



DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY (DTech)

CHANGE MANAGEMENT POLICY



Revised: 10/20/14

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Introduction

The Change Management Policy is the foundation of change management. It establishes the requirements for change to be managed and auditable, and to ensure business continuity. This document contains policy background information, definitions, objectives, policy administration information; and policy statements. These constitute the base requirements for change management and are not intended to define procedures or processes, but instead, provide the framework on which procedures and processes can be based. The change management procedures are defined in the document “Change Management Procedures.”

The purpose of this policy is to create a central repository of all the changes made to IT systems supported by DTech so that the department can have a global view of everything that is changing on the systems it manages and can use this information if problems occur to assist in tracking the issue back to a change that was made. Its purpose is also to ensure changes are communicated to customers both internal and external prior to implementation to give them a chance to have input into the schedule and scope of the change.

Definition of Change Management

Change Management is a discipline that the county follows to help ensure that the information technology services utilized by county departments, technology units and external customers are available to support their business functions by safeguarding system availability and minimizing impact to our internal and external customers. The goals of safeguarding system availability and minimizing impact to those dependent on the county’s technology services are achieved through planning, notification and coordination.

Definition of Change

For the purposes of this document, a “Change” is defined as any notable alteration to a system and/or its configuration that could affect business operations. A “Change Request” is defined as a formal request to perform a change. It is filed by a “Change Requestor.”

There are four categories of changes:

Countywide Change: Changes to systems used countywide and by the highest levels in the County that will result in interruption of service will be treated as major changes with additional communication requirements as defined in this policy. These systems include Email and web mail, COMPASS, Network, telephones, and the County’s Internet and Intranet portals. The comprehensive list of these systems will be kept in the change management system.

Major Change: Change to production system(s) that have major impact or extensive outage to the customer’s ability to conduct their business.

Minor Change: Change to production system(s) that have minor to no impact, or outage to the customer’s ability to conduct their business.

Emergency Change: Change submitted in response to a problem or outage of a system. These are unplanned in nature and are submitted in response to emergencies that cause a change to happen immediately or in a shortened time frame.

The Change Requester will determine, to the best of their ability, which category the change best fits in. The timeline for communication and approval of the change will vary depending on the category of change being

made.

The table below lists the four categories of change, who should be notified for each category, how long before the change the notification must be distributed, and examples of changes for each category.

Category	Groups Notified	Notification Time Frame	Examples
Countywide	DTech Management Team All relevant customer distribution lists for the affected system(s)	Two weeks prior to change	Upgrade of Email or web mail systems. WAN equipment replacement. Upgrade to Internet or Intranet portals that will cause an outage. Version upgrade for Lagan 311 system.
Major	DTech Management Team All relevant customer distribution lists for the affected system(s)	One week prior to change	Upgrade to latest version of System Center. Windows server security patching. Non-disruptive upgrade to NetApp OS on redundant equipment.
Minor	DTech Management Team All relevant customer distribution lists for the affected system(s)	Prior to the implementation of the change as coordinated with the customer of the service.	Customer requested modification to their application. Replacing a faulty LAN switch.
Emergency	DTech Management Team All relevant customer distribution lists for the affected system(s)	As soon as possible without affecting the work to fix the issue.	Email or web mail is down. Internet connection is down. 311 is down.

Objectives

This Change Management Policy provides statements and definitions that are intended to enhance the continuity, stability, and reliability of business operations. DTech personnel will use this Change Management Policy and the Change Management Procedures for any changes to an environment or system that could affect continuous business operations. Other County Departments may participate in this change management process.

The objectives of this Change Management Policy are to:

- Encourage advanced planning, coordination, and communication of changes.
- Consider the consequences of an unsuccessful change, and plan for recovery, prior to implementation.
- Communicate the change to all affected parties.
- Establish a central point and repository to coordinate changes.
- Identify the potential impact of changes on other systems and environments.
- Minimize the number of problems and/or conflicts that are caused by changes.
- Review the change management process for continuous process improvement.

Policy Administration

The root authority for policy administration is the DTech Executive Management Team. This policy does not supersede their authority. This policy formalizes the creation of the Change Management Steering Committee and its role in the implementation and maintenance of this policy.

Change Management Steering Committee (CMSC)

The Managers on the DTech Management Team make up the CMSC.

Role of the CMSC include the following:

- Authority to interpret and recommend changes to the DTech Change Management Policy
- Authority to approve all procedures and processes with respect to the Change Management Policy

Policy Statements

The foundation of change management in Information Technology has six primary components: a request, an approval, coordination, notification, implementation, and closure. These primary components establish a structure upon which policies can be founded.

Change Requests

- Change Requests must be filed for changes that meet the definition of Change contained in this policy document. They must be entered into the central change management system.

- All Change Requests must contain the necessary information to properly describe and document the change. The standard format for the change request is documented in the Change Management Procedures Document. All requests must be submitted using the standard format.
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- All change requests must be submitted to the central change management system as noted in the table contained in the Change Description section of this document. Each change request will be associated with a category; countywide, major, minor, or emergency.
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- All Change Requests should contain the necessary information to back out a change and recover from a failed implementation.
- All Change Requests must be traceable and auditable.
- Change Window: The change window is Sunday from 9 AM to 1 PM, unless otherwise negotiated with the customer.

Change Approval

- Change Requests should be approved before implementation can occur. They are approved by the Manager or Designee of the section responsible for the change.
- If circumstances require that a change must be made immediately to satisfy an urgent requirement such as an outage/problem or a security fix, a Change Request may be filed after implementation.

Change Coordination

- All DTech Managers or their Designee are responsible for reviewing the central change management system for changes and all distributed change notices to ensure that there are no conflicts. If a Manager believes there is a possibility of conflict, that Manager should contact the Manager responsible for the section making the conflicting change and work out a schedule that will mitigate any problems.

Change Notification

- All approved Change Requests must be formally communicated to individuals or groups that will be affected. They must be communicated using the standard format. Whenever a change occurs to any of the systems in the countywide category, Managers will communicate the change as per the table in the Change Description section of this policy and will coordinate with the CIO to send out an announcement of the change to the Board of Supervisors, County Counsel, and all Department Directors.

Change Implementation

- All changes should occur within their scheduled change time.
- Significant deviations from approved Change Requests (e.g., scope of work completed, timeframe, implementer, etc.) should be recorded in the central change management system.

Change Closure

- The disposition of all changes must be documented.
- Any deviations from the approved Change Request must be documented.

Policy Review

The Change Management Steering Committee will review the policy on a yearly basis and recommend any updates needed to the DTech Executive Team for approval.