

Policy on Policies

Policy Owner: <i>Police & Fire and FCERS</i>	Policy Version: <i>1.0</i>
Effective Date: <i>x/xx/2026</i>	Next Review Date: <i>x/xx/2029</i>

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to establish a consistent, transparent, and accountable framework for the development, approval, review, and management of all charters and policies maintained by the Office of Retirement Services (ORS) for the City of San José.

ORS is governed by two separate Boards, one for the Police and Fire Department Retirement Plan and one for the Federated City Employees' Retirement System. Each Board is a distinct legal entity that serves as the governing body for its respective plan, with responsibility for establishing and approving Board Governance documents, which include policies and charters, that affect plan administration and fiduciary oversight. Under San José Municipal Code §§ 3.28.140 and 3.36.350, each Board is granted rulemaking authority to govern the administration of its respective plan. Each Board may retain independent authority, by need or by choice, to adopt or amend governance documents specific to its plan; however, where practicable and appropriate, the Boards may seek to develop and maintain a single, shared policy or charter to promote administrative consistency, governance efficiency, and clarity.

This Policy provides guidance to ensure all ORS documents are appropriately drafted, approved, maintained, and reviewed, and that they comply with the San José (SJ) Municipal Code, applicable laws and regulations, and fiduciary obligations.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to the Boards and Office of Retirement Services employees of the:

- ☒ Federated City Employees' Retirement System
- ☒ Police & Fire Department Retirement Plan

This Policy does not apply to internal operating procedures, work instructions, or other management level documents, which are approved by administration and maintained outside the Board governance review cycle.

AUTHORITY & GOVERNANCE

All charters and policies maintained by ORS are issued under the authority of the applicable retirement plan: the Police & Fire Department Retirement Plan or the Federated City Employees' Retirement System, or jointly by both Boards when the document applies to both plans.

The respective Boards are responsible for:

- Determining the need for a new charter or policy;
- Approving all charters and policies;
- Reviewing documents periodically and as necessary to ensure accuracy and relevance.

ORS CEO, CIO and staff are responsible for:

- Developing and implementing processes and procedural documents to ensure the requirements or guidance contained within charter and policies are followed;

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- Ensuring Board members, employees, and other relevant parties adhere to and comply with established charters and policy rules;
- Maintain the ORS Policy Portal and support the review and update process of documents in accordance to this Policy on Policies.

OVERVIEW

ORS maintains a structured set of governance documents to ensure effective administration of the Police & Fire Department Retirement Plan (PF) and the Federated City Employee's Retirement System (FCERS or FED).

A. Types of Governance Documents

- **Charters:** Charters define purpose, roles, responsibilities, and authorities of the Boards, Board Committees, and key ORS positions (e.g., Chief Executive Officer and Chief Investment Officer). Charters establish the governance structure and oversight framework for each retirement plan. **Charters require Board approval and are subject to the review cycle established by this Policy.**
- **Policies:** Policies provide rules and guidance to govern ORS operations, support decision-making, and ensure compliance with SJ Municipal code as well as other legal and fiduciary requirements. **Policies require Board approval and are subject to the review cycle established by this Policy.**
- **Procedures:** Procedures are step-by-step instructions or detailed processes that explain how adopted policies are implemented or how specific operational tasks are performed. These documents are operational in nature and ensure consistency and compliance in carrying out rules or guidance set by policy. **Procedures are management documents approved by administration, do not require Board approval, and are not subject to the review cycle established by this Policy.**

B. Governance Document Development

Governance documents may be created in response to City requirements, applicable laws or regulations, Board direction, operational needs, or identified governance gaps from independent assessments or internal audits. When new documents are proposed, consideration is given to the appropriate document type (e.g., charter or policy) and whether the governance document applies to a single retirement plan or both.

All new governance documents should use the standard ORS Policy template maintained by ORS staff to promote consistency, clarity, and alignment across all governance documents. New documents are also subject to applicable approval processes as outlined in this Policy.

C. Reviews & Approvals

All new governance documents (specifically Charters & Policies) require review and approval by the applicable Board(s) before being published to the ORS Policy Portal, which is a publicly accessible, centralized repository for current ORS governance documents. There is one Policy Portal for each retirement plan – [Police & Fire](#) and [Federated City Employees](#).

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Governance documents are generally first reviewed and approved by the Governance Committee of the applicable Board prior to consideration for approval by the full Board. Some governance documents may apply to only one retirement plan, and therefore only issued and approved by the relevant & applicable Board. Other documents may be joint governance documents, applicable to both retirement plans, and require review by each Board's Governance Committee and approval by both Boards.

Document Applicability	Initial Review	Final Approval
Applies to either PF or FED	Governance Committee of applicable Board (PF or FED)	Applicable Board (PF or FED)
Joint Document (applies to both PF and FED)	Governance Committee of both Boards (PF and FED)	Both Boards (PF and FED)

Procedural documents will be reviewed and approved by the ORS CEO and staff to ensure they align with the charter and policies.

D. Ongoing Monitoring

Board Governance documents located on the ORS Policy Portal shall be periodically reviewed to ensure they remain accurate, relevant, and compliant with the SJ Municipal code and other applicable laws and regulations.

All Board Governance documents shall be reviewed on a **three-year (3)** review cycle, or sooner if required by changes in SJ Municipal Code, applicable laws and regulations, Board direction, compliance findings, litigation, or material changes to operational practices. Unless otherwise specified and explicitly approved by the Board, the review cadence established in this Policy shall apply to all Board Governance documents; individual policies and charters need not restate the review cycle.

ORS staff, under the direction of the CEO, shall maintain a centralized governance document inventory that identifies adoption dates, most recent review dates, and next scheduled review dates. Staff shall support the Boards in evaluating and approving revisions as needed to ensure all governance documents remain current, applicable, and effective.

E. Retirement

Governance documents that are superseded or no longer applicable may be retired. Retirement of policies or charters shall require review by the Governance Committee(s) and approval by the appropriate Board(s).

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
Governance Committee of Boards (PF & FED)	- Identify/recommend any new governance documents or significant changes to existing governance documents - Review initial draft to ensure documents meet content, format, and compliance requirements - Recommend final documents for approval by the full Board - Ensure documents are regularly monitored & remain current - Approve retirement of governance documents, as appropriate

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Boards (PF & FED)	• Recommend new governance documents or material updates to existing governance documents, as appropriate. • Provide final review and approval of all governance documents • Ensure documents are regularly monitored & remain current • Approve retirement of governance documents, as appropriate
ORS CEO & CIO	• Recommend to the Boards, if necessary and as needed, any new governance documents or significant changes to existing governance documents • Develop & implement requirements or guidance contained in governance documents, ensuring integration into the program's daily operations (e.g., procedure documents) • Ensure Board members, ORS employees, and other related parties comply with governance documents • Ensure documents are regularly monitored & remain current
ORS Staff	• Maintain the ORS Policy Portals for PF & FED • Track & monitor periodic governance document reviews to ensure document remains current, applicable, and effective • Develop and implement procedures in alignment with approved governance documents, if necessary

EXCEPTIONS & NON-COMPLIANCE

No exceptions to this Policy permitted without review by the Governance Committee. Non-compliance must be reported to the Governance Committee of the Boards.

RELATED DOCUMENTS & REFERENCES

- ORS Policy Template [contact ORS staff for reference]
- [Police and Fire Department Retirement Plan Policy Portal](#)
- [Federated City Employees' Retirement System Policy Portal](#)

DOCUMENT REVIEW HISTORY

Version	Approval Date	Description of Changes
0.1	03/18/2026	Creation of Policy. Presented and discussed at Joint Governance Committee.
0.2	4/15/2026 – PF 4/16/2026 - FED	Updated: edited language under "Exceptions & Non-Compliance" section based on discussion at 3/18 Joint Governance Committee.