

**Schedule 'A' to
By-law No. 1271-19**

COUNCIL-STAFF RELATIONS POLICY

A. PURPOSE

The Council-Staff Relations Policy is adopted to encourage respectful relations, to guide communications between Council and Staff, and ensure a harassment-free work environment for all Members of Council and the officers and employees of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon.

B. DEFINITIONS

In the Policy,

- 1) "Chief Administrative Officer" ("CAO") means the Chief Administrative Officer or designate duly appointed by the Township as prescribed in Section 229 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended;
- 2) "Clerk" means the person or designate duly appointed by the Township as prescribed in Section 228 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended;
- 3) "Council" means the council of the Corporation of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon;
- 4) "Member" means a member of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon;
- 5) "Staff" means the officers and employees of the Corporation of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon and of its municipal corporations and local boards, including the CAO and Clerk.
- 6) "Township" means the Corporation of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon.

C. APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

- 1) This Policy applies to each Member of Council and Staff.

D. CONDUCT OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

- 1) Every Member of Council acknowledges and agrees that his or her role as a Member is prescribed by section 224 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended. Specifically, Members:
 - a. represent the public and consider the well-being and interests of the Township;
 - b. develop and evaluate the policies and programs of the Township;

- c. determine which services the Township provides;
 - d. ensure that administrative policies, practices and procedures and controllership policies, practices and procedures are in place to implement the decisions of Council;
 - e. ensure the accountability and transparency of the operations of the Township, including the activities of the senior management of the Township;
 - f. maintain the financial integrity of the Township; and
 - g. carry out the duties of Council under the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended.
- 2) Every Member acknowledges that Staff operate under the direction of the senior municipal administration in accordance with the decisions of Council and are required to serve the Township as a whole, not the needs or desires of any individual Member.
- 3) Every Member shall:
- a. be respectful of the role of Staff to provide advice based on political neutrality and objectivity and without undue influence from any Member or group thereof;
 - b. show respect for Staff and for their professional capacities and responsibilities.
 - c. direct any concerns respecting Staff to the CAO;
 - d. refrain from maliciously or falsely injuring or impugning the professional or ethical reputation of any member of Staff;
 - e. refrain from compelling any member of Staff to engage in partisan political activities or subject any member of Staff to threat or discrimination for refusing to engage in any such activity; and
 - f. refrain from using, or attempting to further, his or her authority or influence by intimidating, harassing, bullying, threatening, coercing, or commanding any Staff member in a manner which interferes with any Staff member's duties, including the duty to disclose improper activity.
- 4) In addition to the forgoing, every Member acknowledges that his or her conduct is subject to By-law No. 1272-19, the Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards of the Corporation of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon, which establishes minimum standards for the behavior of Members in their interactions with other Members, Staff, and members of the public.

E. CONDUCT OF STAFF

- 1) Every officer and employee of the Township acknowledges and agrees that his or her role as a member of municipal administration is prescribed by

section 227 of the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended. Specifically, all Staff:

- a. implement Council's decisions and establish administrative practices and procedures to carry out Council's decisions;
 - b. undertake research and provide advice to Council on the policies and programs of the Township; and
 - c. carry out other duties required under the *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended, any other Acts, and other duties assigned by the Township.
- 2) Staff are expected to conduct themselves in a courteous and professional manner and to be diligent, honest, and trustworthy in fulfilling their duties.
- 3) All Staff shall:
- a. ensure that Council members are aware of any issues or legislative changes that may impact upon their decision-making process;
 - b. ensure that management and the CAO are aware of any issues that may impact upon the Township and/or the ongoing activities of each department;
 - c. respond to directions or inquiries from Council or Committees/Boards, or inquiries from Members of Council made through the Mayor or CAO, in a timely fashion;
 - d. present Council and Committees with non-partisan and professional opinions and reports, whether in writing or in person at a meeting;
 - e. respect all Members of Council as equal and avoid favoritism or the appearance of favoritism;
 - f. avoid publicly criticizing Council, Members of Council, or their decisions or resolutions, whether orally or in writing; and
 - g. defer to the CAO or Mayor on any requests for public comment on any matter of Township business.

F. RESPECTFUL REPORTING

- 1) Members of Council shall be respectful of Staff time and shall observe the chain of command in place within the Township. Members are generally expected to direct questions, concerns, and requests to the Mayor or CAO. Any request for information from a Member of Council that is not delivered and answered at a meeting of Council or a Committee/Board shall be made in writing and circulated in writing to all Members of Council.
- 2) Questions regarding Council or Committee agendas or minutes should be directed to the Clerk or CAO. Members of Council are advised to consult the Township's Procedural By-law No. 1245-18, as amended, for guidance on appropriate communications regarding meetings of Council or Committees.

G. RELEASE OF INFORMATION

- 1) Members of Council and Staff acknowledge that official information related to the decisions and resolutions made by Council will normally be communicated to constituents, the community, and the media by Council as a whole or the Mayor as Head of Council, or by those so designated.
- 2) Information for release to the media or the public will generally be sent to Members of Council immediately in advance of its release. Members who wish to circulate or share information related to any decision or resolution shall accurately and adequately communicate the attitudes and decisions of Council, even if they disagree with Council's decision, such that respect for the decision-making process is fostered.
- 3) Staff shall refrain from making public comment, whether orally or in writing, that disparages or otherwise impugns a decision or resolution of Council.
- 4) Members of Council and Staff shall ensure that the professional communication standards of the Township are upheld at all times by complying with the Township's Social Media Policy and by using only official Township email or social media accounts for electronic communications respecting Township business. Members of Council and Staff shall not use personal social media or email accounts to discuss or disclose information about the Township, other Members, Staff, or third-party service providers or contractors that is not available to the public.
- 5) Members of Council and Staff shall ensure compliance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56, and direct all Freedom of Information requests to the Clerk or Privacy Officer as may be designated by the Township. Members and Staff may also seek information through a Freedom of Information request where appropriate.
- 6) Additional guidance on handling confidential information and protection of privacy is contained in By-law No. 1272-19, the Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards, as well as employee policies regarding confidentiality per by-law no. 1136-16.

H. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMUNICATIONS

- 1) The Mayor or his or her designate shall act as the spokesperson for Council and the Mayor and/or CAO shall act as the spokesperson for the Township in communications with other levels of government or governmental bodies

or agencies. Formal communications between a Member of Council and government or governmental bodies or agencies should be approved in advance by the Mayor and/or the CAO.

I. PROCEDURE AT MEETINGS

- 1) The Township's Procedural By-Law No. 1245-18, as amended, establishes the rules and procedures for meetings of Council, Committees, and Local Boards. Members are expected to understand and strictly comply with the Procedural By-law, and in particular section 13 which governs the Conduct of Members.

J. COMPLIANCE WITH WORKPLACE POLICIES

- 1) The Township is committed to complying with its duties as an employer to ensure a workplace free from harassment and violence in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1. All Members of Council and Staff are responsible for conducting themselves in accordance with the Township of Stirling-Rawdon Harassment and Violence policy (By-law No. 1180-17).
- 2) All Members of Council and Staff will also be responsible for understanding and complying with any other policy, procedure, or rule governing Member or Staff conduct or communications, as may be in force from time to time.

K. COMPLAINTS

- 1) The Clerk shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this Policy. Upon receipt of a complaint or concern, the Clerk shall notify:
 - a. In the case of Members of Council, the Integrity Commissioner;
 - b. In the case of officers or employees of the Township other than the CAO, the CAO; or
 - c. In the case of the CAO or Mayor, Council.
- 2) Notwithstanding subsection 1), officers or employees may direct their complaints or concerns regarding workplace issues directly to the CAO or Mayor, or their appropriate designates, or to another member of management with whom they feel comfortable.
- 3) Where a complaint is made by a Member of Council regarding a request for information, the Mayor or CAO, as the case may be, will investigate the matter and provide an appropriate response.

- 4) Where a member of Staff has refused a request for information made by a Member of Council, the Staff member should inform his or her Manager or the CAO of the request and the reason for the refusal.
- 5) Where there is disagreement between the Council-Staff Relations Policy and the Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards or other Staff policies or codes of conduct, the respective code shall prevail.