



Policy Name:
Council-Staff Relations Policy

AD-63

Approved by Council

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Policy Statement:

The Municipality of Trent Lakes promotes a respectful, tolerant, harassment-free relationship and workplace between Members of Council and the officers and employees of the Corporation. The relationships are guided by the Code of Conduct (Ethics) for Members of Council, the Employee Code of Conduct AD-22, the Procedure By-law, Workplace Harassment Policy AD-20, Workplace Violence Policy AD-26, and all application legislation.

Purpose:

This policy provides guidance on how the Municipality of Trent Lakes ensures a respectful, tolerant, harassment-free relationship and workplace between Members of Council and the officers and employees of the Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Lakes.

Scope:

This policy is applicable to all Members of Council, officers and employees of the Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Lakes (the "Corporation").

Policy Requirements:

The relationship between Members of Council and the officers and employees of the Corporation is guided by the following:

1. Code of Conduct (Ethics) for Members of Council

The Code of Conduct for Members of Council ("Council Code of Conduct") establishes the ethical behavior expected of Members of Council and local boards of the Municipality of Trent Lakes.

Section 6 of the Council Code of Conduct, Discrimination and Harassment, states, "All members of Council have a duty to treat members of the public, one another and staff with respect and without abuse, bullying or intimidation, and to ensure that their work environment is free from discrimination and harassment."

Section 7 of the Council Code of Conduct, Improper Use of Influence, states, “No Member shall use, or attempt to use, their authority or influence for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, coercing, commanding, or influencing any staff member with the intent of interfering with that person’s duties, including the duty to disclose improper activity.”

Section 9 of the Council Code of Conduct, Conduct Respecting Staff, states, “Members of Council are expected to:

- represent the public and to consider the well-being and interests of the Municipality;
- develop and evaluate the policies and programs of the Municipality;
- determine which services the municipality provides;
- ensure administrative policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of Council;
- ensure accountability and transparency of the operations of the Municipality, including the activities of the senior management of the Municipality;
- maintain the financial integrity of the Municipality; and
- carry out the duties of Council under the *Municipal Act, 2001* or any other Act.

Municipal staff are expected to:

- implement Council's decisions and establish administrative practices and procedures to carry out Council’s decisions;
- undertake research and provide advice to Council on the policies and programs of the Municipality; and
- carry out other duties required under the *Municipal Act, 2001* or any Act and other duties assigned by the Municipality.

Council as a whole has the authority to approve budget, policy, governance and other such matters including structures and procedures for committees. Authority to act on behalf of Council, including through a committee, can only be delegated by Council or by law. Members of Council shall be respectful of the role of staff to provide advice based on political neutrality and objectivity and without undue influence from an individual Member or group of Members of Council.

Staff members serve Council and work for the municipal corporation under the direction of the Chief Administrative Officer. Council directs staff through its decisions as recorded in the minutes and resolutions of Council. Members of Council have no individual capacity to direct members of staff to carry out particular functions. Staff establish the appropriate administrative policies, systems, structures and internal controls to implement the goals and objectives of Council, and manage implementation within the resources at their disposal.

Members of Council should not:

- maliciously or falsely injure the professional or ethical reputation, or the prospects or practice of staff;
- compel staff to engage in such activities; or
- use, or attempt to use, their authority or influence for the purpose of intimidating, threatening, coercing, commanding or influencing any staff member with the intent of interfering in staff's duties.”

2. Employee Code of Conduct

The Employee Code of Conduct establishes the required standards of ethical and professional conduct as it applies to their employment with the Municipality of Trent Lakes.

Section 21 of the Employee Code of Conduct, Council-Staff Relations, states, “As an employee of the Municipality, it is recognized that Municipal Council is the elected voice of the residents of the Municipality and the decisions of Council are to be respected. Employees shall distinguish between personal comments or opinions and their jobs with the Municipality.”

3. Workplace Harassment Policy AD-20

The purpose of the Workplace Harassment Policy is to communicate the Municipality's commitment to providing a work environment in which all workers are treated with respect and dignity and to comply with employer duties under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

4. Workplace Violence Policy AD-26

The purpose of the Workplace Violence Policy is to communicate that violence or unacceptable behavior in the workplace perpetrated by or against employees, will not be tolerated.

5. Procedure By-law

The Procedure By-law also establishes rules, procedure and conduct for Members of Council. Subsection 14.4 states, “Council members shall acknowledge that only Council as a whole has the capacity to direct staff members to carry out specific tasks or functions and Council members shall not publicly criticize individual members of staff in a way that casts doubt on their professional competence and credibility.”

Responsibilities:

Members of Council, officers and employees of the Corporation are required to adhere to this policy and its governing provisions, including the Code of Conduct (Ethics) for Members of Council, the Employee Code of Conduct, the Workplace Harassment Policy, the Workplace Violence Policy, and the Procedure By-law.

Contraventions:

The Clerk shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this policy. Upon receipt of a complaint and/or concern, the Clerk shall notify:

- a. The CAO in the case of officers and employees of the Corporation;
- b. The Integrity Commissioner in the case of Council.

The handling of complaints shall be done in the manner set out in the application Code or Policy.