Regulation vs. Policy vs. Procedure

Regulations, policies, and procedures are words that have similarities and confuse many people. These words, or rather concepts, have great significance in all establishments and environments. If regulations are acts or statutes passed by the legislation having the strength of law, policies are rules made to achieve goals in an organization and procedures are the processes to be followed to satisfy policies and regulations. A policy can never conflict with a regulation, a policy can however support a regulation. It is necessary to remember that the absence of a policy does not mean a procedure to satisfy a regulation governing the issue does not exist.

1. Regulation
   - Approver: Government Agency
   - Characteristics: Restrictive in nature and imposes sanctions
   - Flexibility & Change: No flexibility and almost no change

2. Policy
   - Approver: Board of Directors
   - Characteristics: General in nature and structurally guide
   - Flexibility & Change: No flexibility and very little change

3. Procedure
   - Approver: Department
   - Characteristics: Specific in nature and are systematic directions that satisfy a policy or regulation
   - Flexibility & Change: Flexibility and opportunities for change