



Staff Report

Administration – Human Resources

Report To: COW_Finance_Admin_Fire_Community_Services
Meeting Date: November 18, 2024
Report Number: FAF.24.136
Title: Follow-up Report- Draft Employee Code of Conduct Policy
Prepared by: Sarah Traynor, Manager of Human Resources

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.24.136, entitled “Follow-up Report- Draft Employee Code of Conduct Policy”;

AND THAT Council approve the new Corporate Policy entitled “Employee Code of Conduct, POL.COR.24.XX” and accompanying Complaint and Investigation Procedure as attached to this report.

B. Overview

The draft Employee Code of Conduct included in this report was initially presented in [Staff Report FAF.23.176](#) on November 27, 2023. Following this report, Council provided additional comments, facilitating further refinements, which were documented in [Staff Report FAF.24.010](#) on February 5, 2024. Legal counsel was further consulted to ensure compliance with employment laws. As a result of this comprehensive review, the revised draft of the Employee Code of Conduct policy, POL.COR.24.XX and the accompanying Complaint and Investigation Procedure are included in this report for Council's consideration and approval.

C. Background

The draft Employee Code of Conduct was first brought forward through [Staff Report FAF.23.176](#) at the Committee of the Whole (COW) meeting on November 27, with the following recommendations:

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.23.176, entitled “Employee Code of Conduct and Respectful Workplace Policies”;

AND THAT Council approve the new Corporate Policy entitled “Employee Code of Conduct, POL.COR.23.XX”;

AND THAT Council repeal corporate policy “Workplace Violence and Harassment, POL.COR. 18.08” and replace with two (2) new Corporate Policies, “Respectful

Workplace, POL.COR.23.XX and Workplace Violence, POL.COR.23.XX.”

At the November 27, 2024, COW meeting, Council provided the following direction to staff:

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.23.176, entitled “Employee Code of Conduct and Respectful Workplace Policies”;

AND THAT Council can provide additional comments to CAO Everitt and HR Manager Sarah Traynor by December 1, 2023, for inclusion and discussion at the December 18, 2023, Council Meeting as it relates to the new Corporate Policy entitled “Employee Code of Conduct, POL.COR.23.XX;”

Additional comments were provided by Council in advance of, and at, the December 18, 2023, Council meeting, and Council subsequently provided the following direction to staff:

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.23.176, entitled “Employee Code of Conduct and Respectful Workplace Policies”;

AND THAT Council can provide additional comments to CAO Everitt and HR Manager Sarah Traynor by December 1, 2023, for inclusion and discussion at the December 18, 2023, Council Meeting as it relates to the new Corporate Policy entitled “Employee Code of Conduct, POL.COR.23.XX”;

AND THAT Council direct staff to provide a follow-up report to Council in response to comments received at the November 27, 2023 Committee of the Whole meeting and the December 18, 2023, Council Meeting regarding the draft Employee Code of Conduct and Respectful Workplace Policies.

On February 5, 2024, staff brought forward [Staff Report FAF.24.010](#) entitled “Follow-up Report Employee Code of Conduct and Respectful Workplace Policies” which included responses to Council comments and additional revisions to the draft policies.

At the February 5, 2024, COW meeting, Council provided the following direction for staff:

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.24.010, entitled “Follow-up Report - Employee Code of Conduct and Respectful Workplace Policies”;

AND THAT Council approve the new Corporate Policy entitled “Employee Code of Conduct, POL.COR.24.XX”;

AND THAT Council repeal corporate policy “Workplace Violence and Harassment, POL.COR. 18.08” and replace with two (2) new Corporate Policies, “Respectful Workplace, POL.COR.24.XX and Workplace Violence, POL.COR.24.XX”;

AND THAT Council direct staff to bring back a “Whistleblower Policy” for

consideration in 2024;

AND THAT Council direct staff to undertake a further review of the “Respectful Workplace”, “Workplace Violence” and “Respectful Interactions with the Public” policies to provide clarity on the Town’s expectations regarding recording interactions with Town staff and bring back recommended revisions to the policies for Council consideration in 2024.

In response to additional comments provided by Council following the February 5, 2024, COW meeting, at the February 20, 2024 meeting, Council provided the following direction to staff:

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.24.010, entitled “Follow-up Report - Employee Code of Conduct and Respectful Workplace Policies”, and request staff provide a further report.

On May 13, 2024, Council received Staff Report [FAF.24.064 Updates to Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy](#), and approved the following recommendation:

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.24.064, entitled “Updates to Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy”;

AND THAT Council repeal corporate policy “Workplace Violence and Harassment, POL.COR. 18.08” and replace with two (2) new Corporate Policies, “Respectful Workplace, POL.COR.24.XX and Workplace Violence, POL.COR.24.XX”;

AND THAT Council direct staff to undertake a further review of the “Respectful Workplace”, “Workplace Violence” and “Respectful Interactions with the Public” policies to provide clarity on the Town’s expectations regarding recording interactions with Town staff and bring back recommended revisions to the policies for Council consideration in 2025.

The [Respectful Workplace policy, POL.COR.24.02](#) and [Workplace Violence policy, POL.COR.24.03](#) are posted on the Town’s website.

Regarding the draft Employee Code of Conduct policy, staff consulted with the Town's employment lawyer to incorporate further revisions based on Council's feedback. The revised Employee Code of Conduct is included as Attachment 1 and an accompanying Complaint and Investigation Procedure as Attachment 2 within this report for Council's review and approval.

Additionally, Staff Report FAF.24.137, which pertains to the Draft Employee Whistleblower Policy, is included for Council's review and approval on the Committee of the Whole (COW) agenda for November 18, 2024.

D. Analysis

A code of conduct is important as it provides employees with clear guidelines for their behaviour and performance. Understanding these rules, policies, and expectations not only helps prospective employees gauge their fit within the organization, it also helps current employees excel in their roles.

Although the Town has a number of policies outlining the standards and behaviours expected from employees within the workplace, the Town has not instituted an Employee Code of Conduct. Following a comprehensive policy review conducted by the Human Resources Division, a recommendation was presented to the Senior Management Team proposing the development of a Code of Conduct for Employees. The draft Employee Code of Conduct consolidates existing expectations and procedures for Town employees.

Staff recommend the adoption of an Employee Code of Conduct which outlines the expected behaviour and standards for all Town employees. Adherence to these standards is critical for the reputation of the Town and its employees. While the Code cannot anticipate every ethical issue, it serves as a guide for resolving ethical dilemmas, avoiding conflicts of interest, and upholding public trust. Just because an unethical or questionable action is not specifically addressed in the Code of Conduct it does not mean that such conduct is permitted.

This policy aligns with the Town's core values: Excellence, Integrity, Accountability, Inclusivity, and Stewardship, promoting a positive, respectful, and inclusive culture.

The proposed Code of Conduct includes these key principles:

- Professionalism, ethics, and courtesy in all interactions
- Ensuring a safe and healthy workplace
- Compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and policies
- Responsible use of municipal resources
- Conducting business with integrity
- Addressing conflicts of interest and reporting violations

The Code will work alongside collective agreements, contracts, laws, and professional standards relevant to the employee's role. Once Council approves the Employee Code of Conduct and accompanying Complaint and Investigation Procedure, the documents will be posted on the Town's website, and appropriate review and sign-off for all staff will commence. As outlined in the draft policy, compliance with the Code of Conduct is a condition of employment for all Town employees. At the time of hiring, new employees will sign an acknowledgment certifying that they have read, understood, and will comply with the Code.

To ensure all staff have a clear understanding of and adhere to the Code of Conduct, training sessions and resources (FAQ, Quick Reference Sheet) will be provided to help employees become familiar with the Employee Code of Conduct. Training on the Code of Conduct will also be included in new employee orientation.

Annually, employees will complete an online acknowledgment certifying that they have read, understood, and will continue to comply with the Code.

E. Strategic Priorities

1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders.

2. Organizational Excellence

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

3. Community

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

4. Quality of Life

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

F. Environmental Impacts

Within the draft Employee Code of Conduct, the section on Managing Environmental Protection, Risks, and Long-Term Sustainability emphasizes the vital role employees play in meeting the Town's environmental health and safety obligations. Employees are urged to consider the environmental effects of their decisions, such as operational choices, purchasing, and planning, with an aim to reduce the Town's carbon footprint and improve community and employee well-being, aligning with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion principles.

G. Financial Impacts

None. The Employee Code of Conduct roll-out and training will be undertaken internally by leaders and Human Resources staff.

H. In Consultation With

Senior Management Team

Human Resources Staff

External Legal Counsel

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Sarah Traynor, Manager of Human Resources hr@thebluemountains.ca.

J. Attached

1. Attachment 1- Draft Employee Code of Conduct
2. Attachment 2- Draft Employee Code of Conduct- Complaint and Investigation Procedure

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Traynor
Manager of Human Resources

Shawn Everitt
Chief Administrative Officer

For more information, please contact:
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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	FAF.24.136 Follow-up Report Draft Employee Code of Conduct.docx
Attachments:	- Attachment 1- Draft Employee Code of Conduct - Nov 2024.pdf - Attachment 2- Draft Employee Code of Conduct Complaint Investigation Procedure - Nov 2024.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Nov 7, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Sarah Traynor - Nov 7, 2024 - 3:44 PM

Shawn Everitt - Nov 7, 2024 - 4:03 PM