NEOGOV



5 Benefits of Policy Management

SOFTWARE IN GOVERNMENT

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HOW TO DO MORE WITH LESS

REGARDLESS OF SIZE, LOCATION, OR MISSION, LOCAL GOVERNMENTS ACROSS THE COUNTRY ARE BEING ASKED TO DO MORE WITH LESS.

Many are grappling with drastic budget cuts that limit operational capacity and ability to deliver effective service to the public.

Now more than ever, agencies must find every possible efficiency. While there are many strategies to create government efficiencies, one of the best – and most overlooked – tools is policy management software.

Policies are the engines behind government operations. They inform why, how, and who should carry out the essential work of government. Policies set strict parameters for agencies to follow, holding the government accountable to the public. Moreover, policies create consistency across departments and ensure agencies are compliant with important laws.

But having government policies in place isn't enough. The critical next step is to make sure policies are used effectively, and don't turn into red tape. According to Compliance Weekly, the biggest challenge governments face with policy management is coordinating policy development across departments and communicating these policies across diverse organizations.

Thankfully, with effective policy management (and a strong technology solution), governments can overcome these challenges, remain compliant, and enjoy a host of other benefits. In this guide, we'll dive into these unsung benefits of using policy management software to improve government operations.

5 BENEFITS OF USING POLICY MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

Policy management software can bring uniformity to local government operations, which is the root of many challenges. All too often, department policies differ and may even contradict one another, which can result in compliance issues, inconsistent service delivery, and frustrated customers.

Maintaining a digital central repository of all policies can improve service delivery across departments, dismantle communication silos, and even create consistent employee conduct from one department to the next.

Policy management software acts as the glue holding organizations together – and that's just the start.

Keep reading to discover all the ways online policy management can benefit your organization.



BENEFIT #1: CREATE INTERDEPARTMENTAL CONSISTENCY

No matter how big an organization, coordination and communication across departments can be challenging. This is especially true when departments must work together to create, update, and distribute policies. Multiple paper versions can get lost, and it can be hard to keep track of the most current version.

But no matter how challenging, cross-department collaboration is critical for efficient and consistent government operations. When all departments are on the same page, the whole organization functions more smoothly, and citizens enjoy a more consistent experience.

Policy management software is a great way to achieve this interdepartmental harmony. Imagine that each of your government agencies came together to use the same policy software as a single source of truth. Immediately, your entire city would have consistent policies across all operations and employees.



Policy Software

Policy software also retains the flexibility for individual departments to maintain independence for their agency-specific policy management needs. And if an agency ever needs to create an internal policy, they can easily borrow language from another department.

Here are some features of policy management software, like POLICY by NEOGOV, that help with interdepartmental consistency:

- The ability to distribute and assign government policies by group, so that you can send the right information to the right place.
- The ability to create advanced, automated workflows by establishing roles for individuals with simple access and approval controls.
- The ability to maintain version control with the click of a button, so you can see what updates have been made, who made them, and when they were last updated.

BENEFIT #2: BUILD PUBLIC TRUST IN GOVERNMENT

Trust in government is in a steady decline, according to Pew Center research. The importance of maintaining public trust cannot be overstated. Trust in government increases community engagement, voting rates, and compliance with local laws.

While there are numerous ways to build public trust in government, strong policy management is a reliable way to hold government employees accountable and create a consistent experience across departments.

Policies are the framework guiding government work, and dictate what employees can and cannot do. But those policies are only effective if employees read, understand, and follow them. Policy management software helps to ensure employees have read and signed off on policies.

An effective management platform allows agencies to update and instantaneously push policies to all necessary employees while requiring them to sign off that they have read and understood the policies.

Some solutions allow you to adjust policy viewing permissions and make them viewable to the public. When citizens can access, read, and understand your policies, their trust in government increases.



Here are some features of policy management software, like POLICY, that can assist with building trust in government:

- Signature capture and tracking allows you to check and make sure that everyone who needs to review a policy has done so.
- Testing to ensure employees fully understand new and updated policies
- Reporting to track who has or hasn't viewed, signed, and tested on a policy.
- Public sharing functionality allows you to easily embed documents onto a public-facing website to ensure policies are accessible to the public.

BENEFIT #3: REDUCE LIABILITY

No matter the mission, every local government department is at risk of liability. Whether originating from employees or the public, lawsuits can lead to dramatic settlements, penalties, and bad press. While good policy management can't prevent an organization from being sued, it can certainly help build a strong defense.

To reduce organizational liability, it's sometimes necessary to show proof that employees read and understood a certain policy. This can be challenging if records are paper-based and stored within individual departments.

Policy management software can alleviate the strain of compliance by automating all aspects of policy management, including tracking who views and reads policies. Agencies no longer have to print out copies of policies, chase down employees for signatures, or spend time compiling documents in the event of a lawsuit.

Here are more ways policy management software like POLICY can help reduce the risk of liability in your organization:

- Know instantly who has viewed and signed a policy.
- Track and manage every version of a policy.
- Automatically send policy updates to every employee, any time, anywhere.

BENEFIT #4: OPERATE EFFECTIVELY IN CRISIS

If the recent past has taught us anything, it's that extreme and unplanned situations can strike at any time. During times of crisis, it's important for governments to continue running smoothly and effectively.

It's also during these critical moments when agencies need immediate access to policies and procedures. Sometimes, policies need updating quickly to ensure compliance in a particular situation.

Cloud-based policy management software stores important documents online on protected servers, which ensures policies and procedures are available when agencies need them most.

Here are a few common features of policy management software that can assist in times of crisis:

- Even if you and your employees are forced to work remotely, cloud-based storage of important documents allows you to access and collaborate on files, any time, anywhere.
- In the event of a cyberattack, even if hackers gain control over your digital operation, your policies will remain safe and accessible.
- Make sure to look for a software system with leading data security, so you enjoy peace of mind knowing your policies are protected.

BENEFIT #5: WORRY-LESS ACCREDITATION



For some agencies, accreditation is an important aspect of maintaining compliance and building trust within communities. But the accreditation process is often time consuming and resource intensive for already overworked departments.

By using a policy management software, agencies can easily align policies with existing accreditation standards. Some policy management systems can also automate the accreditation process, so that agencies don't spend valuable time searching for individual policies.

Here's how policy management software like POLICY helps with the accreditation process:

- Save even more time by using common accreditation standards built right into the system.
- Map your policies directly to the established standards of accrediting bodies.
- Automate notifications to know when policies are impacted by updated accrediting standards.

FIND THE BEST SOLUTION FOR YOU

Whether you're just starting to compile your agency's policies or struggling to update them, using a policy management software can help you reach your goals faster.

Just by digitizing and centralizing your organization's policies, you can streamline communication and collaboration across departments, promote public trust in government, reduce your risk of liability, and ensure continuity in the event of a crisis. Not to mention, making the compliance and accreditation processes far more efficient.

As you search for the right software for you, remember that not all software offers all of the features described above. It's important to do your research as you look for a solution.

NEXT STEPS

POLICY by NEOGOV offers all of those features and more. It's fast, efficient, and easy to use, all while protecting your information with industry-leading security.

NEOGOV serves public sector HR with a comprehensive suite of solutions for recruitment, onboarding, performance management, employee development, and more. **To learn more about how POLICY can benefit both you and your city, visit our policy management for local and state government page.**

13,000+
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