

## County of Essex Policy and Procedures Manual

### Employee Code of Conduct

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<b>Office of Responsibility:</b>	Human Resources
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#### 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Corporation of the County of Essex (the "**County**") recognizes that it is only through the commitment and effort of each Employee (as defined below) of the County that the excellent quality of the wide range of essential services the County provides can be achieved, and is vital to maintain the trust of the public.
- 1.2 To maintain the public's trust, the County's Employees are expected to demonstrate the highest standards of ethical behaviour, they must be above suspicion and beyond reproach and must be perceived in this manner at all times.
- 1.3 This Employee Code of Conduct (the "**Code**") clarifies the County's expectations of its Employees and re-affirms the County's commitment to caring for its residents' needs, while maintaining fiscal responsibility on behalf of the public.
- 1.4 Public service is a public trust, which means that individuals who have employment in a governmental position are entrusted by the residents they serve to promote the public interest above any personal gain. County Employees are custodians of the public's power and resources and are expected to act with the highest levels of responsibility, integrity, and accountability.

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- 1.5 As the County is a municipal corporation entrusted with public funds, it is critical that every Employee of the County be committed to the highest standards of ethical behaviour. It is in this spirit that this Code was drafted and implemented.
- 1.6 Contravention of this Code is a serious matter to the County and the public, and will be treated as such. Certain serious infractions, including, but not limited to, fraud, theft, willful damage of property, or harassment, if founded, may result in immediate termination of employment, with no progressive discipline being warranted or appropriate.

### 2.0 Scope

- 2.1 This Code applies to, and is to be adhered to by, all Employees of the County.
- 2.2 This Code does not apply to Council, which is governed by its own Code of Conduct.
- 2.3 This Code does not apply to employees of the Essex County Library Board or the Essex-Windsor Solid Waste Authority, which are governed by independent Boards. It is the responsibility of those Boards to determine an appropriate Code of Conduct for those employees.
- 2.4 This Code recognizes that certain Departments of the County may currently have, or may in the future be required to have, Department-specific Codes of Conduct that outline additional expectations and professional standards relevant to their professions and operations. However, such Department-specific Codes shall not conflict with the provisions of this Code and shall be drafted in such a way to complement and operate in tandem with this Code, ensuring consistency in ethical standards for all County Employees.

### 3.0 Definitions

- 3.1 To provide context for this Code, and to assist in the interpretation of this Code, in addition to terms defined in the body of this Code, the following terms have the meanings assigned to them:
- 3.1.1 "**Administration**" means the employees of the County collectively.

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- 3.1.2 "**Assets**" means all property of the County and includes, but may not be limited to, financial assets, buildings, land, vehicles, equipment, documents (whether in paper or digital format), tools, electronic equipment, computers, printers, photocopiers, electronic mail services, internet services, information, and work time.
- 3.1.3 "**CAO**" means the Chief Administrative Officer of the County.
- 3.1.4 "**Code**" means this Code of Conduct.
- 3.1.5 "**Confidential Information**" means information that is not part of the public domain and/or information that has been designated as confidential by Council, the CAO, and/or the County's Privacy Officer.
- 3.1.6 "**Conflict of Interest**" means a situation that arises in the course of an employee's duties when the employee is called upon to deal with a matter in which the employee has a direct or indirect personal and/or financial interest. A Conflict of Interest may be real or perceived, with employees being prohibited from having a real conflict of interest and being required to avoid any and all perceived conflicts of interest. A direct Conflict of interest can occur when an employee may derive, or be seen to derive, some financial or personal benefit, or avoid financial or personal loss. An indirect Conflict of Interest may arise when the potential benefit or loss would be experienced by another person or corporation having a relationship with the employee. A benefit, loss, interest, and/or relationships associated with a Conflict of Interest are generally financial in nature, but are not limited to such. A Conflict of Interest arises when an employee participates in activities, which could advance a personal interest at the expense of the County's interests. Any behaviour, which is, or could be perceived as, a Conflict of Interest is prohibited and subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.
- 3.1.7 "**Council**" means the Warden, Deputy Warden, and the Councillors for the County, collectively.

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- 3.1.8 "**County**" means the Corporation of the County of Essex as a municipal corporation, but may be used interchangeably with the County of Essex as a defined geographic region.
- 3.1.9 "**Employee**" means any person employed by the County pursuant to a contract or collective agreement, and includes the CAO, including full-time, part-time, temporary, and contract employees and students.
- 3.1.10 "**Fraud**" means an act committed, which, through deceit, falsehood, or other such behaviour, either deprives the County of its Assets (this includes, but is not limited to, theft), or causes the County to act to its own detriment or prejudice, or creates a perceived or inherent reputational or safety risk to the County, and with a corresponding benefit to the employee committing the Fraud. Fraud may include misrepresentations of financial or other information to conceal misappropriation, by such means as:
- (i) manipulation, falsification, or alteration of records, or documents, including, but not limited to, records or documents submitted as a condition of employment; and/or
  - (ii) suppression of information, transactions or documents; and/or
  - (iii) misapplication of accounting principles.
- 3.1.11 "**Immediate Family**" means the spouse or common-law partner of an Employee, any child (including natural, adopted, and step-children) of an Employee, any parent, sibling, stepsibling, grandparent, grandchild, in-laws (parent, child, sibling), aunts, uncles, and cousins of an Employee, and any other person who resides in the same household or with whom the Employee has a relationship of dependency or significant personal connection that could create a conflict of interest, or a perception of a conflict of interest
- 3.1.12 "**Privacy Officer**" means the privacy officer appointed by Council to be the privacy officer for the County, and which role Council has currently assigned to the Clerk.

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3.1.13 "**SLT**" means the Senior Leadership Team comprised of the CAO, the heads of the various Departments of the County, and such other members of Administration that the CAO may appoint to SLT from time to time.

3.2 The application of this Code's provisions to diverse situations may reveal ambiguities and inconsistencies in the Code. In such circumstances, the protection of the public interest is to be considered as the true underlying intent of the Code, and the Code shall be interpreted with the true underlying intent in mind.

## 4.0 Purpose

4.1 The purpose of this Code is to:

4.1.1 provide a guide for consistent behaviour for Employees of the County in completing the functions of their employment, serving the public, and delivering services to the residents of the County;

4.1.2 be a formal statement of the policies and principles of ethics, morals, and conduct the County has always embraced and requires its Employees to adopt and follow; and

4.1.3 provide a means for Employees of the County to obtain authorization and guidance with respect to real or perceived Conflicts of Interest, and to protect Employees by giving them the means to self report instances where they believe they may be in a Conflict of Interest.

4.2 This Code's references to guidelines and policies, as well as related expectations, re-affirms the County's commitment to integrity, objectivity, and professionalism in delivering services to the public. Maintaining residents' confidence and trust in municipal government and its employees is of the utmost importance. The high standards of conduct expressed in this Code are intended to ensure that this public trust is not compromised.

## 5.0 Policy

### 5.1 Overview

- 5.1.1 All County Employees must perform their duties in a manner that maintains and enhances public confidence and trust in the integrity, objectivity, and impartiality of the County. Trust and mutual respect are the cornerstones of any healthy relationship between any government and residents it serves.
- 5.1.2 As a municipal corporation entrusted with public funds, the County is obligated to ensure the protection and appropriate use of all its resources and Assets.

### 5.2 Principles of Conduct

- 5.2.1 An Employee shall not:
  - 5.2.1.1 engage in any business or transaction or have a financial or other personal interest that is incompatible with the discharge of the Employee's official duties;
  - 5.2.1.2 be under an obligation to any person who might benefit from special consideration or favour from the Employee or who might seek, in any way, preferential treatment;
  - 5.2.1.3 give, in the performance of official duties, preferential treatment to themselves, Immediate Family, or friends, or to organizations in which Immediate Family or friends have an interest, financial or otherwise;
  - 5.2.1.4 be in a position where the Employee could derive any direct or indirect benefit or interest from any contracts about which the Employee can influence decisions;
  - 5.2.1.5 benefit from the use of Confidential Information acquired during the course of official duties that is not generally available to the public; and/or

5.2.1.6 engage in any outside work or activity or business undertaking:

- (i) that interferes with the Employee's duties;
- (ii) in which the Employee has an advantage or appears to have an advantage derived from employment at the County;
- (iii) in a professional capacity that will or might appear to influence or affect the carrying out of duties as an Employee of the County; and/or
- (iv) that results in the use of Assets of the County for activities not associated with their employment with the County.

### **5.3 Disclosure**

5.3.1 As this Code applies to all Employees of the County, each Employee is required to be knowledgeable about the Code, all related County policies, regulations, government guidelines, and internal procedures applicable to their employment with the County. Each Employee is required to address any situations of actual or potential non-compliance with this Code.

5.3.2 When an Employee believes that they may be in breach of the Code, then that Employee must make prompt and full disclosure to their immediate supervisor and/or Department Head. This disclosure may be verbal at first instance but shall be reduced to writing and include a detailed description of the actual or potential breach. The written disclosure of any incident will be co-signed by the Employee and their immediate supervisor and/or Department Head (the "Self Report"), with the Department Head then being responsible for ensuring the requirements of this Code in handling the Self Report are complied with.

5.3.3 The County recognizes that an actual or potential breach of this Code may arise without any intentional wrongdoing or improper conduct on the part of the Employee. In such a circumstance, an Employee will not be disciplined or treated

adversely for making prompt and full disclosure. However, all Employees are expected to make every effort to avoid such circumstances, and are obligated to make a Self Report as soon as they learn of such a circumstance.

5.3.4 Employees are to use sound judgment and apply the Code in a proactive fashion in order to maintain the public's trust in the County's integrity.

5.3.5 An Employee failing to disclose an actual or potential breach of the Code may be subject to discipline, and which discipline could be up to and including termination of their employment.

#### 5.4 Reporting Allegations

5.4.1 In addition to the self-disclosure obligation outlined above in this Code, any Employee that becomes aware of suspected Fraud, breach of trust, or other wrongdoing by another Employee shall report this to their immediate supervisor, Department Head, or the CAO (the "**Report**").

5.4.2 The Report shall be investigated by the Director of Human Resources or their delegate, or, if the Director of Human Resources deems it appropriate, an external third-party investigator, who will complete a written report (the "**Investigation Report**").

5.4.3 Confidentiality of any information contained in the Report and/or the subsequent Investigation Report will be protected, except to the extent required by any associated discipline or legal responsibilities.

5.4.4 All Employees must co-operate fully during an investigation of any Report.

5.4.5 Reprisals against any of the following persons related to a Report and the subsequent Investigation Report are prohibited:

- (i) any Employee seeking advice about making a Report in relation to the Code;
- (ii) any Employee who makes a Report in relation to the Code;

- (iii) anyone who cooperates in an investigation or other process related to a Report made in relation to the Code; and/or
  - (iv) anyone who seeks enforcement of the Code.
- 5.4.6 Any Employee who makes a Report in good faith or cooperates in an investigation shall be protected from any and all reprisals by the County.
- 5.4.7 Any Employee who experiences, or believes they have experienced, a reprisal or retaliation as a result of making a Report in good faith or cooperating in an investigation should report the suspected reprisal to the Director of Human Resources. Upon receipt of such a report, the Director shall promptly assign an external party to address and investigate the matter.
- 5.4.8 When in doubt about the interpretation or application of this Code, clarification should be sought from the Director of Human Resources or their delegate.

## 5.5 Employee Behaviour

- 5.5.1 The County recognizes that Employees interact with residents or clients in receipt of municipal services or programs, community agencies, contractors, suppliers, and the general public on a daily basis. Employees recognize that they are expected to perform their duties with integrity, objectivity, courtesy, and impartiality, and to conduct themselves at all times in a manner that respects others and their rights. Employees will acknowledge and recognize the dignity and worth of every person they serve and with whom they work.
- 5.5.2 The County's Employees are its ambassadors and Employees are expected to reflect a positive image at all times, including online and through social media, with each Employee being conscious of their need to conduct themselves with the highest degree of moral and ethical behaviour and integrity.
- 5.5.3 This Code also requires that Employees be professional and courteous with their fellow Employees.

- 5.5.4 Employees should be aware that improper behaviour in the workplace has a negative effect on other Employees and the public's opinion of the County. Examples of improper behaviour include excessive noise, inappropriate office decorations, potentially offensive pictures and jokes, spreading rumours and/or misinformation, bullying, profanity, gossip, and demonstrating little or no respect for other's personal belongings, and intentionally excluding or ignoring colleagues in a manner that undermines workplace harmony. Employees are expected to be reasonable and fair in their expectations of each other and resolve any conflict in a mature and professional manner.

## 5.6 **Related Obligations (Professional Associations)**

- 5.6.1 Nothing in this Code is intended to conflict with the County's obligations to its Employees under its various collective agreements, Policies, or employment contracts. To the extent that this Code conflicts with legislation, collective agreements, other Policies of the County, or employment contracts, those collective agreements, Policies, or employment contracts take precedence.
- 5.6.2 As well as this Code, many Employees may also be subject to other rules of conduct as part of their professional affiliations. These Employees, including, but not necessarily limited to, accountants, lawyers, planners, physicians, nurses, paramedics, personal support workers, and engineers, should be aware of the expectations of their respective professional associations, and comply with same.

## 5.7 **Violation of Code of Conduct**

- 5.7.1 Every Employee is expected to be aware of, and act in compliance with, this Code and all related Policies of the County. Violation of this Code is a serious matter and will be addressed as such by the County. Any Employee, who has contravened the requirements of this Code, including the reporting obligation to report any knowledge of wrongdoing, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, with discipline being up to and including termination of employment.

- 5.7.2 Any Employee being investigated for a potential violation of this Code may be suspended, with or without pay, or be re-assigned to other duties pending completion of the investigation, at the discretion of the Director of HR, in consultation with the CAO, and with such determination being made on the particulars of the case and the best interests of the County.
- 5.7.3 Nothing in this Code negates the right of any employee to representation, whether having a legal professional and/or union representative act on their behalf.

## 5.8 Use of Municipal Property and Assets

- 5.8.1 Employees shall not make unauthorized use, or use outside a sanctioned municipal initiative, of any Assets or other resources of the County for any personal reasons.
- 5.8.2 Employees must ensure that any Assets in their care as part of their job duties is properly secured and protected at all times. This responsibility extends to the use and security of any corporate credit cards and access code fobs.
- 5.8.3 Employees shall only use the County's Assets for activities associated with the discharge of their duties.
- 5.8.4 County Assets are provided solely for County business and sponsored activities, and are accordingly restricted to such use.
- 5.8.5 Employees accessing the County's internet access are prohibited from performing any unacceptable or unlawful activities on the County's electronic network. (See Policy Number 2001-001: Technology Use Policy) unless required during the course of an investigation, as approved by the Director of Human Resources. By way of example, this would include accessing websites that contain pornographic material or that promote hate propaganda.
- 5.8.6 No Employee shall sell, transfer, or in any way authorize the use of any intellectual property, including copyrighted works, patented inventions or processes, and trademarks, belonging to the County, without express written authority to do so.

- 5.8.7 For clarity in interpreting the above subsection of the Code, the intellectual property rights in any work produced by an Employee in the course of their employment with the County are and remain the exclusive property of the County.

## 5.9 Security and Protection of Information

- 5.9.1 It is every Employee's responsibility to ensure that all information collected, produced or obtained in the course of their duties, whether in reports, memos, oral communication or electronic format, is as accurate as possible. No employee shall willfully mislead other Employees, Council, or the public, about any issue of municipal concern.
- 5.9.2 Employees shall not release to anyone, any Confidential Information acquired in the course of that person's duties with the County, except as authorized by the Privacy Officer in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("**MFIPPA**").
- 5.9.3 Employees who require clarification on the release of Confidential Information, or information of any kind, shall consult with the Privacy Officer.
- 5.9.4 Employees shall not destroy any Confidential Information except through the approved process outlined in Policy Number 2005-001 – Records Destruction Policy.
- 5.9.5 No Employee shall benefit, either directly or indirectly, from the use of Confidential Information acquired during the course of their employment that is not generally available to the public.
- 5.9.6 Notwithstanding the provisions above, MFIPPA allows Employees to use personal information if they require that information to carry out their duties, and if the affected individual reasonably expects that their personal information would be used in the manner it is. However, when an Employee proposes to disclose someone's personal information, the Privacy Officer shall be consulted on any requirements to do so, and no personal information will be released or used without the Privacy Officer's authorization.

For clarity, the Privacy Officer may establish a procedure whereby designated Employees are authorized to disclose stated types of personal information to specified recipients provided that they do so in compliance with the procedure.

- 5.9.7 These guidelines extend beyond an Employee's current employment relationship with the County and when an Employee leaves the employment of the County, they remain under an obligation not to disclose Confidential Information for their own personal gain.

#### 5.10 **Media and Public Relations**

- 5.10.1 Communications with the media and public will be conducted in accordance with Policy Number 2018-001: Corporate Communications & Media Relations Policy.
- 5.10.2 It is not the intent of this Code to restrict the ability of Employees to express a personal opinion on matters of general interest, but Employees are cautioned to make it clear that their comment is being made in their capacity as a private citizen, and not as a representative of or spokesperson for the County.
- 5.10.3 Employees must use caution to ensure that the County's interests are not compromised in any way, either by the use of municipal letterhead, email addresses, or by any other implication, in making their personal opinions known to others.

#### 5.11 **Conflict of Interest**

- 5.11.1 The term "**Conflict of Interest**" has the meaning assigned in Section 3.1.6 of this Code.
- 5.11.2 Conflicts of Interest include, but are not limited to, the following:
- (i) An employee may not make a personal bid on the sale of municipal property or goods, except those disposed of at public auction or of a nominal value.
  - (ii) The choice of suppliers of goods and services to the County must be based on competitive considerations of quality, price, service and benefit to the County,

and must comply with Policy Number 2019-003: Procurement Policy. Use of one's position or knowledge to influence the procurement process for direct or indirect personal gain is prohibited. Employees must not represent themselves as being in a position to commit the County to the purchase of goods or services except in accordance with Policy Number 2019-003: Procurement Policy, and within the recognized authority of their position.

- 5.11.3 Employees or their Immediate Family should not sell goods, materials, or services to the County. However, an exception may be made with the approval of the CAO, if the procurement is handled in accordance with Policy Number 2019-003: Procurement Policy, and if any services provided by an Employee are provided outside the regular hours of employment and on a fee for service basis, and if any services provided by an Immediate Family member is on a fee for service basis.
- 5.11.4 Any Employee that believes they are in breach of these provisions shall comply with the disclosure requirements of this Code, outlined in Section 5.3 of this Code above.
- 5.11.5 Any Employee who is aware of someone else who is in breach of these provisions shall comply with the disclosure requirements of this Code, outlined in Section 5.4 of this Code above.
- 5.11.6 Any doubt whether an Employee has a Conflict of Interest should be addressed in writing by the Employee to his or her immediate supervisor or Department Head, seeking direction on the matter. The immediate supervisor or Department Head shall consult with the Director of Human Resources or their delegate as needed to obtain an opinion in writing as to whether or not there is a Conflict of Interest.

## 5.12 **Gifts and Entertainment**

- 5.12.1 Employees must make workplace decisions based on an impartial and objective assessment of each situation, free from the influence of gifts, favours, hospitality, or entertainment, and must avoid both the reality and the

appearance of impropriety with the organizations or individuals with whom the County deals.

- 5.12.2 Employees shall not accept any gifts, favours, hospitality, or entertainment, that could reasonably be construed as being given in anticipation of future business dealings, or in recognition of past business dealings, with the County.
- 5.12.3 Notwithstanding the above, as part of public relations efforts, the CAO may approve acceptance of gifts that results in Employees attending at public events to represent the County and its interests.
- 5.12.4 Notwithstanding the above and notwithstanding the general rule that the acceptance of even customary gifts and entertainment should be avoided, it is recognized that this type of hospitality may be acceptable within strict limits as a part of some reciprocal business relationships or to develop a network which will benefit the County. An Employee may pay for or accept customary gifts and entertainment, such as meals, provided:
- (i) the expenses involved are at a reasonable level;
  - (ii) the expenses are infrequent;
  - (iii) the expenses can clearly be seen as legitimately serving a definite business purpose of the County;
  - (iv) the expenses are appropriately related to the role and responsibilities of the Employee involved; and
  - (v) the expenses have been disclosed to and approved by the Employee's immediate supervisor.
- 5.12.5 Employees who are asked to speak publicly to an organization or professional association may accept a small honorarium or gift, provided the honorarium or gift is reasonable in all of the circumstances. Employees may also to accept an offer of reimbursement of travel and/or accommodations, provided the approval of the Employee's immediate supervisor has been obtained in advance.
- 5.12.6 Notwithstanding the above, Employees may not accept travel, accommodations, or any other form of hospitality

when speaking at conferences or business functions where the purpose of the event is to solicit business from the County.

- 5.12.7 Employees are expected to protect their integrity and prevent the appearance of a bias or Conflict of Interest by refusing any form of gift not explicitly permitted by this Code, and by reporting all offers of gifts by outside persons or firms to their immediate supervisor.
- 5.12.8 Likewise, gifts and entertainment may, on rare occasions, be given to others at the County's expense, but only if approved by the CAO and only if consistent with accepted business practices.

### 5.13 **Political and Community Activity**

- 5.13.1 To ensure public trust in the County, Employees must be, and appear to be, both personally impartial and free of undue political influence in the exercise of their employment duties.
- 5.13.2 No full-time or part-time permanent County Employee shall be appointed to serve on a Board or Committee of the County. Should a member of a Board or Committee of the County subsequently be employed by the County in any capacity, that member shall be deemed to have resigned their position from such Board or Committee of the County. This Portion of the Code shall not apply to an Employee being employed for a term of six months or less, with such Employee deemed to be on leave from their position on the Board or Committee of the County.
- 5.13.3 The County encourages Employees to take part in community activities. However, an Employee serving on a community board, not-for-profit board, or external committee is responsible for continually assessing whether their involvement has resulted in a real or perceived Conflict of Interest. If a real or perceived Conflict of Interest arises, the Employee may have to consider resigning as a member of the community board, not-for-profit board, or external committee, shall abstain from involvement in those decisions or votes that are associated with or would create, or be seen to create, a Conflict of Interest, and shall notify

their immediate supervisor of such real, potential, or perceived Conflict of Interest.

- 5.13.4 Employees may participate in political activities at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels, or otherwise be involved in political causes, providing such activity does not take place during work hours or utilize the Assets of the County. Notices, posters, or similar material in support of a particular candidate or political party are not to be displayed or distributed by Employees on County property or worksites. However, Employees engaged in political activities must make it clear that the positions they take and/or support are their personal opinions and that they are not representing the formal position of the County.

#### 5.14 **Family/Personal Relationships (Nepotism)**

- 5.14.1 All Employees are prohibited from giving any preferential treatment to Immediate Family or friends, or to organizations in which Immediate Family or friends have an interest, financial or otherwise.
- 5.14.2 Should the County be engaged in a business relationship or transaction with any Immediate Family or friend of an Employee, or to an organization in with any Immediate Family and/or friend of an Employee has an interest, that Employee shall, as soon as they become aware of the business relationship or transaction, disclose this potentially perceived Conflict of Interest in writing to their immediate supervisor.

#### 5.15 **Outside Business Activity/Employment**

- 5.15.1 Employees may engage in outside business activity or take on alternate employment separate and apart from their employment with the County, which is colloquially known as "moonlighting", but only if that alternate employment does not violate this Code, does not negatively impact on their effectiveness at the County, does not contravene any related policies and procedures of the County, and complies with the following guidelines:
- (i) the alternate employment/activity must not conflict with their hours of work with the County;

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- (ii) the alternate employment/activity must not interfere with the efficient performance of their duties with the County;
- (iii) the alternate employment/activity must not compete with the County's services; and
- (iv) the alternate employment/activity does not use the County's Assets or other resources.

5.15.2 As responsibility to avoid actual or perceived conflicts of interest lies with the individual Employee, should an Employee have any external employment and/or business activity, the Employee shall disclose in writing all such "moonlighting" situations to their immediate supervisor, who in turn, shall immediately inform the Director of Human Resources, or their delegate, in order to receive written confirmation that the external employment and/or business activity does not conflict with the Code and/or any related policies.

### 5.16 **Fraud/Theft**

5.16.1 The term "**Fraud**" has the meaning assigned in Section 3.1.10 of this Code.

5.16.2 Employees shall comply with all controls established by the County to prevent Fraud.

5.16.3 Employees shall exercise honesty and integrity and shall not knowingly be a party to any Fraud. Each Employee is obligated to report any knowledge or suspicion of Fraud to their immediate supervisor, or their Department Head, or to the CAO.

5.16.4 Any allegation of Fraud shall be investigated in accordance with this Code.

### 5.17 **Expectation of Administration in Support of Council**

5.17.1 While Council does not have an administrative or managerial role in the day to day business of the County, with the exception of their statutory oversight of and duties with respect to the Clerk (see Section 228 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*), the CAO (see Section 229 of the *Municipal Act*,

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2001), and the Treasurer (see Section 286 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*), Employees as members of Administration are required and expected to generally support Council and specifically to:

- (i) provide timely reports to Council outlining factors that will assist in their decision-making process, research policy issues as required, provide sufficient information based upon analysis and best professional expertise and judgment;
- (ii) implement Council's decisions;
- (iii) manage and identify the means for achieving the service levels, metrics, and goals set by Council;
- (iv) provide appropriate and timely responses to Council inquiries, to keep Council up to date and informed, to be open to discussion, and to ask when clarification is needed from Council;
- (v) not act based on personal political beliefs and/or views, but in the best interests of the County and in accordance with directions provided by Council;
- (vi) act with integrity and be honest in their dealings with Council, fellow Employees, contractors, residents, clients, and the public;
- (vii) not withhold information that is not Confidential Information, or willfully mislead, Council, fellow Employees, contractors, residents, clients, or the public about any issue.

5.17.2 Failure of Administration to act in accordance with the expectations outlined above constitutes a violation of this Code, and may result in discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

## 6.0 Responsibility

6.1 The CAO is responsible for ensuring SLT's compliance with this Code, ensuring that the Code is reviewed as scheduled, and

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- reporting to Council with respect to any revisions to the Code that may occur from time to time.
- 6.2 The County Treasurer in consultation with the CAO and SLT shall establish and maintain adequate policies, systems, procedures, and controls to prevent and detect Fraud, theft, breach of trust, conflict of interest, bias and any other form of wrongdoing.
- 6.3 SLT shall ensure that the Employees in their respective Departments are aware of and act in compliance with this Code and its related policies.
- 6.4 The management of each Department shall likewise ensure that the Employees who report to them are aware of and act in compliance with this Code and its related policies.
- 6.5 The CAO, SLT, and/or management shall ensure that each incident of a suspected breach of the Code is investigated, as further outlined in this Code.
- 6.6 All Employees are required to be aware of, and comply with, this Code and all related policies. In furtherance of this requirement, all Employees shall sign a form acknowledging that they have received, read, understood, and accepted the terms of this Code and other policies referenced in and related to this Code.
- 6.7 All Employees are required to report any suspected breach of the Code to their immediate supervisor, or, if the allegation is related to their immediate supervisor, to the Human Resources Department.
- 6.8 Upon receiving disclosure of an actual or potential breach of the Code, the Director of Human Resources, in consultation with the CAO, and after obtaining any necessary legal advice from the Office of the County Solicitor, shall either determine that no breach exists or take reasonable steps to ensure that the matter is addressed in the appropriate manner and handle any necessary discipline. Although Employees shall be treated fairly in any discipline, depending on the gravity of the breach of the Code, discipline may include immediate termination of employment, without any progressive discipline deemed to be warranted or appropriate.
- 6.9 The purpose of the consultations required in Section 6.8 above, is to protect the County's legal interests in potential subsequent

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disciplinary actions, protect the rights of those employees involved, and prevent further losses or damage to the County.

### 7.0 Related Documents

7.1 The following documents are related to this Code

- 7.1.1 Policy Number 2001-001: Technology Use Policy
- 7.1.2 Policy Number 2013-001: Social Media/Online Communications – Employee Personal Use Policy
- 7.1.3 Policy Number 2018-001: Corporate Communications & Media Relations Policy
- 7.1.4 Policy Number 2018-003: Fit for Duty Policy
- 7.1.5 Policy Number 2019-003: Procurement Policy
- 7.1.6 Policy Number 2022-004: Corporate Credit Card Use Policy
- 7.1.7 Policy Number 2024-015: Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy and Program
- 7.1.8 Policy Number 2023-006: Internal Responsibility System
- 7.1.9 Policy Number 2005-001 Records Destruction Policy
- 7.1.10 Policy Number 1991-001 Employment Hiring Policy

### 8.0 Summary of Amendments

<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendments</b>
1993-07-02	Policy adopted by Council and implemented.
2008-03-19	Policy updated in accordance with Council Report 2008-R04-HR-0319-GPS, as approved by Council Resolution 119/08
2019-10-17	Administrative revisions to reflect updated names and policy numbers for the Procurement Policy and Fit for Duty Policy
2025-12-17	Policy re-drafted using standard Policy template, to reflect current accepted best practices for Codes of Conduct, to reflect accurate associated Policies, and to change the Policy from a Corporate Policy to an Administrative Policy.

## **Appendices**

None.

Additional Considerations