Administrative Policy No. 15.20

Subject:	Exceptions to Policy for Information Technology
Information Contact:	DSHS IT Policy & Governance DSHSDLITPolicyGovernance@dshs.wa.gov Chief Information Officer MS 45880, (360) 902-7714, FAX (360) 753-3575
Authorizing Source:	Office of the Secretary
Effective Date:	January 1, 2003
Revised:	October 27, 2020
Approved By:	**Original signed by Lori Melchiori** Senior Director, Office of Policy and Rules

_____

Purpose

This policy establishes:
1. The process to request and grant an exception to information security and information technology related administrative policies, standards, and processes in the Department of Social and Health Services; and
2. The process to request an exception to policy established by the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO).

Scope

This policy applies to all organizational units in the Department of Social and Health Services.

Definitions

Administration – An organization within the Department of Social and Health Services that is governed by an assistant secretary.

Department – The Department of Social and Health Services.

DSHS chief information officer (CIO) – The individual in the DSHS enterprise technology division with executive authority who serves as the department's principal advisor on the effective application of information technology to meet business needs.

DSHS secretary – The highest-ranking DSHS executive and chair of the DSHS cabinet. Serves as the final escalation point for decisions that cannot be resolved at the cabinet level, and is responsible for final decisions.

Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) – The OCIO sets information technology (IT) policy and direction for the state of Washington. The state CIO is a member of the governor's executive cabinet and advisor to the governor on technology issues.

Policy Requirements

The secretary delegates authority to grant exceptions to DSHS information security and information technology policies, standards, and processes to the DSHS chief information officer (CIO). The secretary (or designee) retains the right to review and overrule CIO decisions.

Exceptions may be approved for a one-time request, a specific period of time, or indefinitely. Exceptions granted for a specific period of time are considered temporary. Action to achieve policy compliance must be taken prior to the end of the temporary exception period.

When requesting an exception to a department policy that was established to comply with an Office of the Chief Information Officer policy or standard, an exception to the OCIO policy is required as part of the exception request.

Procedures

A. Department organizational units:
    1. Use the Information Technology Policy Exception Request form ([DSHS 05-240](#)) to request an exception to information security or information technology policies or standards from the DSHS chief information officer.
    2. Obtain appropriate internal approvals before submitting the request to the address indicated on the form ([DSHS 05-240](#)) for processing.
    3. Ensure the request includes the following information for exceptions that also require approval by the Office of the Chief Information Officer:
        a. Citation of the [OCIO policy or standard](#) for which the exception is requested;
        b. Description of the exception being requested, including technical details;
        c. Explanation of why the exception is needed and the potential consequences if approval is not granted; and
        d. Identification of a risk mitigation strategy and a plan to deal with

potential issues caused by the non-compliant approach.

B. The DSHS chief information officer:
    1. Approves or denies exception requests for information security or information technology policies, standards, or procedures within 14 days of receipt.
    2. Prepares and forwards requests requiring OCIO approval to the secretary for signature within 14 days of receipt.
    3. Maintains a log to track receipt and disposition of exception requests and to monitor compliance activities.

C. The DSHS Secretary (or designee):
    1. Reviews requests from the CIO that require an exception from the Office of the Chief Information Officer.
    2. Submits requests to the Office of the Chief Information Officer for exceptions to OCIO policies or standards.
    3. Provides the OCIO response to the CIO for tracking of the disposition and communication back to the administration.