

**APS TARC**

Adult Protective Services Technical Assistance Resource Center

enhancing  
effectiveness of  
**APS** programs

# APS Policy Development & Review: Framework for Success

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# Disclaimer

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# About the APS TARC

The mission of the APS TARC is to enhance the effectiveness of state APS programs by:

- Supporting federal, state, and local partners' use of data and analytics,
- Applying research and evaluation to practice, and
- Encouraging the use of innovative practices and strategies.

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# Housekeeping

- You may ask questions of our presenter at any time by typing them in the "Questions" box. We will relay as many as we can to the speaker when we pause for questions.
- This webinar is being recorded and all registrants will receive an email when the recording is made available on the APS TARC website.
- All attendees will receive an automatically generated email approximately 24 hours after the webinar ends with a link to a certificate of attendance.

# Poll Question

What is your relationship to the policy that governs your APS program?

- I'm the manager that approves it.
- I'm the program specialist that writes it.
- I'm the trainer that teaches it.
- I'm field staff that uses it.
- I'm the...other

# Another Poll Question

I believe that policy is.....

- Essential to program success
- A necessary but not sufficient cause of program success
- Not that important to program success
- Something that does more harm than good to program success

# Webinar Overview

## Description

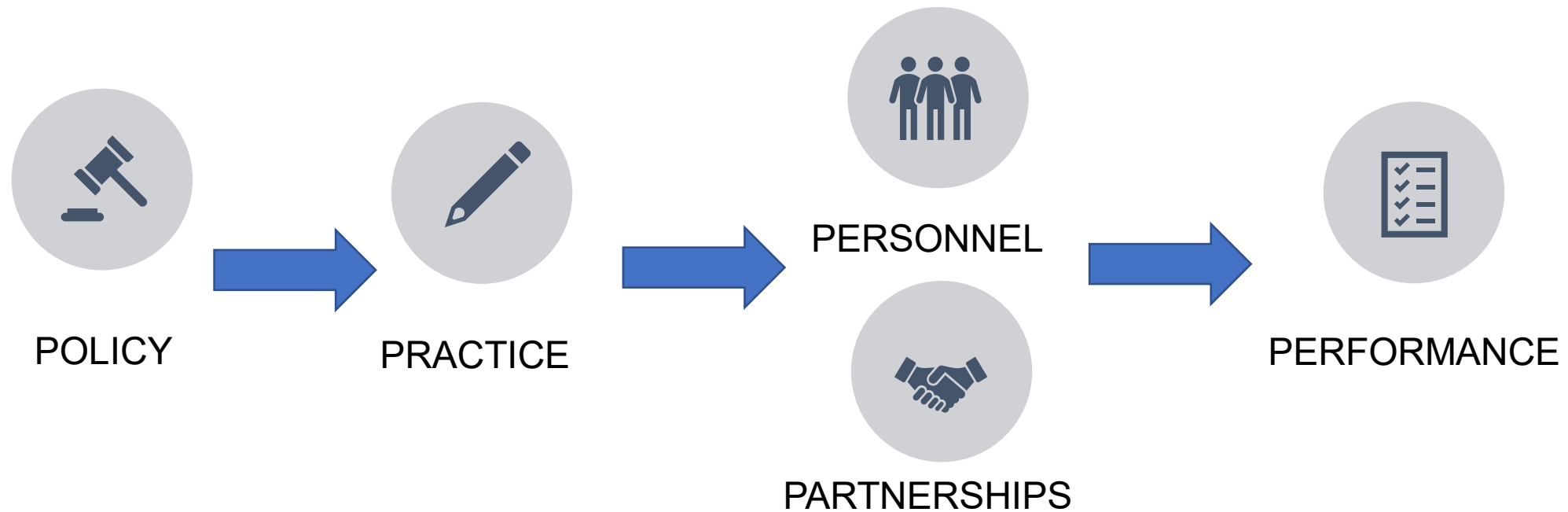
This webinar will define and discuss the nature of policy and will provide a strategic framework for policy development, implementation, review, and revision, with thoughts on how to best use policy to improve program effectiveness.

## Topics

- Why Policy Matters
- What is Policy
- Policy Sources and Resources
- Making Policy Useful
- Using Policy for Quality Assurance
- Creating Good Policy



# The APS TARC Model for Successful APS Programs



**Policy** guides **practice** by APS **personnel** in conjunction with **partners** and is a basis for evaluating **performance**.

# Why Good Policy Matters

Defines program expectations for quality casework by:

- Codifying ethics/culture
- Informing training content
- Guiding casework decisions
- Providing criteria for evaluation of staff and overall program performance

Results in:

- Consistency in practice
- Protection for agency and worker

**Improvements in policy was a consistent theme in response to the practice survey questions regarding recent innovations.**

# Wikipedia Says Public Policy Is...

An institutionalized proposal to solve relevant and real-world problems, guided by a conception and implemented by programs as a course of action created and/or enacted, typically by a [government](#) or [nonprofit organization](#), in response to [social issues](#)

# Formal and Informal Policy

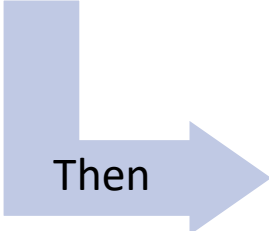
Sometimes referred to as “Big P” and “Little P” policy

- Formal policy is written down and communicated through official channels to everyone all the time
- Informal policy is verbal or oral tradition and is communicated through unofficial channels on an as needed basis
  - Supervisor to worker
  - Worker to worker
  - Other

Informal policy is important but scary!

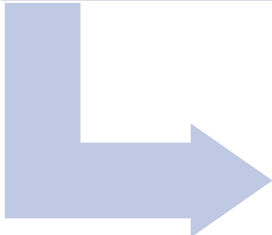
Law: Federal, state, local

- Broad requirements for program operations



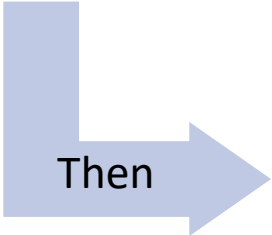
Administrative Code

- Rules that define legal requirements; implements law



Policy

- Written directions that operationalize legal requirements
- Describe **what** to do



Procedure

- Written directions that operationalize policy: **how** to do it

# Sources to Use in Developing Good Policy

- Enabling authority (law, executive direction)
- Data that indicates where your practice is weak
- Research and evaluation on best and promising practices within APS and related fields
  - NAPSA Research to Practice Committee
- Benchmarking with other programs
- Stakeholders: Internal and External
- Agency partners (e.g., HR, IT)
- Legal staff

# Sources NOT to Use in Making Policy

- Other programs with different cultures or expected outcomes
  - CV
  - CPS
  - OAA
- Other agency partners (e.g., HR, IT)
- The one bad case

# Resources to Use in Developing Good Policy

## Administration for Community Living

- National Voluntary Consensus Guidelines for APS Systems
- NAMRS Adult Maltreatment Reports
- Upcoming ACL evaluation of APS systems report

## APS TARC

- NAMRS data
- Policy profiles
- TA products
- LISTSERV
- Ad hoc questions

State law compendium: [https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/law\\_aging/2020-aps-ia-ltcoo-statutes-citations.pdf](https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/law_aging/2020-aps-ia-ltcoo-statutes-citations.pdf)



# Making Policy Useful

- Create a logical framework and **write it down** in clear, simple language
- Make it readily available at the touch of a button to staff **and the public**
- Train new staff based on it; re-train seasoned staff based on it
- Incorporate practice tools to support it
  - Case Management system
  - Assessment tools
  - Job aids and “cheat sheets”
- Provide TA resources to support it
- Supervisors communicate and reinforce it
- Evaluate compliance with it through QA process

# Using Policy for Quality Assurance

Policy provides the **content** for assessing program compliance at various levels

- Supervisor review and approval
- Compliance assessment tools and case reading

Policy compliance can be scored and evaluated.

# Using Policy for Quality Assurance

The QA process should provide a feedback loop on policy to target areas for improvements:

- Worker and supervisor compliance
- Training content and methods
- Policy itself

# How do I know if my policy is “good policy?”

- Is it consistent with law?
- Is it stakeholder informed?
- Is it clear?
- Does it strike the right prescriptiveness and flexibility balance?
- Can (do) you use it to evaluate staff and program compliance?
- Can workers easily access it and do they follow it?

# Let's Talk! Discussion Questions

- What do you think is the most important benefit of good policy?
  - Defining program ethics and culture
  - Directing casework
  - Foundation for training
  - Protecting workers
  - Foundation for QA
- What is an example/story of how good policy was important to good casework or program improvement?
- What barriers do you face in implementing good policy?
- How can the APS TARC better assist you in developing and implementing good policy?

# Additional Questions?

# Resources

- National Voluntary Consensus Guidelines for APS Systems – <https://acl.gov/programs/elder-justice/final-voluntary-consensus-guidelines-state-aps-systems>
- NAMRS Adult Maltreatment Reports & Data - <https://namrs.acl.gov/>
- Evaluation - <https://apstarc.acl.gov/Information-Research/Evaluation.aspx>
- TARC TA Products, LISTSERV, Peer Calls, etc. - <https://apstarc.acl.gov/>
- ABA State Law Compendium [https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/law\\_aging/2020-aps-ia-ltccop-statutes-citations.pdf](https://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/administrative/law_aging/2020-aps-ia-ltccop-statutes-citations.pdf)

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