*

- i. Childcare covers the hours of care required for training and travel time.
- ii. Childcare covers licensed and unlicensed childcare costs for up to four children, twelve years and under. In cases of special needs, reimbursement may include children aged thirteen and over.
- iii. Payment for childcare provided by a spouse is not covered, nor are payments for any other relative residing with the claimant.

#### *b. Transportation:*

- i. Learners may claim the cost of return fare from their place of work or their residence to the training site.
- ii. Only one member of a personal vehicle car pool may receive a mileage allowance.
- iii. Exemptions to the maximum rates may be made for persons needing special transportation.

### 4. Rates of Reimbursement

- a. Training Supports are not intended to cover the entire cost of childcare or transportation.
- b. Childcare and travel costs will be reimbursed up to the rates and ceilings established in by the Board of Directors, from time to time.

### 5. Income Tax

- a. Training Supports are taxable benefits under *The Income Tax Act*. T4A slips will be issued to learners receiving Training Supports in excess of \$500 per year.
- b. ABC Learning Centre will maintain appropriate documentation, to support the disbursement of Training Support funds.
- c. Learners should be reminded that childcare expenses that are reimbursed with Training Support funds cannot be deducted when calculating income for income tax purposes.



### 6. Payment Of Training Supports

- a. Normally, Training Supports will be paid after ABC Learning Centre has received and approved the appropriate supporting documentation from the learner. In case of special needs, however, advanced payments may be issued to the applicant. Subsequent payments will be adjusted based on the previous attendance period.
- b. Upon completion of the learner's time in the program, ABC Learning Centre will recover any unused portion of funds advanced.
- c. Payments can be made directly to the claimant or to the service provider, such as licensed childcare.

### 7. Learners Already Subsidized From Other Sources

- a. ABC Learning Centre must ensure that the learner is not receiving support for childcare and transportation from another source.
- b. ABC Learning Centre is responsible for negotiating local agreements with other government agencies to ensure the continuity of support for learners.

### 8. Other

- a. ABC Learning Centre is not responsible for negotiating applicants' childcare and transportation arrangements. However, staff must inform their clients of the various community services available in the area.



### Volunteer Screening Policy

ABC Learning Centre is committed to creating an effective employee and volunteer screening process in order to protect its participants, volunteers, staff, resources and reputation.

ABC Learning Centre, therefore, has a responsibility to screen, appropriately to the position, any person who is working, volunteering or acting on the Centre's behalf. As ABC's volunteers and staff may have access to vulnerable people, this responsibility is particularly important.



### Definitions

*Participants* will be the common term used to refer to clients, learners, students and all other program participants throughout this policy.

*Duty of Care* is a legal principle that identifies the legal obligations of individuals and organizations to take reasonable measures to care for and protect their participants.

*Vulnerable people* are those who, because of age, disability, or other circumstances, are in a position of dependence on others or are otherwise at a greater risk than the general population of being harmed, by a person in a position of authority or trust relative to them. This includes children, youth, senior citizens, people with physical, developmental, social, emotional or other disabilities as well as people who are victims of crime or harm.

### Directives

1. All volunteers, who apply for positions that provide direct service to participants, will go through a screening process that will help to ensure their suitability for the position and the safety of any vulnerable clients with whom they may have access.
2. Volunteers, who wish to provide support to ABC Learning Centre that does not involve direct access to vulnerable participants, will be screened according to the type of position.



3. During the volunteer screening process, ABC Learning Centre collects personal information from Police records checks and from other sources. This information will:
  - a. Be used only for the purposes for which it was collected
  - b. Be kept confidential and only disclosed to those who make decisions about hiring or refusing potential volunteers
  - c. Not be provided to any other person or organization without the specific approval of the applicant
  
4. ABC Learning Centre will establish a risk-management committee that will conduct risk assessments on all volunteer positions. Job descriptions for each volunteer position will determine the type and intensity of screening required relative to the risk as per the chart below.

Volunteer Screening Process by Position Risk Level		
<b>Low Risk Position:</b>  1. Application 2. Interview 3. Monitoring	<b>Medium Risk Position:</b>  1. Application 2. Interview 3. References 4. Supervision	<b>High Risk Position:</b>  1. Application 2. Interview 3. Police Records Check 4. References 5. Supervision

When you are developing Volunteer Screening policies and procedures, a good place to start is Volunteer Canada's screening webpage (<https://volunteer.ca/screening>). A "must have" is their *The Screening Handbook* that can be downloaded from the list of resources at the bottom of their webpage.



### Additional Policy Resources

There are many online resources to help provide guidance for policy development. Check out these useful and free resources:

**Charity Central - Office in a Box – Policies** ([www.charitycentral.ca/office/AB-EN/Section6-AB-EN.pdf](http://www.charitycentral.ca/office/AB-EN/Section6-AB-EN.pdf)) Charity Central's Office in a Box, Chapter 6 is a resource of samples, templates, forms, etc. that was developed: to assist small and rural charities in improving voluntary compliance with the Canada Revenue Agency's (CRA) requirements; to help organize and archive an organization's important information; and to act as a source of information and a tools to educate members of boards. The whole "box" of office resources was developed by Public Legal Education of Alberta and can be downloaded at: [www.charitycentral.ca/office\\_all](http://www.charitycentral.ca/office_all)

**Imagine Canada - Sector Source** has two pages in their *Managing an Organization* section. The first is a Staff Management Policies and Practices Page that offers links to a number of topics and samples of policies, practices and bigger picture studies that inform the development of any new policy. See <http://sectorsource.ca/managing-organization/staff-management/policies-and-practices>. The second is a Board Governance Policies and Planning page that provides guidance on strategic planning and a collection of standard policy examples every board should have in place. See: <http://sectorsource.ca/managing-organization/board-governance/board-policies-planning>

**Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Farming and Rural Affairs - *Developing Policies and Procedures for Volunteer Organizations Fact Sheet*** - Provides steps to developing policies, a list of policies that you should consider, some samples and a template for policy and procedure development for volunteer organizations. See: [www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/facts/08-063.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/facts/08-063.htm)

**Carters Barristers and Solicitors' *Legal Risk Management Checklist for Not-for-Profit Organizations*** – This publication has an extensive list of policies that you should consider to limit your organization's risks. See: [www.carters.ca/pub/checklst/nonprofit.pdf](http://www.carters.ca/pub/checklst/nonprofit.pdf)

**Institute of Community Directors, Australia** – Although not a Canadian resource, the Policy Bank has samples on a wide range of valuable policy topics such as: values, governance, financial management, financial control, communications, volunteers and human resources. See: [www.communitydirectors.com.au/icda/policybank](http://www.communitydirectors.com.au/icda/policybank)

## Sample Policies and Procedures



### **Literacy Link South Central – Policy and Procedure Templates for Adult Literacy Service**

**Providers.** This resource has valuable templates including: personnel, volunteer management, financial management, case management, safety and more. [\*A Collection of Policy and Procedure Templates for Adult Literacy Service Providers \(1999\).\*](#)

A number of **literacy organizations** now have their policies and procedures online. Two good examples are:

- Next Step Literacy Council of South Simcoe has posted their Policies and Procedures Manual online at <http://nextstepliteracy.ca/about-us/policies>
- Literacy Council of York Central links their Privacy Policy from their webpage at: [www.literacycouncilyorksouth.com/Privacy%20Policy.pdf](http://www.literacycouncilyorksouth.com/Privacy%20Policy.pdf)

And, of course don't forget **Community Literacy of Ontario's** own resources:

- ***Guides for the Development of Policies and Procedures in Ontario's Community Literacy Agencies, Volumes 1 and 2.*** These two downloadable resources discuss all the background information you might consider before developing a number of common policies and procedures. See: [www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/resources/publications](http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/resources/publications)
- Setting policies is an important step in managing your organization's risk. CLO produced four **Risk Management Newsletters** that contain information appropriate to policy development. ([www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/resources/newsletters](http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/resources/newsletters)). There are also four Risk Management webinars available at [www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/resources/webinars](http://www.communityliteracyofontario.ca/resources/webinars)