Policy Writing Guidelines

The following guidelines are non- binding recommendations. The rules governing policy development can be found in the "Policy Format Policy". These guidelines will simply help policy developers apply the principles of clear, equitable communication as policies are created.

1. Know precisely why you are writing the policy.
2. Investigate and understand the needs of the people who will use the policy (your users). What do they need to know or do?
3. Write a descriptive heading for each subtopic.
4. Eliminate any information your users do not need.
5. Focus on meaning and making your information accessible to your users.
    - Be helpful and respectful.
    - Use simple language and terms. Define any terms your users may not be familiar with.
    - Write short, simple sentences.
    - Use the active voice.
    - Be specific.
    - Use the present tense.
    - Write objectively. Avoid hyperbole.
    - Use positive language.
    - Spell out common and trademarked abbreviations the first time you use them in the policy.
    - Avoid uncommon abbreviations.
    - Use gender neutral language and terminology when appropriate
6. Spell correctly and consistently.
7. Punctuate and capitalize correctly and consistently.
8. Send a draft of your policy to your reviewers (the policy owner and other stakeholders as determined at the beginning of the project) for their feedback.
9. When you get reviewers' feedback, analyze it and revise your policy if/as necessary.