Outline of Policy Review Process:

1) Select review team members. Team members will ideally represent all levels of an organization.   They will be specially trained in applying principles of trauma informed care to policies and procedures through practice examples and will continue to learn as they apply it in the actual review process.

2) Keeping in mind the 6 Principles of Trauma Informed Care (SAMHSA):
- Safety
- Trustworthiness and Transparency
- Peer Support
- Collaboration and Mutuality
- Empowerment, Voice and Choice
- Attention to Culture, Gender and History

Identify and prioritize the written policies and procedures to be reviewed. Divide chosen sections among team members to review in pairs or independently.

3) Reviewers go through relevant policies and procedures and ask the following questions where applicable:
- Does this policy or procedure promote or ensure safety?
- Is it clear? necessary? relevant? known?
- Have the people most affected by it had a say in developing it? Do they continue to be involved in decision making and policy development?
- Does it address or take into account strengths, disparities, and history for the populations being affected?

Reviewers will identify concerns, needs, and change recommendations to be presented to the full group. Reviewers make hand written notes on the printed sections of the document they're working on.

4) Using a projector and adobe pro (reader won't work) with a master copy of the full policy document, the team goes through the document from the beginning. Reviewers give their thoughts on sections they have identified as needing changes. There may be discussions and thoughts on wording generated by the whole group. Sections are highlighted and explanatory notes are written beside each highlighted area using the comments function in adobe. This process is followed from week to week (or month to month) until complete.

5) The organization or program creates a plan for addressing the changes in the policy using a new process or using the policy change process already in existence (if it is inclusive, informative, fair, etc.). The plan can include a process for sharing and vetting a draft of substantive changes proposed as well as for communicating about the process and educating staff (including current staff and those to be hired) on policies and procedures in general, and on specific policy changes.