
TITLE:	Employee Code of Conduct Policy
POLICY NO.:	POL-ADMIN-01-2023
APPROVAL DATE:	July 17, 2023
EFFECTIVE DATE:	July 17, 2023
POLICY AMENDED:	N/A

PURPOSE

The Township of West Lincoln (“Township”) is committed to maintaining ethical and respectful conduct with integrity in order to maintain community trust. The Township is committed to the fundamental principles of accountability and transparency as a matter of good governance and will be guided by these principles. Employees and Volunteers are the Township’s most valuable and important asset. Township Employees and Volunteers are expected to continue performing their duties in a manner that maintains public trust and confidence in the quality services, programs and facilities offered to the residents of the Township. As “Good Ambassadors”, Employees and Volunteers should practice the fundamental values identified in the Township Values Policy through their interaction with community members receiving those services, and with co-workers sharing in the commitment to provide those services. It is with this in mind that every Employee and Volunteer is expected to comply with the Employee Code of Conduct Policy and all other policies and procedures that govern their behaviour.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all Township Employees and Volunteers while on duty providing services to the community. This Employee Code of Conduct outlines the behavior expected of Employees and Volunteers of the Township. Employees and Volunteers are encouraged to direct any questions or concerns regarding the policy to their immediate Supervisor or the Human Resources Coordinator. Serious breaches of this policy must be reported in accordance with the Township’s Whistleblower Policy and Procedure. Employees and Volunteers who report such breaches in good faith will be protected from reprisal in accordance with the terms of that policy.

DEFINITIONS

Employee: a person employed by the Township who provides services for remuneration (pay or benefits) (including full time, part time or contract employees).

Leader: a person in a leadership role (including supervisors, managers, directors and the CAO).

Volunteer: a person who freely and voluntarily provides time or service to the Township.

Worker: a person who is an Employee or Volunteer.

Disclosure of Confidential or Personal Information

Workers may not use or disclose confidential, privileged, or personal information belonging to or in the custody or control of the Township except as necessary to perform their duties in accordance with the Township's policies and procedures, and in accordance with the provisions of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, or as otherwise required by law. Where a Worker is uncertain whether information may be used or disclosed, they are to seek guidance from their immediate Supervisor or the Human Resources Coordinator.

Professionalism and Adherence to Core Values

As ambassadors and representatives of West Lincoln, Workers are expected to conduct themselves professionally in all of their interactions with other Workers and third parties (including clients, community agencies, contractors, suppliers, and the public).

Workers should conduct themselves in a manner consistent with these values:

Respect	We treat everyone equitably with compassion, sensitivity, and respect
Service	We serve West Lincoln with pride, dedication, and excellence
Honesty	We value honest, integrity, and trust
Community	We believe in social, environmental and economic choices that support our diverse community.
Partnerships	We foster collaboration and value partnerships

Workers must also be respectful of their co-workers. They should be aware that improper behaviour in the workplace has a negative effect on others. Improper behaviour includes but is not limited to any conduct or comment that is unfriendly, discourteous, uncivil, unethical, dishonest, disrespectful, abusive, harassing or discriminatory in nature. The Workers are to be guided by the Workplace Harassment Program & Procedure Policy.

Role of a Leader

Leaders set the tone and expectations across our organization. In addition to adhering to the Employee Code of Conduct as Workers, Leaders (including supervisors, managers, directors and the CAO) have an additional obligation to promote awareness of the Code of Conduct and be available to provide guidance regarding behavior. Any Leader that receives a complaint or becomes aware of a potential violation of the Code of Conduct must report it to their immediate Supervisor or the Human Resources Coordinator and take action based on the advice provided to them. Leaders must not independently investigate complaints or take disciplinary action without first seeking advice from Human Resources. Under no circumstances is retaliatory action to be taken.

Respect, Truth, Honesty and Integrity

Workers shall respect the values of truth, honesty and integrity in all Township matters and activities.

Workers shall not impose their personal, moral or religious standards on others, as every person is an individual with specific rights, values, beliefs, and personality traits to be respected at all times.

Workers should respect the right to confidentiality and privacy of all co-Workers and third parties (including clients, community agencies, contractors, suppliers and the public) and must be aware of their responsibilities under relevant legislation, workplace policies, ethical standards, and, where appropriate, professional standards.

Excellence

Workers shall at all times, act in the best interest of the Township, in a responsible manner, and be held accountable for their actions.

Workers shall strive to achieve the highest standards of ethical conduct.

Workers shall be cognizant of their position within the Township and recognize the trust placed in them. Workers shall ensure that they are performing their duties in a manner that does not violate trust relationships or abuse the power of their position.

Conflict of Interest

Workers shall not use their position with the Township to gain any particular advantage or benefit (for themselves, their family, their friends or others) in utilizing any service provided by West Lincoln or in conducting any business on behalf of the Township of West Lincoln.

Workers shall not be involved in discussing, supporting, objecting to or deciding any matter in which they have a personal or familial interest. Any Worker involved in such a matter shall declare a conflict of interest as soon as such conflict is identified.

Workers of West Lincoln shall not use their position with the Township to gain any particular personal, business, educational, financial or political advantage; this includes a prohibition that Workers not use any Township property, assets, resources, tools, materials or for personal benefit or gain.

Workers who choose to become personally involved in any community board, agency, association or political body must clearly declare that such involvement is not as a representative of the municipality.

Political Activity

Workers shall not be engaged in or involved with any political activity or election campaign (ie. Federal, Provincial, Regional or Municipal) in the workplace or during normal business hours. That includes campaigning, canvassing, fundraising or other activity intended to advance the particular interests of a person, party or other. All Workers have the right to participate in political activities on their own time. Recognizing that political views and activities may be divisive and disruptive it is important that during work time. Workers remain focused on performing their duties and responsibilities.

Social Media

Participation on any social media site by any Worker shall not conflict in any way with the Worker's working relationship with the Township. A Worker's obligation to protect the Township's confidential information extends to anything posted on social media.

Workers must not:

1. refer to the Township on social media or otherwise be identified as a Worker of the Township;
2. harm the Township's reputation in using social media; or
3. make comment on Township business or the Worker's work.

Public Criticism of the Township

Workers are expected to support policies, programs and the decisions of the Township and not publicly criticize the Township as an institution or employer, such that the public's perception is adversely affected. All Workers have a general right to freely express opinions on matters of public policy. However, this right is limited by the Workers' working relationship with the Township. Inappropriate public criticism may include, but is not limited to; letters to the editor, interviews with the media, negative statements to the public and posts on social media sites.

Disclosure Process

If a potential or real conflict of interest exists because of a Worker's personal or familial interests in a matter involving a service provided by the Township, a business dealing with the Township, or similar circumstances, the Worker must notify in writing of the situation, detailing their conflict, to their immediate Supervisor or Human Resources Coordinator. The Supervisor or Human Resources Coordinator will then ensure that someone who is not personally involved in the situation makes the judgment, inspection, or decision using the same objective criteria that would be used for that situation if a non-employee client were using the particular service or involved in the business dealing.

If a potential or real conflict of interest exists because a Worker is promoting a service or a product in an independent capacity but customers may perceive the Worker as a representative of the Township, the Worker will notify in writing of the situation to their Supervisor or Manager or Director or CAO (as appropriate). The Worker will inform each customer that they are acting in an independent business capacity rather than as a Worker or representative of the Township.

Whenever a Worker considers that he or she could be involved or appear to be involved in a conflict of interest, the employee shall immediately disclose the situation in writing to their immediate Supervisor or Human Resources Coordinator.

NON-COMPLIANCE

Failure or refusal to adhere to the terms of this policy may result in discipline up to and including dismissal.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated with staff via email and alternative methods as necessary. All staff will be notified of any changes if and when amendments are applied. Any concerns with the implementation of this policy, by any staff member, are to be directed to their Supervisor.

RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

Whistle Blower Policy
Township Values Policy
Municipal Act, 2001
Municipal Conflict of Interest Act
Municipal Elections Act, 1996
Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Human Rights Code
Occupational Health and Safety Act
Provincial Offences Act
Criminal Code