

Title: **Writing and Using Standard Operating Procedures.**

For revision history see last sheet

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS PROCEDURE:

To provide guidance and procedures for USNH staff and members who use, write, review, release or change USNH Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

2.0 BACKGROUND:

2.1 Governance. SOPs are organizational tools that have been developed in accordance within the broader goals of governance. The USNH "Governance Policy Book" was released by the Board of Trustees in 2015. In a guiding introductory paragraph the policy includes -

"The Board will govern in a manner that:

2.1.1 Is guided by policy.

2.1.2 Establishes and maintains accountability, authority and responsibility among and between Board, Staff, Volunteers and the Congregation.

2.1.3 Is adaptive and evolving..."

2.2 Guidance and Continuity. We have a staff composed of paid professionals and volunteers. Especially for volunteers and committee members there are frequent changes in personnel. In many cases procedures have been written on an as-needed basis but without a well defined means of publishing them, finding them, establishing applicability or making changes; in other words, without formal "Documentation Control". The result has sometimes been a "scrapbook" approach where procedures were often collected by an office administrator and placed on an office shelf. New volunteers often had little idea whether or where a procedure existed and, if it did, whether it was applicable and current. Often there was no record of the writer or any logged history of changes. This has resulted in procedures that were used and then ignored or re-written when new people took over. The lack of a cohesive system could result in broken continuity marked by frustration, wheel spinning, unnecessary work and ineffective coordination.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES:

3.1 Any individual member of USNH, a member of the Management Team, a Board Member, a Member of Staff, a Committee Chair or a Task Force Leader may request and/or generate and present a SOP for review and release (or for change and re-release) by the Management Team.

3.2 The Management Team (MT) is responsible for formatting, editing and release of SOPs. Part of the Management Team's work has been to establish procedures in accordance with section 2.1. In some cases the MT has written the procedures from the ground up. In most cases the MT has confined its work to formatting, editing and releasing new procedures written by others. See also 4.0

Title: **Writing and Using Standard Operating Procedures.**

For revision history see last sheet

- 3.3 The Office Administrator** is responsible for releasing a new SOP forwarded from the Management Team at Rev A. The SOP is made available from the USNH website (see 7.1), placing a hard copy of the procedure in the office 3-ring binder adding to all previously released procedures, updating a master list at the front of the same 3-ring binder and placing a notification and copy in the next Newsletter **SOPs are living documents.**

The Office Administrator will re-release subsequent changes at Rev B,C,D,E etc.

4.0 ROLE OF THE MANAGEMENT TEAM IN PRODUCING and RELEASING SOPs:

- 4.1 The Management Team will typically receive inputs for SOPs** from the Minister, the Board, the DLRE, the Office Manager, committee chairs, task force leaders or member volunteers.
- 4.2 The Goal of the Management Team** is to release and maintain thoughtful, useful procedures that provide guidance to our staff and volunteers. These should help users to work efficiently, effectively and within the established guidelines of the Unitarian Society of New Haven. Every attempt is made to keep SOPs as brief and straightforward as possible and, specifically, NOT to burden members with unnecessary regulation or red tape. A further goal is to provide procedures to assure the safety of all USNH members.

5.0 DOCUMENTATION CONTROL:

- 5.1 A Revision History** will be found on the last page of every SOP. *During the development of a SOP* there may be a number of reviews by the various interested parties which result in successive improvements/deletions/layout and wording changes. Each change is reviewed by the Management Team and assigned a numerical revision level. This way the history of steps taken in the document's creation, the original writer, names of those who made the changes and the nature of the changes are permanently recorded on the final document.

For example, Figure One shows the **REVISION HISTORY** on the last page of SOP-0008: Policy for Child and Youth Protection, when last revised on 08/15/2019.

Rev	By	Date	Changes Made
1	J. Hill	10/03/2018	Initial draft transcribed by J Hill from original document
2	J. Greist	11/17/2018	Edits, additions, inclusion of Appendices III, IV, V.
A	Management Team	01/23/2019	Minor edits and Approved Initial Release
B	Management Team	07/05/2019	Added Appendix VI. Driver's Agreement Form.
C	DLRE and Management Team	08/15/2019	Added DOB and address to Appendix V. Alt Waverly supervisor signature added to Appendix VI.

FIGURE ONE

In the above example -

The initial draft was transcribed by J Hill for review at Rev 1 on 10/03/2018.

Title: **Writing and Using Standard Operating Procedures.**

For revision history see last sheet

Edits and additions were made by J Greist and the document was reviewed by the MT and brought to Rev 2 on 11/17/2018. Additional edits were made by the MT and the document *released for distribution* and filing at Rev A on 01/23/2019.

- 5.2 Changes Made After Release and Distribution.** In the above example two additional changes are documented showing that the SOP was revised and re-distributed at Revision B on 07/05/2019 and changed again, re-distributed at Revision C on 08/15/2019. All revision changes are made by the MT.

Note that Revisions are all numerical (1, 2, 3,...) BEFORE first formal release and all alpha (A, B, C,...) AFTER initial Release and Distribution.

6.0 STANDARDIZED FORMAT:

- 6.1 Font and Size:** Arial 12 for all text except for Arial 10 in Revision History Table.
OR Times New Roman 12 for all text except Times New Roman 10 for History Table.
- 6.2 Top Header:** Copy the Standard Header (top all pages) as used in this procedure.
- 6.3 Indentation and Format for Headings and Sub Headings:** As far as possible use the general layout as used in this procedure. A good starting point is to select and copy a SOP that has somewhat similar headings to those you require.
- 6.4 Wording for Headings:**
- 6.4.1 Headings common to ALL SOPs include
- 6.4.1.1 PURPOSE. This is always the first heading, immediately after the first page header. Refer to released SOPs for examples.
- 6.4.1.2 RESPONSIBILITIES. This is always included and is normally the second heading. It defines the tasks from all those affected by the SOP.
- 6.4.2 Headings frequently used include BACKGROUND, RECORD KEEPING.
- 6.4.3 Other headings will usually be specific to the function of the SOP.
Examples: Policy Statement, Requirements, Duties of..., Submission of, Processing..., Solicitation Guidelines, Use of Funds, Deadlines, Types of Submissions, Definitions of..., Durations, Notifications, Payments, Transportation, Responding to... Refer to released SOPs for examples.
- 6.5 Appendices:** Are used to separate materials that can be removed usefully from the main body of the SOP. Use Appendices to make the SOP less onerous to use and easier to read. Guidelines, suggestions, lists and especially forms should be presented as appendices.
- 6.6 Examples of Previous Appendices:** See Appendix I of this document.

Title: **Writing and Using Standard Operating Procedures.**

For revision history see last sheet

- 6.7 Forms:** All forms should be included as an independent Appendix and referenced in the SOP together with a brief description of when and how the form is used. SOPs are less cumbersome when detailed instructions for using a form are clearly written on the form itself. Copies of blank forms will usually be made from the appropriate host SOP Appendix as needed.
- 6.8 Revision History:** (See 5.1 above). Copy, paste and modify from an existing procedure or build a new table from the "Word" formatting palate. Place this at the bottom of the last page or place on its own separate last sheet.

7.0 USING SOPs:

- 7.1 Finding an SOP on-line:** Go to website www.usnh.org. See menu at top of front page. Click on "About Us".** Scroll down and click on "USNH Online". Scroll down past "Our defining documents". Click on "Operational Policies and Procedures". Each policy is available as a .pdf file.

** Selection of "about us" is not required on some smart-phones.

- 7.2 Locating SOPs in the USNH Office:** Up to date Revisions of all SOPs are kept in a white 3-ring binder which is maintained by the Office Administrator. The binder should be found on a wall-shelf opposite the Office Administrator's desk. An up-to-date list of all current SOPs is kept at the front of the same 3-ring binder.
- 7.3 Checking the Revision Level:** Ensure that the last revision level listed in the "Revision History" table, on the last sheet, is the same as that shown on the SOP list. Refer any discrepancy to the Office Manager.

8.0 CHANGING AN EXISTING SOP:

- 8.1 Requesting a Change:** Write down the proposed changes, additions and deletions and discuss them with a member of the Management Team. The changes will be reviewed by the MT and circulated for review by others as appropriate.
- 8.2 Making a Change:** The SOP will be revised with agreed changes, the revision level will be updated and signed off by the MT. The SOP will then be re-released per 3.3 above.

9.0 MAKING A NEW SOP:

- 9.1 Generating a First Draft:** If you are able, use this procedure to generate a new document using Microsoft Word. Use of this procedure in writing a first draft will be helpful to the Management Team (MT) and will reduce the time required to complete the document and get it released. Alternatively, produce a written procedure, or, at least all major components to be combined into the required

Title: **Writing and Using Standard Operating Procedures.**

For revision history see last sheet

procedure. The MT will review the materials and notify likely interested parties of the proposed new procedure.

9.2 Approving and Releasing a New SOP: After initial reviews have been completed the MT will format the new procedure and re-submit it for review at Rev 1.

9.3 Numerical Revision Updates for Each Iteration: Several iterations and reviews may be required when preparing a new SOP for final release. The proposed new document is assigned Rev 1 and this is documented in the "Revision History" (per 5.1 above). For each iteration the MT will increase the Revision level by 1 and re-circulate for additional reviews. When ultimately ready, the new procedure will be released by the Office manager per 3.3 above.

10.0 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

10.1 Why do we need SOPs? See all of section 2.0 and 4.2

10.2 How can SOPs help me? See 2.2 and 4.2

10.3 Where can I find a list of released SOPs? See 7.2. Or, peruse all SOPs on-line per 7.1

10.4 How do I find an SOP? See 7.1 and 7.2

10.5 How do I know if an SOP is current? See 5.1 and 7.3

10.6 I have a new SOP written up. What are the steps to finalizing it and getting it released as a new SOP? See all of section 9.0

10.7 I have found an old procedure which is not in SOP format and needs changes. How do I get the updates made and a new SOP released? See all of section 8.0

10.8 How do I find what I need within an SOP? See 6.4 thru 6.8

10.9 How do I know who wrote an SOP and when? See 5.1

10.10 Who do I see to change or expand an existing SOP? See all of section 8.0

10.11 Can I write a new SOP? Yes. See 3.1 and 3.2 Use this procedure as a guide. Final edits and format standardization will likely be made by the Management Team per section 3 so the need for an initial document to conform to all sections of this procedure are not imperative.

10.12 Can I request a new SOP? See 4.1

Title: **Writing and Using Standard Operating Procedures.**

For revision history see last sheet

Title: **Writing and Using Standard Operating Procedures.**

For revision history see last sheet

APPENDIX 1 - EXAMPLES OF APPENDICES IN RELEASED SOPs

When considering adding an Appendix Refer to the SOPs listed below to help find a starting concept

SOP-0002	Appendix I	Fundraiser Proposal Form (Check list for proposed event)
SOP-0002	Appendix II	Fundraiser Monies Form (A simple cash report handed in with proceeds of event)
SOP-0002	Appendix III	Fundraiser Report Form (A brief after event report/checklist)
SOP-0004	Appendix I	Format for Acknowledgement Letter as Required for Tax Purposes. (Wording for a letter)
SOP-0007	Appendix I	Limited Access Agreement. (For signature)
SOP-0008	Appendix I	Managing Child Behavior Problems. Guidelines for R E Volunteers.
SOP-0008	Appendix II	Managing Child Behavior Problems. Ideas for the Classroom.
SOP-0008	Appendix III	Safe Congregation Policy for Youth/Teens Program at USNH.
SOP-0008	Appendix IV	CYRE Right Relations Policy. (Signature form for Volunteer Teachers)
SOP-0008	Appendix V	Code of Ethics for Leaders of Children and Youth. .
SOP-0008	Appendix VI	Driver's Agreement. Completed by Adult Drivers Transporting USNH and Waverly Children.
SOP-0009	Appendix I	Application for Minister's Discretionary Funds. (Request Form)

REVISION HISTORY

Rev	By	Date	Changes Made
1	Jeremy Hill	08/20/2019	Initial draft for review
2	Jeremy Hill	09/01/2019	Added 7.1. Expanded section 10.
A	Management Team	10/07/2019	Minor changes based on final reviews. Approved initial release.