

 <b>Council/Legislated Policy</b>		Section #	Policy #
		7	12
		Approval Date:	Revision Date:
Title:	<b>Council-Staff Relations Policy</b>		
Responsibility:	Council and Administrative Services	Approval Level:	Council
Applies to:	All Members of Council and All Employees		

**Policy Statement:**

The Region of Waterloo will promote a respectful, tolerant and harassment-free relationship and workplace between Members of Council and the officers and employees of the Region, guided by the Code of Conduct for Members of Council, the Employee Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy, the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy, the Workplace Harassment Prevention Policy and the Procedural By-law.

**Purpose**

This policy provides guidance on how the Region of Waterloo ensures a respectful, tolerant and harassment-free relationship and workplace between Members of Council and the officers and employees of the Region.

**Operating Details:**

The relationship between Members of Council and the officers and employees of the Region is guided by the following:

**1. Code of Conduct for Members of Council**

The Code of Conduct for Members of Council establishes the ethical behaviour expected of Members of Council

Section 20 of the Code of Conduct for Members of Council titled Conduct Regarding Staff states:

- Members shall be respectful of the fact that staff work for the municipality as a body corporate and are charged with making recommendations that reflect their professional expertise and corporate perspective, without undue influence from any individual Member or group of Members.
- Direction to staff may only be given by Standing Committee or by Regional Council and no Member shall attempt to direct staff.
- No Member shall maliciously or falsely injure the professional or ethical reputation, or the prospects or practice of staff, and all Members shall show respect for the professional capacities of the staff of the Region.

- Certain employees are employed within the administration of justice. Members shall refrain from making requests or statements or taking actions which may be construed as an attempt to influence the independent administration of justice.
- Requests from Members for action from staff will be addressed in accordance with the Council Requests for Information, Reports and Enquiries Policy and the Region's Procedural By-law.

Section 21 of the Code of Conduct for Members of Council titled Harassment/Bullying states:

- Harassment of another Member, Staff or any member of the public is prohibited under the Ontario Human Rights Code. Harassment, whether it occurs inside or outside the workplace, or whether it is related to the work environment or other activities of a Member, is inappropriate behaviour for the purpose of this Code.
- Members will not engage in workplace harassment, discrimination, or violence as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act when dealing with other Members, Staff, volunteers or members of the public.

## **2. Employee Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy**

The Employee Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy states:

- Employees of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo are required to carry out their duties on an impartial and objective basis, such that the public has confidence in their integrity and their dedication to the Region's best interests. Impropriety or bias must be avoided.

## **3. Workplace Violence Prevention Policy**

The Workplace Violence Prevention Policy states

- The Region of Waterloo is committed to providing a safe and hospitable work environment for its employees and for those it serves by establishing a workplace violence prevention program. Workplace violence in any form will not be tolerated and reasonable steps will be taken to prevent workplace violence from all possible sources such as employees, customers, clients, supervisors, workers, strangers and domestic/intimate relationships.

## **4. Workplace Harassment Prevention Policy**

The Workplace Harassment Prevention states:

- The Regional Municipality of Waterloo is committed to taking all reasonable steps to create and maintain a fair and equitable work environment that is free of unlawful discrimination and workplace harassment. All employees of the Region must treat one another with respect and professionalism and refrain from engaging in unlawful

discrimination and workplace harassment contrary to the *Ontario Human Rights Code* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. The management in each department is responsible for taking steps to prevent unlawful discrimination and workplace harassment and for stopping it if it does occur. This includes unlawful discrimination and workplace harassment from all possible sources such as employees, customers, clients, supervisors, workers, strangers, and domestic/intimate relationships.

## **5. The Procedural By-law**

Section 29. of the Procedural By-law 00-031, as amended, titled "Conduct of Members in Council" states:

- No member will:
  - a) Speak disrespectfully of the Reigning Sovereign, or of any member of the Royal family, or of the Governor General or the Lieutenant-Governor of any province;
  - b) Use offensive words or unparliamentary language during Council or Committee Sessions against the Council or staff;
  - c) Speak on any subject other than the subject in debate;
  - d) Speak in a manner that is discriminatory in nature based on an individual's race, ancestry, place of origin, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, age, colour, marital status, family status, physical appearance or disability;
  - e) Interrupt any speech or action of other members of Council, or any other person addressing Council;
  - f) Speak or act disrespectfully towards any member of Council or the audience, and
  - g) Disobey the Rules of Procedure or a decision of the Regional Chair or of the Council on questions of order or practice or upon the interpretation of the Rules of Procedure. In the case where a member persists in any such disobedience after having been called to order by the Regional Chair, the Regional Chair may immediately put the question, no amendment, adjournment or debate being allowed, "that such member be ordered to leave their seat for the duration of the meeting of the Council", but if the member apologizes they may, by a majority vote of the members present, be permitted to retake their seat.

### **Responsibilities**

Members of Council and Employees are required to adhere to this policy and its governing provisions, including the Code of Conduct for Members of Council, the Employee Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy, the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy, the Workplace Harassment Prevention Policy and the Procedure By-law.

### **Procedures:**

The Regional Clerk shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this policy. Upon receipt of a complaint and/or concern, the Regional Clerk shall notify:

1. In the case of employees, the Manager, Director, or Commissioner responsible for the employee and the Commissioner, Human Resources; or
2. In the case of Council, the Integrity Commissioner.

Where there is a discrepancy between the Council-Staff Relations Policy and the Code of Conduct for Members of Council or the Employee Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy, the language of the Code prevails.

### **Legislative and Administrative Authorities**

Section 270 of the Municipal Act, 2001, as amended, requires Regional Council to adopt and maintain a policy with respect to the relationship between Members of Council and the officers and employees of the Region. The Council-Staff Relations Policy identifies the legislation, policies, procedures and practices that the Region complies with in order to promote a respectful relationship between Members of Council and the officers and employees of the Region of Waterloo.

### **See Also:**

Code of Conduct for Members of Council  
Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest  
Workplace Violence Prevention  
Workplace Harassment Prevention Policy  
Procedural By-law