

# MS 001 Peace Corps Manual: Authority and Revision Process

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## Attachment

Attachment A - Senior Policy Committee Charter

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## **1.0 Purpose**

This Manual Section sets forth the authority for the Peace Corps Manual (the “Manual”), the authoritative status of the Manual, and the process for revising the Manual.

## **2.0 Authority for the Manual**

Promulgation of the Manual is authorized by section 2503(b) of the Peace Corps Act. Specific Manual sections are authorized variously by the Peace Corps Act, the Foreign Service Act, Executive Orders, and other applicable federal law.

## **3.0 Authoritative Status and Applicability of the Manual**

**3.1** The Manual constitutes the authoritative policies governing the operations of the Peace Corps and the responsibilities and conduct of Volunteers and Peace Corps employees, i.e., direct hire employees and personal services contractors. For purposes of the Manual, direct hire employees are persons hired by appointment by the Peace Corps under Sections 7(a), 7(c) and 13 of the Peace Corps Act and similar appointment authorities and personal services contractors are persons hired by contract under Section 10(a)(5) of the Peace Corps Act.

**3.2** Peace Corps procedures including directives, handbooks, standard operating procedures, technical guidelines, and other publications must be consistent with the policies in the Manual.

**3.3** Any reference in the Manual or procedures to Peace Corps "employees" or "staff" includes personal services contractors, unless excluded by operation of law or Peace Corps policy.

## **4.0 Revision Process**

### **4.1 Senior Policy Committee**

The Senior Policy Committee has oversight responsibility for the Manual revision process. This responsibility includes developing the process for revising the Manual, coordinating the formulation of Manual policies, working with appropriate offices in drafting new or revised language, ensuring that the Manual accurately reflects applicable law and policy and coordinating the issuance and distribution of new or revised Manual sections. The Senior Policy Committee also has oversight and approval authority for procedures that implement Manual policies. The Senior Policy

Committee will be assisted in carrying out these responsibilities by a Policy Secretariat. *See* attached Senior Policy Committee Charter.

## **4.2 Approval**

All substantive revisions to the Manual must be approved by the Director. Technical revisions to the Manual must be approved by the Senior Policy Committee or its designee.

### **4.2.1 Substantive Revisions**

Substantive revisions are revisions to the Manual other than technical revisions.

### **4.2.2 Technical Revisions**

Technical revisions are revisions that have no substantial policy impact, such as spelling, grammar, or style corrections; revisions to factual information (e.g., changes in addresses or names of offices); citations or cross-references to legal authorities; or changes to conform with revisions to other Manual Sections.

## **4.3 Issuance and Distribution**

Approved Manual Sections must be issued and distributed in accordance with procedures determined by the Senior Policy Committee.

## **4.4 Effectiveness**

Approved Manual Sections become effective on the date of issuance and have prospective effect only, unless otherwise stated in the Manual Section.

## **5.0 Interim Policy Statements**

When there is an immediate need to issue a new Peace Corps policy, an Interim Policy Statement may be issued. The procedure for issuing Interim Policy Statements is the same as for issuing a Manual Section. An Interim Policy Statement has the same legal force and effect as a Manual Section and should be issued as a new Manual Section or integrated into an existing section in a timely manner.

## **6.0 Waiver of Manual Provisions**

As long as the waiver is not inconsistent with controlling legislation, a Manual provision may be waived:

- (a) if specifically permitted by the terms of the relevant Manual section in accordance with the procedures set forth therein; or
- (b) by the Director for compelling or equitable reasons, unless the waiver would be adverse to the interests of an individual who has relied on the provision.

## **7.0 Procedures**

The Senior Policy Committee is responsible for overseeing the development of the procedures that implement the policies in the Manual. It will oversee the work of offices that develop procedures and will assure that other offices, which it determines have a substantive programmatic interest in the proposed procedures, are given the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed procedures. Procedures that implement Manual policies must be approved by the Senior Policy Committee or by an office or other body designated by the Senior Policy Committee. All such procedures will be made available on the Peace Corps intranet.

## **8.0 Effective Date**

The effective date of this Manual section is the date of issuance.