Developing and Approving HFN Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that new or revised Hupacasath First Nation (HFN) policies are developed using a process that ensures that all HFN members have ample opportunity to comment on a proposed policy before it goes to Chief and Council for approval.

It is recognized that new policies may be needed to address new challenges, or that existing policies may need to be revised to address changing circumstances.

Only policies that have been developed or revised in accordance with this policy and approved by Chief and Council will be considered 'official' HFN policy. All other policies will be considered as 'drafts' and not approved.

Minor administrative changes to policy that do not materially affect the policy, as determined by the Policy Committee, may be made and forwarded directly to Chief and Council for review and approval, bypassing the requirements for community policy input sessions and an open house. Examples of minor changes include:

- Position titles
- Formatting
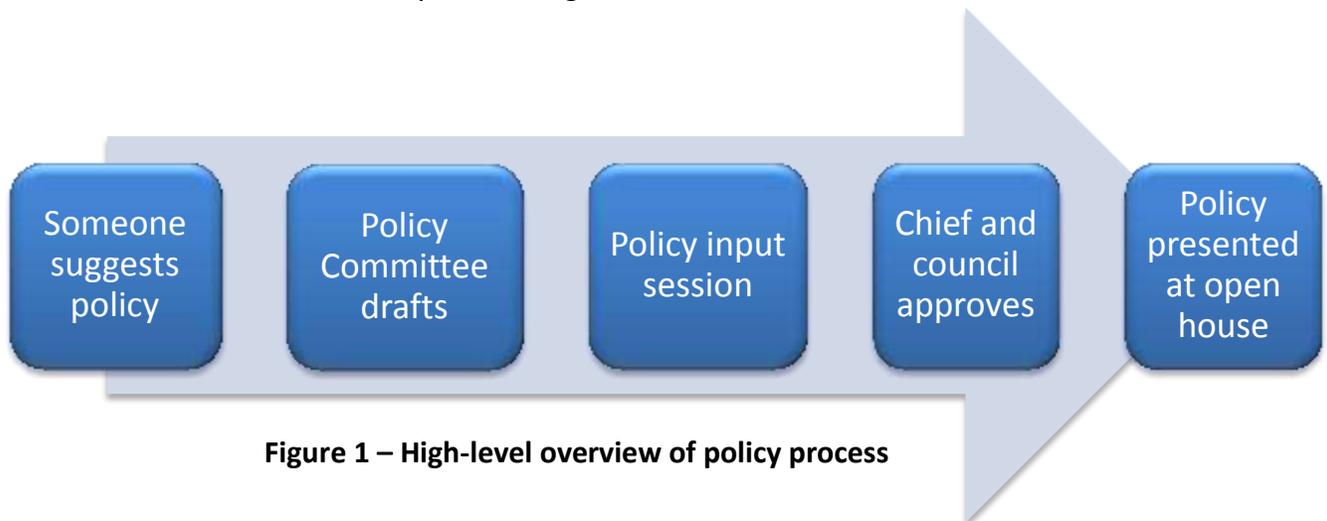- Clarifications
- Spelling and grammar
- Software system changes

Figure 1 – High-level overview of policy process

Responsibility for Developing and Revising Policy

The Policy Committee is responsible for developing new or revised policies under the direction of Chief and Council. If no Policy Committee has been appointed, Chief and Council are responsible for developing policy in conformance with this policy.

For more information on the role of the Policy Committee, see Policy Committee Terms of Reference.

Suggesting New or Revised Policy

Any member of the Hupacasath First Nation may suggest the need for a new policy, or suggest that an existing policy be revised.

New or revised policies may be initiated in a variety of ways:

- Chief and Council initiates
- Policy Committee initiates
- Staff member initiates
- Any HFN member initiates
- Periodic review identifies need

Whenever possible, suggestions for new or revised policies should use the *Suggested New or Revised HFN Policy* form. However, its use is optional. Verbal suggestions may also be accepted. A Policy Committee member or HFN staff member can accept the verbal suggestion and document the member's ideas. The member making the verbal suggestion must sign the form.

1. Initiator completes a *Suggested New or Revised HFN Policy* form, if possible, outlining the new or revised policy and submits it to the Policy Committee.

2. Policy Committee reviews the suggestion, and if necessary, speaks with:
   - The initiator
   - Other community members
   - Staff members
   - Chief and Council
   - Any others the Policy Committee deems necessary

3. Policy Committee decides whether to proceed with the suggested new or revised policy and communicates that decision in writing to the initiator. The decision will outline the reasoning for either accepting or rejecting the suggestion. The written decision should

be communicated to the initiator within two weeks of when the decision is made.

Drafting New or Revised Policy

If the Policy Committee has determined that a new or revised policy is necessary, or has been so directed by Chief and Council, the committee will draft the new or revised policy.

1. The Policy Committee drafts the new or revised policy and distributes it to Chief and Council, appropriate department heads, and anyone else the Policy Committee wants to review the policy.

2. After giving reviewers ample time to review the draft, the Policy Committee considers any review comments received and revises the policy as the committee deems appropriate.

3. The Policy Committee prepares a spreadsheet of all comments received, and makes it available to reviewers or others upon request. The spreadsheet should be available within two weeks of the last comments received.

Review at Community Policy Input Sessions

All draft policies will be reviewed at one or more policy input sessions made up of HFN community members. The intent of the policy input sessions is to present the key aspects of the policy to those at the policy input session.

The Policy Committee will decide how many policy input sessions will be held to review the policy. Separate sessions may be held targeting the following groups:

- Youth (under 18)
- Young adults (18 to 29)
- Adults (30 to 54)
- Elders (55 and older)
- Disabled

The intent of using separate groups is to create a comfortable environment that will encourage community members to voice their opinions honestly and openly. The age ranges shown are only suggestions. Policy input sessions, regardless of their target group, are open to all community members.

Policy input sessions will be organized and held by the Policy Committee with the input of the Communications Coordinator. The input sessions will be held at a time and place that best suits the target group. A meal, snacks, or door prizes should be considered to

encourage participation. At least two weeks of notice should be given for input sessions.

At least one member of the Policy Committee and one member of council will participate in each policy input session.

Participants who are loud and disruptive may be asked to leave and provide written input.

Community members are also encouraged to provide input on policies, either by completing a policy and procedure input form, or by contacting any member of the Policy Committee or Chief and Council.

The Policy Committee will consider all review comments received and revise the policy as the committee considers appropriate. A spreadsheet will be created of review comments received and will be made available to community members on request. The spreadsheet will be available within two weeks of the last policy input session.

Recommendation of Policy to Chief and Council

After the policy has been finalized by the Policy Committee, the policy will be recommended to Chief and Council for review and approval. At a regular council meeting, Chief and Council will review the policy and decide whether to:

- Approve the policy as written
- Approve the policy with changes
- Circulate the policy to others for review
- Send the policy back to the Policy Committee for changes
- Reject the policy

Chief and Council will document the reasons for their decision in the meeting minutes.

Policies are considered to come into effect on the date they are approved by Chief and Council. This date will be shown on the approved policy.

Chief and Council will document changes to the policy using the "comments received" spreadsheet to ensure transparency and document the rationale for their actions.

All approved policies will be posted on the HFN web site in PDF format, unless the Policy Committee considers that posting the policy may present a security risk to HFN (for example, by posting accounting or payroll policy and procedures).

The Policy Committee will keep an up-to-date written record of all approved policies.

Policy Open House

All newly approved or revised policies will be presented to the HFN community at a policy open house. More than one policy may be presented at an open house.

Open houses will be organized and held by the Policy Committee with the input of the Communications Coordinator.

A meal, snacks, or door prizes should be considered to encourage participation. At least two weeks' notice should be given for an open house.

The purpose of policy open houses is to communicate information about new or revised policies to the HFN community. Because the policy has already been approved by Chief and Council, no records are kept of comments received. Those expressing an interest in changing the policy should be given a copy of this policy and the *Suggested New or Revised HFN Policy Form.*

Periodic Review of Approved Policies

All approved policies will be reviewed at least annually. The CEO is responsible for designating staff to review policies. The Policy Committee will record the date of reviews, the names of reviewer(s), and the outcome, and keep this information on file.

Retention of Records

All documentation relating to policies must be kept for at least 5 years, including:

- *Suggested New or Revised HFN Policy* forms
- Written response to persons suggesting a policy or change to an existing policy
- Spreadsheet summaries of review comments received