

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY
ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER 52
CODE OF CONDUCT
FOR
ELECTED MUNICIPAL OFFICIALS**

BE IT RESOLVED AS AN ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER of the Council of the Halifax Regional Municipality as follows:

I. SHORT TITLE

1. This Administrative Order may be cited as Administrative Order 52, the *Code of Conduct for Elected Officials*.

IA. PURPOSE

2. The public expects the highest standards of professional conduct from Members elected to local government. The purpose of this Code is to establish guidelines for the ethical and interpersonal conduct of Members of Council (“Members”). Council is answerable to the community through democratic processes and this Code will assist in providing for the good government of the Halifax Regional Municipality.

II. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

3. Members shall uphold the law and at all times:

(a) Seek to advance the common good of the municipality as a whole while conscientiously representing the communities they serve.

(b) Perform the functions of office truly, faithfully and impartially to the best of their knowledge and ability in accordance with the following core values:

(i) **Integrity** – giving the municipality’s interests absolute priority over private individual interests;

(ii) **Honesty** – being truthful and open;

(iii) **Objectivity** – making decisions based on a careful and fair analysis of the facts;

(iv) **Accountability** – being accountable to each other and the public for decisions taken;

(v) **Leadership** – confronting challenges and providing direction on the issues of the day.

(c) Uphold this Code as a means of promoting the standards of behaviour expected of members and enhancing the credibility and integrity of Council in the broader community.

III. COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES

4. The Council (or its designated committee) will:

(a) review the Halifax Regional Municipality's Code of Conduct for Elected Officials as required and make any amendments considered appropriate.

(b) review, consider or take other action concerning any violation of this Code of Conduct which is referred to Council for consideration.

(c) where there is any conflict between this Code of Conduct and the requirements of any statute of the provincial or federal government, provincial or federal statutes shall take precedence.

IV. MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Conduct to be Observed

5. Members are agents of the public whose primary objective is to address the needs of the citizens. As such, they're entrusted with upholding and adhering to the by-laws of the municipality as well as all applicable provincial and federal laws. As public servants, Members must observe a high standard of morality in the conduct of their official duties and faithfully fulfill the responsibilities of their offices, regardless of their personal or financial interests.

Dedicated Service

6. All Members should faithfully work towards developing programs to address the needs of the citizens in the course of their duties. Members should strive to perform at a level which is expected of those who work in the public's interest.

Collective Instruction and Direction

6A All Members recognize that instructions or directions to employees must be made by Council, and that Council provides instructions or direction through the Chief Administrative Officer. A Member must not instruct or give direction, either publicly or privately, to an employee of the Municipality.

Respect for Decision-Making Process

7. All Members recognize the responsibility of the Mayor to accurately communicate the Decisions of the Council, even if they disagree with such decisions, such that respect for the decision-making processes of Council is fostered.

Conduct at Meetings

8. Members shall respect the chair, colleagues, staff and members of the public present during Council meetings or other proceedings of the municipality. Meetings shall provide an environment for transparent and healthy debate on matters requiring decision-making.

Release of Confidential Information Prohibited

9. No Member shall disclose or release to any member of the public any confidential

information acquired by virtue of their office, in either oral or written form except when required by law or authorized by the municipality to do so. Nor shall Members use confidential information for personal or private gain, or for the gain of relatives or any person or corporation.

Gifts and Benefits

10. No Member shall show favouritism or bias toward any vendor, contractor or others doing business with the municipality. Members are prohibited from accepting gifts or favours from any vendor, contractor or others doing business with the Municipality personally, or through a family member or friend, which could give rise to a reasonable suspicion of influence to show favour or disadvantage to any individual or organization.

Use of Public Property

11. No Member shall request or permit the use of municipal-owned vehicles, equipment, materials, or property for personal convenience or profit, except where such privileges are granted to the general public. Members shall ensure that the business of the municipality is conducted with efficiency and shall avoid waste, abuse and extravagance in the provision or use of municipal resource.

Obligations to Citizens

12. No Member shall grant any special consideration, treatment, or advantage to any citizen or group of citizens beyond that which is accorded to all citizens.

Interpersonal Behaviour

13. Members shall treat every person, including other Members, corporate employees, individuals providing services on a contract for service, and the public with dignity, understanding and respect and ensure that their work environment is free from discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Community Representation

14. Members shall observe a high standard of professionalism when representing the municipality and in their dealings with members of the broader community.

V. GOOD GOVERNANCE

15. Members accept that effective governance of the municipality is critical to ensuring that decision are taken in the best interests of all stakeholders and to enable the municipality to function as a good corporate citizen.

VI. GOVERNMENT RELATIONSHIPS

16. Members recognize the importance of working constructively with other levels of government and organizations in Nova Scotia and beyond to achieve the goals of the municipality.

VII. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AVOIDANCE

17. Members are committed to making decision impartially and in the best interests of the municipality and recognize the importance of fully observing the requirements of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 229 with regard to the disclosure and avoidance of conflicts of interest.

VIII. REPORTING BREACHES

18. Persons who have reason to believe that this Code has been breached in any way are encouraged to bring their concerns forward. No adverse action shall be taken against any Member or municipal employee, who, acting in good faith, brings forward such information.

IX. CORRECTIVE ACTION

19. Any reported violations of this Code will be subject to an investigation by Council. Council may retain an external consultant or panel with relevant experience to conduct an investigation and provide a report and recommendation to Council. If an investigation finds a Member has breached a provision of this Code, Council may take corrective action which may include censure of the Member, an apology to those affected by the breach, counselling, and withdrawal of appointment from any committee of Council.

X. COMPLIANCE WITH CODE

20. Members acknowledge the importance of the principles contained in this Code which will be self-regulated by Council. Councillors are required to sign a "Statement of Commitment to the Code" (Attachment A) within seven (7) days of taking the Councillors' oath pursuant to section 147 of the *Municipal Elections Act*, R.S.N.S. 1989, c. 300.

XI. OVERALL RESPONSIBILITIES

21. The Halifax Regional Municipality Code of conduct for elected Municipal Officials applies to all members of Council.

Done and passed in Council this 23rd day of July, 2013.

Mayor

Municipal Clerk

I, Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk of Halifax Regional Municipality, hereby certify that the above noted Administrative Order was passed at a meeting of Halifax Regional Council held on July 23, 2013.

Cathy Mellett, Municipal Clerk

ATTACHMENT A

**STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO THE ELECTED OFFICIALS CODE OF
CONDUCT
OF THE HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY**

I, (Full Name) _____ declare that as a member of **HALIFAX REGIONAL COUNCIL** acknowledge and support the elected official's Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____

Declared this ____ day of _____, 20 __.

Before me:

Municipal Clerk

Notice of Motion:

Approval:

July 23, 2013

Amendment #1

Added section 6A

Notice of Motion:

Approval:

July 20, 2021

August 31, 2021
