

## Mackenzie County

<b>Title</b>	<b>Employee Code of Conduct</b>	<b>Policy No:</b>	<b>HR001</b>
--------------	---------------------------------	-------------------	--------------

<b>Legislation Reference</b>	
------------------------------	--

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide commitment to our employees so that we are able to deliver quality service and maintain public trust. As our most valued asset, Mackenzie County employees must be above reproach in their professional dealings and must demonstrate the highest standards of behavior as stewards of the County. Employees are accountable to the County, Council and Ratepayers of the County. It is with this in mind that every County employee is expected to be aware of, and comply with the Code of Conduct and other policies and directives that govern employee behavior.

This Policy shall:

- Establish the roles employees are expected to take in establishing an ethical workplace;
- Protect the public interest;
- Promote high ethical standards among municipal employees.
- Establish guidelines for:
  - a. County Time and Assets;
  - b. Gifts and Gratuities;
  - c. Other Employment and Activities;
  - d. Personal Conduct
  - e. Personal Gain, Benefit or Favoritism;
  - f. Political Activity;
  - g. Public Comment;
  - h. Staff/Council Relations;
  - i. Use, Collection and Disclosure of Information

### **Definitions:**

“Employee” – Includes all employees of Mackenzie County.

### **Disclosure**

It is the responsibility of all employees to disclose any real or what may be perceived as a conflict of interest or violation of the Code. If you think you may be in violation of the Code, address the situation and make full and prompt disclosure to your Supervisor. Any suspected non-compliance by another employee must also be promptly reported. Anyone who knowingly makes a false accusation about non-compliance will be subject to disciplinary action.

Where an employee in good faith reports a violation of the Code, they will not be dismissed, disciplined or suspended or threatened with such. They will not be penalized and intimidation or coercion by another employee will not be tolerated.

### **County Time and Assets**

County time and assets are used for the performance of municipal duties. We will safeguard and protect county time and assets. Employees must devote themselves exclusively to the performance of their employment duties during paid working hours. We will not use any county asset, including email, internet services, or any other electronic communication device, if such use could be offensive, inappropriate or fraudulent.

Employees are required to care for county assets, which includes all property, equipment, software, information, materials and time. County assets are only to be used for municipal purposes or as approved by your Supervisor.

The County, like any organization, should not waste time, money or resources. We serve all the citizens of Mackenzie County and our work is paid for by their tax dollars. To do our jobs properly, we need to have all resources available at all times. Whether the asset in question is work time, a municipal vehicle or a computer, it must be ready to do the assigned task.

### **Expectations**

- Respect county assets and take proper care of them
- Use county assets only for municipal work
- Reimburse the county promptly for any personal costs (long distance calls, photocopying, etc.)
- Devote time at work to performing assigned job duties
- Obtain approval for exemptions

### **Gifts and Gratuities**

We will not accept or provide any gift with a value greater than \$50, benefit or favor in exchange for special consideration or influence, or where it may be perceived to be in exchange for special treatment.

Employees must not give or receive gifts in doing so there is a perception that their decisions are being influenced or their integrity appears to be compromised. Although most gifts come with no strings attached, there is always the chance that something is expected or perceived to be expected in return.

In the event that the municipality receives gifts, these gifts will be used at County functions as door prizes, etc.

#### **Expectations**

- Decline cash tips
- Decline in kind gifts with a value greater than \$50
- Decline gifts that could be viewed as an exchange for a favor
- Decline gifts from potential vendors or interested parties during or in anticipation of the purchasing or tendering process
- If unsure, decline the gift or ask your Supervisor

### **Other Employment and Activities**

We will only engage in other employment and activities that do not conflict with our municipal duties.

To ensure continued commitments to service levels, employees are expected to avoid other employment or activities that interfere with their municipal duties or are contrary to the interests of the municipality.

Employees of the County work hard and are dedicated to ensuring the municipality's success. During paid working hours your attention must be devoted to your work at the County. You cannot have other employment or engage in other activities that conflict with or undermines your ability to perform your County duties effectively.

#### **Expectations**

- Refuse work that could be perceived as a conflict of interest
- Advise your supervisor where we have any involvement with an external organization that could be considered a conflict of interest.
- Ensure other employment is not adversely affecting your municipal responsibilities.

## **Personal Conduct**

We will perform our duties with honesty and integrity and in a manner that is helpful, respectful and courteous. We will not behave in a manner that could result in a conflict of interest.

Employees will do their jobs to the best of their abilities, treat those we work with and serve with respect and courtesy. Employees shall respect the dignity and diversity of our colleagues and the public.

It takes the effort of each and every employee to make Mackenzie County a great place to live, learn, work and play. The best way to maintain good working relationships is to treat every person the way you want to be treated.

This is particularly important for municipal employees because we are often seen as ambassadors of the County. We must work to maintain the public's confidence by acting courteously and responsibly and by providing the best possible level of service.

### **Expectations**

- Practice common courtesies, such as “please” and “thank-you”
- Treat people as you want to be treated
- Represent the municipality in a positive way
- Be honest with people and in all your dealings with the County
- Make every person feel important
- Take on a customer-service focus
- Exercise diplomacy and tact when dealing with difficult people
- Respond promptly to requests for information and assistance
- Recognize that we are the public face of the municipality therefore dress appropriately

## **Personal Gain, Benefit or Favoritism**

We will not participate in any decision process that may result in a real or perceived gain or benefit. We will remove ourselves from situations where there is a real or perceived risk of favoritism. We will use information collected by the County only for purposes consistent with the use for which it was collected. When we have access to confidential information relating to any competition open to the public, we are ineligible to compete. We will not recommend or endorse products, services or suppliers.

Employees must remove themselves from any decision process that may result in actual or perceived personal gain, favoritism or benefit. Awarding of municipal tenders, job opportunities, land sales and disposal of surplus assets will be

carried out impartially – without any advantage or favoritism to themselves or others.

All municipal business must be conducted fairly and impartially. Employees are compensated for their service with tax dollars. A municipal employee should not benefit from his or her job beyond the compensation paid for the job.

#### Expectations

- Use information only for the purpose for which it was collected
- Remove yourself from any decision process that may result in actual or perceived personal gain, benefit or favoritism

#### **Political Activity**

We must not engage in any political activity or electioneering during normal working hours at our place of work.

Political activities such as canvassing, campaigning, or fundraising that aim to advance an individual's or group's political interests will not be permitted in the workplace during normal working hours. All employees have the right to take part in political activity and electioneering, but only on their own time.

The fact that we work for a municipal government presents a unique situation; our workplace is a highly political environment where opinions vary widely and strongly. In order to respect all beliefs, political activity is not allowed in the workplace. Political views and activities are important to many employees, but the work environment and time should be devoted to County business.

#### Expectations

- Get written permission from your direct supervisor before you engage in any non-work activity at your place of work.

#### **Public Comment**

Municipal employees may comment on public issues but must not engage in any activity or speak publicly where this could be perceived as an official act or representation (unless authorized to do so).

Employees must not jeopardize the perception of impartiality in the performance of their duties through making public comments or entering into public debate regarding municipal policies. Employees must not use their position in government to lend weight to the public expression of their personal opinions.

The official spokesperson for the municipality is the Chief Elected Official/Designate or the Chief Administrative Officer.

### Expectations

- Refrain from expressing personal views or opinions on matters of political controversy or on municipal policy or administration where to do so would impair the public's confidence in the municipality's ability to carry out its functions.
- Refrain from making any negative views on municipal business to the general public.
- Abstain from speaking on behalf of the municipality to the media or other official acts.

### **Staff/Council Relations**

Municipal employees must recognize the distinct roles of the elected and non-elected bodies within the municipality.

Employees must recognize that elected officials are responsible for the establishment of policy and that employees are responsible for implementation of the directives originating from Council and conduct themselves accordingly in all circumstances.

### Expectations

- Implementation of Council directives
- Treat all members of Council in an objective and impartial manner and with respect
- Communication to Council will be channeled through your Supervisor or the Chief Administrative Officer
- Notify your Supervisor if a municipal matter is outside existing County Policy and/or Council approved budget
- Notify your Supervisor if an elected official has made you feel uncomfortable with any request for information, opinion or assistance

### **Use, Collection and Disclosure of Information**

We will use, collect and disclose information only in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) and for the purposes of carrying out municipal duties.

Many employees have access to personal information about other employees or access to personal or financial information of members of the public. This information must be kept confidential and secure, and must only be used for the purpose for which it was collected.

Employees have a responsibility to maintain and to protect business and financial information of the public and personal information about identifiable individuals.

FOIP governs the way municipalities use, collect and disclose information. Employees are required to keep all personal information private and not to disclose it. In addition, any business or financial information of the public is confidential and can only be used for the purpose for which it was gathered. Employees are not allowed to use this information for personal gain or benefit of any kind.

### Expectations

- Maintain confidentiality
- Keep information secure
- Use information only for the purpose for which it was collected
- Handle sensitive and confidential information with care and disclose only in accordance with FOIP.

### **Professional Codes of Conduct**

Employees with professional designations may be subject to more than one code of conduct. If a situation arises that may cause conflict or confusion between the applicable codes, speak with your Supervisor.

### **Compliance**

The Human Resources Department must ensure each employee receives a copy of the Code of Conduct. Each employee must sign the enclosed declaration form to acknowledge receipt of the Code of Conduct.

Questions concerning the application, interpretation or disclosure procedures of the Code of Conduct should be directed to your Supervisor.

Violation of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. If you think you are or may be in conflict with the Code of Conduct, you must notify your Supervisor.

*Note: Employees should not assume that any unethical activities not covered by the Code of Conduct are permissible.*

### **Related Policies and Procedures**

ADM002 – Vehicle Usage  
ADM009 – Media Spokesperson  
ADM044 – Dress Code Policy  
ADM050 – Council/Administration Protocol  
ADM052 – Electronic Access and Acceptable Use Policy  
Harassment/Violence Directive No. 0.05

Collective Agreement  
Corporate Vision, Mission, and Values

	<b>Date</b>	<b>Resolution Number</b>
<b>Approved</b>	29-Jul-15	15-07-520
<b>Amended</b>		
<b>Amended</b>		



Schedule "A"

**Code of Conduct Declaration**

**I certify** that I have read, understand, and agree to the terms set forth in the Mackenzie County Employee Code of Conduct Policy in its entirety.

**I further certify** that I have received a copy of this Policy.

**I acknowledge** that as a municipal employee I am expected to be professional in all dealings and to demonstrate a high standard of behavior as stewards of the County.

**I acknowledge** that a violation of this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Please Print)