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The Importance of Agency Policies

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What I plan to look at:

- ▶ Why are written policies important?
- ▶ Where should I look for policies that apply to all state employees?
- ▶ What policies should our agency consider?
- ▶ What should our policies look like?
- ▶ How should we maintain our policies?

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Why are written policies important?

- ▶ Provide employees with predefined expectations
- ▶ Allow for consistent management of employees – lowers risk of misunderstandings, grievances, and possible lawsuits

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Why are written policies important?

- ▶ Critical to Inspector General investigations and State Ethics Commission findings
- ▶ Examples:
 - OIG Report 2007-12-0274 – agency employee's use of state computer to order magazine subscriptions for former employer violated agency de minimus use policy

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Why are written policies important?

- ▶ Examples (continued):
 - OIG Report 2012-02-0022 – agency employee's use of state-issued vehicle on state holiday violated agency employee handbook and State of Indiana Vehicle Fleet Management Policy

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Why are written policies important?

- ▶ Examples (continued):
 - OIG Report 2012-12-0305 – agency employee's use of state computer to sell Mary Kay products violated computer and Internet use agreements

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Where should I look for policies that apply to all state employees?

- ▶ Indiana Office of Technology
 - www.in.gov/iot
 - Information Resources Use Agreement



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Where should I look for policies that apply to all state employees?

- ▶ State Personnel Department
 - www.in.gov/spd
 - Policies and Procedures
 - Standardized policies
 - Employee handbook
 - Additional resources



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Where should I look for policies that apply to all state employees?

- ▶ State Budget Agency
 - www.in.gov/sba
 - Financial Management Circulars



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What policies should our agency consider?

- ▶ 42 IAC 1-6-1 - Ethics policies
 - An agency appointing authority or state officer may adopt policies related to the ethics code *if* the policies are at least as strict as the Ethics Code.

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What policies should our agency consider?

- ▶ De Minimus Use
 - State Property/Ghost Employment Rule
 - When can employees use state time and state resources for limited personal use?
- ▶ Security of Documents
 - How will we protect and maintain confidential information our agency receives?

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What policies should our agency consider?

- ▶ Confidentiality of State Information
 - Does our agency need to define for employees when information is considered confidential and when or by whom it can be disclosed?
- ▶ Conflict of Interest
 - Does our agency need to provide stricter restrictions on conflicts?

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What should our policies look like?

- ▶ Official agency letterhead
 - At a minimum, include name of agency
- ▶ Include applicability
 - Will it apply to full-time, part-time, permanent and temporary employees?
 - Will it apply to Boards & Commissions?

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What should our policies look like?

- ▶ Include effective date or last updated date
- ▶ Indicate whether the policy replaces an existing policy or is a new policy
- ▶ Include relevant legal citations and legal authority for policy

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What should our policies look like?

- ▶ Include definitions of relevant terms if necessary
- ▶ Include signature from agency appointing authority or individual with delegated authority to adopt policy

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How should we maintain our policies?

- ▶ File all ethics code policies, rules, or regulations with the State Ethics Commission
 - 42 IAC 1-6-1
 - Failure to file **does not** affect the validity of the policies

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How should we maintain our policies?

- ▶ Maintain policies in a central location where all employees can find them
 - Agency employee handbook
 - Agency website
- ▶ Educate employees on policies!!
 - Ensure all new employees receive policies
 - Send regular reminders to employees on policies

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Thank you!!

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