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## EMPLOYEE CODE OF CONDUCT

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### Purpose and Policy Statement

1. Employees of the Corporation of the Municipality of Mississippi Mills shall be committed to carrying out their duties in a manner that maintains and enhances public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity and impartiality of the Municipality. Trust and mutual respect are the cornerstones of a relationship between the public and municipal government. In serving the public interest, Employees are entrusted with access to a wide range of information, resources and responsibilities, and shall operate with a sense of honesty and accountability.

### Application

2. This Employee Code of Conduct (the “Code”) applies to all Employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent and temporary employees, as well as volunteers, students, and interns (collectively referred to as “Employees”).

### Definitions

3. In this Code of Conduct, the following terms have the meanings set out below:
  - a) **“Chief Administrative Officer”** includes Clerk-Administrator or such other employee who is responsible for exercising general control or management of the administration and affairs of the Municipality and other duties as directed by Council.
  - b) **“Child”** includes a child born within or outside of marriage and includes an adopted child and a person to whom the Member has demonstrated a settled intention to treat as a child of his or her family.
  - c) **“Closed/In-Camera Meeting”** means any meeting of Council, Committee of the Whole, Standing Committee or Board that is closed to the public in accordance with the *Municipal Act, 2001*.
  - d) **“Confidential Information”** includes information in the possession of, or received in confidence by the Municipality, that the Municipality is prohibited from disclosing, that the Municipality is required to refuse to disclose, or that the Municipality chooses not to disclose, under the Municipal Freedom of Information

and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), or other legislation or policy of the Municipality. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, Confidential Information also includes all information concerning matters dealt with at closed meetings, information that is marked as "confidential", information obtained by the Member by virtue of their position as a Member that is not in the public domain, or information that is otherwise determined to be confidential by the Chief Administrative Officer, Clerk or as specifically declared by Council.

- e) **“Council”** means the Council of the Municipality of Mississippi Mills;
- f) **“Ethically”** means behaving in a manner characterized by honesty, fairness and equality in interpersonal relationships and with respect for the dignity and rights of other people.
- g) **“Family Member”** includes:
  - i. A Spouse of the Member;
  - ii. A Child of the Member;
  - iii. A Parent of the Member;
  - iv. A Sibling of the Member, whether by birth, marriage or adoption;
  - v. A Grandchild, grandparent, aunt, uncle, niece or nephew of the Member;
  - vi. A Parent-in-law of the Member; and
  - vii. Any person who lives with the Member on a permanent basis.
- h) **“Gift”** means any cash or monetary equivalent, fee, object of value, service, personal benefit, travel and accommodation or entertainment. A gift does not include remuneration.
- i) **“Harassment”** includes, but is not limited to, engaging in a course of vexatious or unwanted comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwanted and includes Sexual Harassment as defined in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, as amended from time to time.
- j) **“Member”** includes an elected member of the Municipal Council and all members of Boards and Committees of the Municipality.
- k) **“Municipality”** means the Corporation of the Municipality of Mississippi Mills.
- l) **“Parent”** includes those persons who demonstrated a settled intention to treat as a child the Member, whether or not the Member is their natural child.
- m) **“Personal Interest”** means:
  - a. a financial interest of an Employee or the financial interest of a Family Member of an Employee;
  - b. a financial interest of a friend or colleague of the Employee;
  - c. any benefit or advantage to the Employee, the Employee’s Family Member, friend or colleague.
- n) **“Spouse”** means a person to whom the Member is married or with whom the Member is living in a conjugal relationship outside of marriage.

## General Responsibilities

4. Every Employee has a duty and responsibility to treat members of the public, members of Council and each other in a respectful manner, without abuse, bullying, harassment or intimidation.
5. Employees shall adhere to the standards outlined in this Code, and shall seek clarification from their Supervisor if unsure about any responsibilities or information contained in this Code.
6. If an Employee feels he or she may violate or already has violated this Code, he or she shall follow the disclosure and compliance requirements set out in sections 37 to 39 of this Code ("Disclosure and Compliance Requirements).
7. Employees shall consult with their Supervisor for guidance if they suspect a potential breach by another Employee of this Code.
8. Employees shall review and sign this Code annually.
9. Employees shall follow the Disclosure and Compliance Requirements.

## Confidentiality

10. Employees shall hold in strict confidence all Confidential Information acquired as a direct or indirect result of their employment with the Municipality.
11. Confidential Information shall not be disclosed except when required by law and the policies and procedures of the Municipality.
12. Particular care must be exercised before releasing information relating to the following matters:
  - a) items under litigation;
  - b) personnel matters;
  - c) information which infringes on the right of privacy of others;
  - d) sources of complaints about a variety of matters where the identity of the complainant is given in confidence;
  - e) information supplied to obtain various municipal approvals where such information is not part of the public documentation; and
  - f) schedule of prices in quotations or tenders for the supply of goods and/or services.

Please note that these items do not constitute an exhaustive list and have been included for emphasis.

13. Employees shall safeguard and protect Confidential Information of the Municipality and of others to which the Employee becomes privy as a result of their employment with the Municipality. Where an Employee is unsure of the status of information requested for release by a member of the public, he or she shall

consult with their Supervisor and/or the Chief Administrative Officer prior to releasing such information.

14. Employees are strictly forbidden from using any information available only to Employees to attempt to secure financial gain from any investment in real estate or other business dealings, whether by direct means or indirectly through others.
15. The obligation to keep information confidential applies even if the Employee ceases employment with the Municipality.

### **Conflict of Interest**

16. No Employee shall participate in any decision, project or process where they have a Conflict of Interest in such matter. Employees shall avoid Conflicts of Interest and comply with the Disclosure and Compliance Requirements where such Conflicts of Interest occur.
17. A Conflict of Interest may be real or apparent in nature:
  - a) A “real” Conflict of Interest exists where a Personal Interest exists and that interest is:
    - i. known to the Employee; and
    - ii. has a connection to the Employee’s duties that is sufficient to influence the exercise of those duties.
  - b) An “apparent” Conflict of Interest exists where an informed and reasonable person, upon reviewing and thinking the matter through, could conclude that a Personal Interest exists, and that the Personal Interest is sufficiently connected to the Employee’s duties that it could reasonably influence the exercise of their duties.
18. Employees must perform their duties impartially, such that an objective, reasonable observer would conclude that the Employee is exercising their duties objectively, without undue influence and in a manner that does not create a Conflict of Interest. Employees shall govern their actions using the following as a guide:
  - a) in making decisions, always place the interests of the taxpayers and the Municipality first and, in particular, place those interests before your Personal Interests and the interests of friends, business colleagues and Family Members;
  - b) interpret the phrase "conflict of interest" broadly and with the objective of exercising your duties impartially and objectively;
  - c) if there is doubt about whether or not a Conflict of Interest exists, seek the advice of your Supervisor;
  - d) do not make decisions or attempt to influence a decision that creates an obligation to any other person or business that will benefit from the decision;

- e) do not make decisions or attempt to influence any other person for the purpose of benefitting yourself, friends, business colleagues or Family Members, or any organization that might directly or indirectly benefit such individuals;
- f) do not put yourself in a position where a decision you make or your actions would give preferential treatment to friends, business colleagues or Family Members, or any organization that might directly or indirectly benefit such individuals;
- g) do not approve or attempt to influence the approval of any license, permit, contract, agreement or other document on behalf of the Municipality for your own personal use or benefit, or for the use of a Family Member, friend or colleague;
- h) do not make any decision or participate in the process of hiring, transferring, promoting, demoting, disciplining or terminating any Family Member, or friend;
- i) do not participate in any property matter involving your property or the property of any Family Member, friend, or colleague; and
- j) do not promise or hold out the prospect of future advantage through your influence in return for a direct or indirect Personal Interest.

### **Interaction with Members of Council**

- 19. Employees and Members shall respect each other's' roles and responsibilities and work diligently to create a positive working relationship.
- 20. Employees shall not maliciously or falsely injure the professional or ethical reputation of Members.
- 21. Operational inquiries received from Members will be addressed by Employees as follows:
  - a) Employees who are approached by Members regarding operational matters shall follow up on the inquiry and provide feedback on the inquiry to their Supervisor;
  - b) Employees shall follow up on inquiries from Members with the Chief Administrative Officer as needed.
- 22. Employees shall recognize and respect that Members are bound by the Council Code of Conduct and applicable legislation including the *Municipal Act* and the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, and that their purpose is to act in the best interests of the Municipality and within the requirements of their positions as Members.
- 23. Employees who have concerns about operational issues shall:
  - a) address the concerns with their Supervisor or department head; and
  - b) if they still have concerns about such issues after addressing them with their Supervisor and department head, shall address them with the Chief Administrative Officer and shall not address such issues with Members.

## **Use of Municipal Property**

24. No Employee shall for personal purposes or profit, use or permit the use of any Municipal property, equipment, services, or supplies other than for purposes connected with the discharge of their employment duties unless the use is a reasonable and incidental personal use of equipment such as computers, fax machines, cell phones, blackberries, etc., where the Municipality incurs no additional costs relating to such use, and the use is of limited duration and frequency.
25. Municipal property and resources, including facilities, vehicles, equipment and materials, shall be used only in the performance of employment duties and shall not be used or converted for personal benefit or use.
26. Employees are responsible for exercising care to prevent the abuse, excessive wear of or loss of Municipal equipment and materials used by the Employee in the course of their Employment.
27. Computer system information and procedures and any other information regarding computerized systems are considered Municipal property and may not be shared with the public. Employees are prohibited from using such systems for their personal benefit.

## **Gifts, Hospitality and Other Benefits**

28. Employees shall carry out their employment duties free from influence of gifts.
29. Employees are prohibited from soliciting, accepting, offering or agreeing to accept any gifts or benefits of any kind, personally or through a Family Member or associate (business or otherwise), that is connected directly or indirectly with the performance of their employment duties or could reasonably be construed as being given in anticipation of future, or recognition of past, special consideration by the Employee.
30. The above policy does not preclude Employees from accepting:
  - a) Token gifts, souvenirs, mementoes or hospitality of minimal or no value received in recognition for service, for speaking at an event, or for representing the Municipality at an event;
  - b) Food and beverages at meetings, banquets, receptions, ceremonies or similar events;
  - c) Food, lodging, transportation, entertainment provided by other levels of governments, by other local governments or by local government boards or commissions;
  - d) Reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their employment duties; or

- e) Gifts of a nominal value that are received as an incident of protocol or social obligation.
31. Where it is not possible to decline unauthorized gifts, hospitality or other benefit, Employees shall report the matter to the Chief Administrative Officer. The gift shall become the property of the Municipality and the Chief Administrative Officer may require that the gift be retained by the Municipality or be disposed of for charitable purposes in the Chief Administrative Officer's sole discretion.

### **Communications and Media Relations**

32. Only the Chief Administrative Official or his or her designate shall comment to the media on matters concerning staff operations, actions and functions of the Municipality.
33. Employees, when communicating with the public and media, will accurately and adequately communicate the attitudes and decisions of the Council, Board or Committee, even if an Employee disagrees with a majority decision, so that there is respect for and integrity in the decision making process.
34. It is not the intent of this Code to restrict the ability of an Employee to express a personal opinion on matters of general interest. In such cases, the Employee must make it clear that the comment is being made in their capacity as a private citizen, and not as a representative of the Municipality. At no time shall an Employee express a position that is disrespectful of the decision of the majority of Council, a Board or a Committee.
35. Posting or commenting on social media about the Municipality either directly or indirectly, constitutes communication with the public that is governed by this Code.
36. If Council has taken a position in a Local Planning Appeals Tribunal, or other tribunal or court, and instructed the Municipal Solicitor to appear at a hearing in support of such position, no Employee who disagrees with such position shall give evidence at such hearing or otherwise work against the will of Council expressed in its direction to the Municipal Solicitor in such matter.

### **Disclosure, Investigation and Compliance**

37. If an Employee suspects he or she has or may violate this Code, he or she shall immediately complete a "Confidential Employee Code of Conduct Disclosure" form and submit it to their Supervisor.
38. Upon receipt of the disclosure form, the Supervisor shall investigate and make a determination which shall be set out in the "Determination Regarding Confidential Employee Code of Conduct Disclosure" form, a copy of which shall be provided to the Employee and the Chief Administrative Officer.

39. Employees shall comply with their Supervisor's decision and any conditions of that decision.

I have read and been informed about the content, requirements, and expectations of the Employee Code of Conduct. I have received a copy of the policy and agree to abide by the policy guidelines as a condition of my employment and my continuing employment.

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**Employee Name (ID) please print**

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**Date**

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**Employee Signature**