

# CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

*for Members of Council*  
*Town of Renfrew*

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## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

All members of Town Council of the Town of Renfrew will adhere to the Code of Conduct Policy to ensure that there is no conflict between their personal interests and official duties.

## **BACKGROUND:**

The Town has implemented this Code of Conduct Policy in order to both promote professionalism and to ensure that the relationship of trust that exists between council and the public remains an integral part of local government in Renfrew. Since its inception, local government has been understood to be an open, accessible and accountable form of government.

The purpose of a Code of Conduct Policy is to document and formalize standards of ethical conduct as they apply to Municipal representatives.

Municipal Council Members hold positions of privilege. Therefore, they should discharge their duties in a manner that recognizes a fundamental commitment to the well-being of the community and regard for the integrity of the corporation.

Each member of council will be provided with a copy of this Code of Conduct.

## **METHOD OF UPDATING THIS POLICY:**

As new issues arise, the Code will be reviewed and modified according to current situations. Any comments or suggested revisions should be directed to the Administration Committee through the Town Clerk's Office.

This Code of Conduct applies to all members of Town Council.

The Town Clerk is responsible to ensure that every member of council has received a copy of this Code, and any points of confusion have been clarified.

## **GENERAL:**

- 1) Members should promote the goals, objectives and policies of the Town of Renfrew.
- 2) Members should disclose in writing to the Town Clerk any business, commercial, or financial interest where such an interest might be construed as being in actual or potential conflict with their official duties.
- 3) Members of the Town of Renfrew Council should refrain from physical or verbal abuse or threats towards other members of Council, employees or members of the general public.
- 4) Members should ensure, in the performance of their official duties, equality of treatment to all persons and shall refrain from providing preferential treatment to any person, group, or organization.
- 5) Members should not engage in any business, dealing, or transaction or have a financial or other personal interest which is in conflict with the discharge of their official duties.
- 6) Members should not knowingly participate in any decision or promotion or make any recommendation, in which they or their family has any financial interest, except as a resident of the Municipality.
- 7) Members shall not benefit from the use of information acquired or used, and that is not generally available to the public, during the course of official duties.
- 8) Members must safeguard and protect any confidential information which they are privy to as a result of their position in the Town. Members will not disclose or otherwise release such confidential information to any person or agency other than authorized Town staff or officials, at any time during or following their term of office, except as required by law.
- 9) If members receive formal complaints, concerns or queries from residents of the Town, an appropriate response, within an appropriate time frame, should be sent to that resident.
- 10) Upon termination of elected term, members shall deliver to the Town Clerk all correspondence, images, drawings, documents, computer files, paper files, and all other property belonging to the Town which may be in the member's possession or control.
- 11) The Town expects a standard of dress and grooming from members of Council that is reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances of their position within the Town of Renfrew.

## **PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR:**

- 1) Members of the Town's Council are ambassadors of the Town. Thus, each member should be conscious of the Town's public duty and their part in the discharge of that duty. They are expected to conduct themselves with the highest degree of ethical behavior and integrity.
- 2) Members should at all times, act in the best interest of the municipality.

**GIFTS, BENEFITS, AND ENTERTAINMENT:**

- 1) Members of Council must make decisions based on an impartial and objective assessment of each situation, free from the influence of gifts, favours, hospitality or entertainment. The Town must avoid both the reality and the appearance of impropriety with the organizations or individuals with whom it deals. The public's perception of the integrity of the Town is very important.
- 2) Members should not place themselves in a position where they could derive any benefit or gain from any Municipal contracts, persons, groups, companies, or organizations with which the Town does business.
- 3) Members should not demand, accept, or agree to accept from a person, group, or organization that wishes to have business dealings with the Town, a nominal gift, benefit, favour, discount hospitality, or gratuity for personal benefit.

**POLITICAL ACTIVITY:**

The Town recognizes the right of members to engage in political activities for all levels of government consistent with the following:

- 1) Members may engage in any political activity as long as it does not impair, or is not perceived as impairing, the member's ability to perform their duties impartially.
- 2) Political activity should not occur by the member while representing, or being perceived to represent the Town.
- 3) The actions of members involved in any political activity shall not result in a corporate conflict.
- 4) A Member is allowed to actively campaign, solicit or promote any political candidate at the municipal, provincial or federal levels of government.
- 5) A Member seeking the nomination or candidacy of any elected provincial or federal political office must request an unpaid leave of absence from the time of declaration of intent until the cessation of the political candidacy.

## **VIOLATION OF CODE OF CONDUCT:**

- 1) The preceding guidelines and expectations, as well as the related policies, re-affirm the Town's commitment to integrity, objectivity and professionalism in delivering services to the public.
- 2) Maintaining the taxpayer's confidence and trust in local government is of the utmost importance. The high standards of conduct expressed in this document are intended to ensure that this public trust is not compromised. As such, every Member of Council is expected to be fully aware of, and in compliance with, the Code and its related policies.
- 3) Every Member of Council shall have regard to the provisions contained in the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990.
- 4) Any member of Council may submit to the Clerk, a signed confidential written allegation if it is felt that another member has violated this Code of Conduct to the extent that some action on the part of Council is warranted.

The allegation shall be held in confidence by the Clerk until the next meeting of Council, and be discussed in closed session.

Should Council determine that a breach has occurred, they will need to determine the appropriate course of action to be taken.

Any breach of this Code will be dealt with fairly and in keeping with the severity of the infraction.

If Council feels that a breach has occurred, but is unable to make a determination, they may request that an individual agreed upon by Council be appointed to investigate and report back to Council with a recommendation.