

Municipal Police Board Policy in Manitoba

Police Board Policy – Definition

Policy sets a position and provides a high level of direction. In the case of a police board, a policy statement speaks to a determined position on an important issue to inform or direct the management of a police service in the municipality. What constitutes an important issue is something that may vary from one municipality to another, and determining issues that require police board policy should be related to the role of the board to have, as much as possible, actual knowledge of the needs values and expectations of its community either directly through its own community engagement or indirectly as the result of community engagement undertaken by the police service of the municipality.

A policy statement has a specific purpose which is to provide direction in context and scope to the mandated role. Police board policy provides strategic direction to the police chief to ensure effective management of the police service.

Police board policy statements provide general direction to the police chief but do not prescribe the operational actions or activities that may be required. Police board policy statements provide direction to a police chief to ensure that a community's policing needs, values and expectations are supported, i.e., through police service procedures, processes and programs.

Police Board Purpose and Duties

Sections 27 and 28 of *The Police Services Act* establish the purpose and duties of the police board:

Purpose of the police board

- 27 The purpose of the police board is to provide
- (a) civilian governance respecting the enforcement of law, the maintenance of the public peace and the prevention of crime in the municipality; and
 - (b) the administrative direction and organization required to provide adequate and effective police service in the community
- **Section 27 defines the police board purpose as being a governance role and one that provides administrative direction to the police service. The police board is to provide administrative (strategic) direction to the chief of police relative to the management of the police service.**

General duties of police board

28(1) The police board must

- (a) after consulting with the police chief, establish priorities and objectives for the police service;
- (b) establish policies for the effective management of the police service;
- (c) direct the police chief and monitor his or her performance; and
- (d) perform any other prescribed duties.

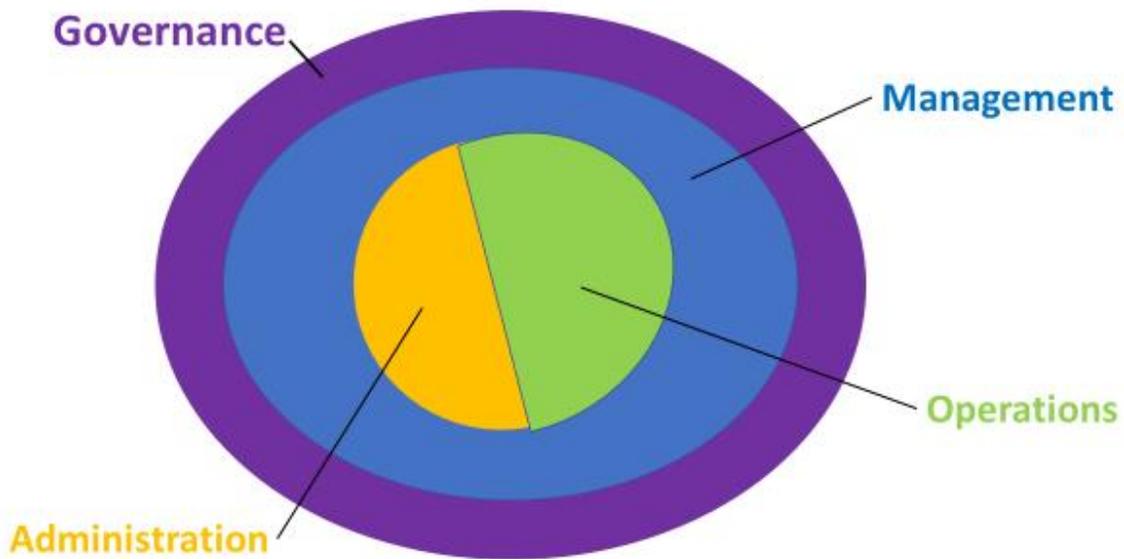
- **Subsection 28(1) clearly outlines the police board policy role as being: “to establish policies for the effective management of the police service” congruent with the board’s governance role as noted in section 27.**

Specific duties of police board

28(2) Without limiting the generality of subsection (1), the police board must

- (a) ensure that the police chief establishes programs and strategies to implement the priorities and objectives established by the board for the police service;
- (b) ensure that the community needs and values are reflected in the policing priorities, objectives, programs and strategies;
- (c) ensure that police services are delivered in a manner consistent with community needs, values and expectations; and
- (d) act as a liaison between the community and the police service.

- **Policy development is not identified as a specific duty of the police board in subsection 28(2). Police board policy development and subsequent policy direction should be general in scope or at a high level to assist the police chief in his/her management role; which is in alignment with the prescribed governance role of the police board. Police board policy is not intended to provide direction to police service operational actions or activities.**



Police Board Policy Scope

Subsection 35(1) of *The Police Services Act* – Policy and procedures manual

35(1) The police board must operate in accordance with the policy and procedures manual developed by the commission for police boards.

The Manitoba Police Commission (MPC) Policy and Procedure Manual provides a detailed policy framework for municipal police boards. **In addition to the MPC policy framework, each individual police board will develop local policies to specifically instruct the police board members relative to the governance and operations of the police board that also reflect the requirements of the local context.**

The local police board policy will align with the Manitoba Police Commission Policy and give specific direction to the governance and operations of the local police board.

Examples of Police Board Governance Policy

- Vision, Mission, Values
- Appointments and Tenure
- Key Governance Principles
- Rules of Procedure
- Conflict of Interest
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints
- Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members

- Communication
- Training
- Remuneration
- Committees

Municipal Police Boards may also be required, as the local context dictates, to provide general strategic direction to the police chief/police service relative to administrative policy matters and is intended to provide “administrative direction and organization” and to “establish policies for the effective management of the police service.”

Examples of Police Board Policy Direction for Management of Police Service

- Police Board – Police Service Communications/Reporting
- Succession Planning
- Community Consultation
- Risk Management
- General Audit
- Police Service Records Management
- Major Events
- Respectful Workplace
- Diversity
- Complaints Against Police Service
- Police Service Accreditation

Policing Regulations and Standards (Operations)

A number of police board policy manuals in Canada also include detailed provincial policing regulations and standards although not authored by or originating from the boards.

Provincial policing regulations and standards provide specific direction to inform police service operations policy which is **not** within the mandate or prescribed in the legislated “purpose”, “general” or “specific duties”, of municipal police boards in Manitoba.

Examples of Policing Regulations and Standards

- Crime prevention
- Community patrol
- Criminal intelligence
- Arrest and detention
- Joint forces operations
- Search of premises
- Search of persons
- Confidential sources

- Police pursuits
- Evidence control
- Witness protection
- Police equipment
- Police training
- Police qualifications
- Use of force
- Violent Crime Linkage Analysis
- Police information sharing

The police board policy manuals surveyed also include police board policy statements in support of provincial policing regulations and standards. In many cases these police board policy statements are simply a statement that reinforces a regulation or standard with direction to the police chief to ensure that police service procedures and processes are aligned with the spirit and intent of the provincial legislation. These police board policy statements in support of regulations and standards underscore a police board position per se but do not add further weight to the provincial legislation that is in place.

Police Board Policy Role Effectiveness

Policy development that remains governance focused and provides direction for the management of the police service in alignment with community needs values and expectations is the most beneficial policy role for police boards.

Police boards do not have the mandate, experience or expertise to provide direction to police service operational procedures or processes and as a result police board policy uttered in this area is often incomplete and uninformed.

In the policy arena, **police boards are most effective and provide most value when they operate within their prescribed role which is to provide general and strategic direction and to establish policies for the effective management (not operations) of the police service.**