



DISTRICT OF NORTH SAANICH

COUNCIL POLICY

TITLE: CODE OF ETHICS AND CONDUCT FOR COUNCIL	NO. COU-014
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The purpose of the Code of Ethics and Conduct is as follows:

- 1) To provide guidance to Council so as to ensure that each are accorded reasonable and fair treatment;
- 2) To assist Council members in avoiding problems relating to role problems;
- 3) To preserve the integrity of the Council and administration;
- 4) To protect the individual rights of Council and administration as normal citizens.

These guidelines are additional to any requirements at law and do not excuse any member from complying with any common law or statute law. (235/04)

1.0 Primary Focus

Both Council and its administration recognize that their allegiance and loyalties are to the community as a whole and not to any individual(s) or group(s).

2.0 Relationship between Members of Council and its Administration

Each Council member shall ensure that their behaviour towards other members of Council and the administration is based on the following principles:

- 1) Respect for the right of others to offer their opinion;
- 2) Tolerance for viewpoints which may be at odds with those of others;
- 3) Respect for views and opinions which may well be in the minority;
- 4) Respect for the role of the CAO as the key employee of Council and its chief policy advisor.
- 5) Respect for the right of the administration to present reports and advice which may not be that which is acceptable to Council.

3.0 Fair Treatment for Those Presenting to Council

Each person presenting to Council will be afforded fair treatment by all members of Council who will seek to ensure that:

- 1) Presenters are treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion, age, disability or occupation;

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- 2) Presenters are dealt with in good faith;
- 3) Presenters are given an adequate time in which to present their views;
- 4) Presenters are treated without bias and are accorded respect for their time and views.

4.0 Chairman of Meetings

The Mayor (or chair of meeting) will not tolerate:

- 1) Discourtesy by one member to another member;
- 2) Rudeness to members of staff or to the public;
- 3) Disruptive behaviour.

The Mayor (or chair of the meeting) should personally speak to any member guilty of such behaviour requesting that they desist from such remarks or behaviour. If necessary, the chair shall call a brief recess and speak in private to the offending parties.

5.0 Authority and Powers

Each member of Council will respect the legislation which accords to Council as a whole the authority to make decisions which guide the actions of the administration. This authority is vested in Council when it is convened as a body at a duly constituted meeting. Council members will therefore refrain from attempting to guide or influence individual members of the administration.

6.0 Requests for Information

Council members will direct their requests for information or action to the office of the CAO (unless otherwise delegated to a member of staff by the CAO). If the matter is subject to a current Council policy, the administration will respond as quickly as possible in filling the request. If the request is not covered by a current policy, it will be forwarded to the CAO who will place the matter before Council to receive its direction.

7.0 Conflict of Interest

Neither Council members nor members of the administration will act in such a way as to constitute a conflict of interest. All residents will be treated equally. Decisions on matters of pecuniary interest (either direct or indirect) which impact family members in a way not consistent with the population

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as a whole will be deferred pending the advice of the municipality's solicitor. In this, as in all matters, the legislation will prevail.

8.0 Council Spokesperson

The official decisions of Council will be conveyed to the public and all others by way of Council resolutions, bylaws and policies. These decisions will be conveyed by the Mayor (or his designate) to the media as directed by the official Council decision. Any other comments on Council positions by any other member of Council which are not consistent with the official positions should be prefaced as personal opinion only.

9.0 Public Statements

A member is not restricted in any public statement they choose to make, but as a member of the Council they are expected to:

- 1) Support the role of the Council; and
- 2) Support the current policies, bylaws and resolutions of the District of North Saanich.

Any requests by the media to the administration for comment or information on matters pertaining to a matter within the jurisdiction of the Council and not yet subject to an approved policy should be immediately referred to the CAO and through him to the Mayor.

10.0 Acceptance of Gifts

Pursuant to Section 105 & 106 of the Community Charter a member is expected to avoid any actual or reasonable apprehension of bias in the acceptance of gifts and shall:

- 1) Accept only those gifts of protocol or social obligation that occur in normal business relationships; and,
- 2) Not accept a fee, gift or other benefit that is connected directly or indirectly with the performance of the member's office.

11.0 Bribery

A member is to be alert to any attempt of bribery and shall:

- 1) Reject bribery in any form;

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- 2) Report any attempt or perceived attempt to bribe a member to the CAO; and
- 3) Report any bullying or intimidation intended on influencing a member.

12.0 Family Bias

A member is expected to avoid any actual or reasonable apprehension of bias in the dealings with relatives not defined as family and shall avoid any actual or reasonable apprehension of bias when acting as a member of Council.

13.0 Treatment of Others

Each member shall ensure that their behaviour towards other Council members, the CAO and members of the administration, consultants, lawyers, the public and/or their agents is at all times:

- 1) Courteous, professional, fair and unbiased;
- 2) Contributes to the preservation of orderly decorum;
- 3) Avoids sarcasm, derogatory comments, or questions or comments designed to embarrass;
- 4) Respectful of the rulings and direction of the Chair; and,
- 5) Where a member is the Chair, they shall be responsible to immediately rule such behaviour out of order and require the offending member to offer an apology to all present at the hearing.

Each member has a responsibility to ensure that all persons appearing before or otherwise having dealings with Council are:

- 1) Treated fairly regardless of race, gender, religion, age, disability or occupation;
- 2) Dealt with in good faith;
- 3) Dealt with without bias and in a judicial temper; and,
- 4) Given an adequate opportunity to state their case.

14.0 Confidentiality

Each member shall retain in confidence any matters presented to the Council in camera until such time as that matter has been determined by Council resolution to be a public matter.

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15.0 Partisan Politics

Council members are entitled to serve as members of provincial or federal parties.

Council members will not allow their party affiliation or responsibilities to interfere with the requirements and responsibilities of serving this District as a member of Council.

Council members will not engage in political activities in the District Hall or at any event sponsored by the District or by one of its commissions or committees.

Council members are not to use their office to comment on other politicians.

16.0 Adherence to Code, Charter, Act and Procedures

Each member shall:

- 1) Adhere to all aspects of this code of ethics;
- 2) Adhere to the requirements of the Municipal Act and/or the Community Charter;
- 3) Adhere to the provincial guidelines provided for by the Council's approved Procedural Bylaw; and,
- 4) Adhere to the requirements of Council policies and procedures.

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