

 HUMAN RESOURCES AND CITIZEN SERVICE POLICIES		Section #	Policy #
		I	31
		Approval Date:	Revision Date: Sept 2007
Title:	PUBLIC CRITICISM OF EMPLOYER		
Applies To:	All Employees		

POLICY STATEMENT:

Regional employees are expected to support policies, programs and decisions of the Region and not publicly criticize the Region or Regional partners, including public agencies and other levels of government.

OPERATING DETAILS:

All employees have a general right to freely express opinions on matters of public policy; however, this right is limited by an employee’s duty of loyalty owed to the Region. The precise scope of this duty of loyalty, and defining when this duty has been breached, must be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account all relevant circumstances. No employee will act in such a manner or publicly criticize the Region to such an extent that the employee’s ability to perform his or her duties or the public’s perception of an employee’s ability to perform his or her duties is adversely affected.

Public criticism includes negative letters to the editor, negative interviews with the media and making negative statements in public, whether verbally or in the form of printed or electronic messages.

Public criticism undermines the Region and causes damage to its reputation in our community. **To determine whether there has been improper criticism of the Region, the Region will consider such factors as the following:**

- **the content of the criticism;**
- **the sensitivity and veracity of the information disclosed;**
- **the manner in which the criticism has been made public;**
- **all other relevant circumstances**

The Region reserves the right to take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, against any employee who breaches his or her duty of loyalty owed to the Region or who engages in public criticism of the Region to an impermissible extent.

SEE ALSO:

- Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest (I-08)
- Disciplinary Action (I-28)
- Discovery and Reporting of Serious Wrongdoing (I-35)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:

- Director, Employee Relations,
Human Resources and Citizen Service