

Town of Gull Lake

Employee Code of Conduct

PREAMBLE

The Town of Gull Lake (the "Town"), strives to maintain the highest level of public confidence in all aspects of the organization. Underlying everything that the Town does and strives to do are its core values of accountability, dedication, honesty, innovation, respect and teamwork. It is only through the commitment and effort of our staff that excellent quality of services and achievement of our core values can be maintained in this level of government.

As the Town's most valuable and significant resource, our Employees are expected to demonstrate the highest standard of ethical behavior, being above reproach, trustworthy and able to withstand public scrutiny. This means we must adhere to the highest standards of personal and professional competence, integrity, and impartiality and must perform our duties in a manner that recognizes a fundamental commitment to the well being of the community.

Our Values

This Code has been prepared to reflect our core values.

Accountability: We deliver what we promise. We are accountable for our own actions and results. We are accountable for the efficient and effective use of public funds.

Dedication: We willingly take on responsibility. We are committed to serving our community. We take initiative and we take on our share of the work.

Honesty: Each of us demonstrates personal integrity, truthfulness and honesty in how we do our job. We inspire public confidence and trust in our local government.

Innovation: We pursue innovation by being creative and showing initiative. We encourage employees to exercise judgment in meeting customer needs.

Respect: We value an open, respectful and inclusive community. We value the cultural and social diversity of our community. We make it possible for every resident to participate in our community, and in our government.

Teamwork: We act as a team. We demonstrate high levels of trust and cooperation. We collaborate with each other to achieve our goals. We work diligently to achieve positive outcomes in meeting the needs of our community.

1.0 Definitions

Bylaw: A regulation adopted by the Town for the government of its members and the regulation of its affairs or a local ordinance.

Administrator: Means the Town Administrator.

Confidential Information: Includes information of any customer, supplier or business that works with or for the Town; items under litigation, personal matters, including Personal Information; items under negotiations; information supplied in support of a license or other applications etc., where such information is not part of the public domain; and information designated as confidential by Council.

Elected Officials: Includes Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Council.

Employee: Includes an individual employed by the Town, including those employed on a personal services contract, and volunteers.

Town Assets/Property: Includes all property of the Town including equipment, financial assets, land, vehicles, material, documents, whether in hard or digital/electronic form, inventories, tools, electronic equipment, computers, electronic mail, internet services, information and work time.

2.0 Interpretation and Application

In recognition of the Town's core values and the importance of continuity of minimum standards in demonstrating our values, this Code of Conduct (the "Code") has been developed. The Code clarifies the Town's expectations of its Employees and reaffirms its commitment to our community, service excellence and maintaining fiscal responsibility on behalf of the public. It establishes clear and reasonable standards of conduct expected of all Employees and provides guidance in the determination of appropriate conduct in the workplace. This Code is meant to support, but not replace, the use of good judgment regarding personal and professional conduct. The absence of a specific policy or regulation does not relieve any employee from the responsibility to exercise the highest standards in those situations.

3.0 Authority

This Code is authorized by the Council of the Town of Gull Lake.

4.0 Scope

This Code applies to all Employees of the Town of Gull Lake.

5.0 Enforcement of the Code of Conduct

It is the responsibility of the Administrator, to ensure that Employees receive adequate and appropriate information about this Code along with a copy and any schedules or amendments. The Administrator shall, to the best of their ability, ensure that the Code is followed. The Council, will also review the Code on an annual basis, to ensure that it continues to reflect the needs and responsibilities of the Town's Employees and Administration. Each Employee shares the obligation of ensuring compliance with the Code. They are required to address any situations of existing or potential noncompliance with the Code that they suspect or become aware of.

6.0 Non-Compliance

A violation of the Code may result in, but is not limited to, any one of the following responses:

- a) Coaching;
- b) Verbal or written warnings;
- c) Suspension with or without pay;
- d) Dismissal for just cause;
- e) Removal from volunteer positions with the Town;
- f) Notification sent to professional associations; and/or
- g) Such other action or penalty as may be appropriate or permitted by law under the circumstances.

The appropriate response for non-compliance with the Code shall, in the normal course, be determined by the Administrator or, in situations where the alleged violation has been committed by the Administrator the Mayor/Council will determine non compliance.

7.0 Corporate Responsibility

The Town will support Employees in understanding their individual and collective roles in adhering to the Code.

8.0 Behavior and Professionalism

Town Employees interact with clients in receipt of municipal services or programs, community agencies, contractors, suppliers, and the general public on a daily basis. It is through our professionalism, courtesy and objectivity in these interactions that we can all ensure we achieve respect for one another. Our Employees are viewed as ambassadors of the Town and are expected to reflect a professional image at all times, whether on or off duty. We do this by being conscious of the Town's public duty and by conducting ourselves with the highest degree of moral and ethical behavior and integrity. Employees must also be professional and courteous with one-another. Improper behavior in the workplace has a negative effect on others and the public. Examples of improper behavior include excessive noise, inappropriate office decorations, potentially offensive pictures and jokes, profanity, demonstrating little or no respect for personal belongings, and engaging in conduct or behaving in such a way as to negatively impacts the Town's reputation

9.0 DEALING WITH DIFFICULT CUSTOMERS

Rude, abusive or aggressive behavior may include rude or otherwise vulgar noises, expressions or gestures, verbal abuse of a personal or general nature, intimidating, threatening or offensive behavior, physical violence against property or physical violence against a person.

If in the opinion of any staff member, rude, abusive or aggressive comments or statements are made in telephone conversions or interviews, the staff member may:

- a) Warn the caller that if the behavior continues, the conversation or interview will be terminated
- b) Terminate the conversation or interview if the rude, abusive or aggressive behavior continues after a warning has been given.

Where a conversion or interview is terminated, the staff member must then inform the Town Administrator of the incident and make a report of the event. Where appropriate the Administrator will then discuss the matter with the Mayor or Deputy Mayor to determine what action should be taken with respect to the customer's behavior.

10. Workplace Safety

Workplace safety is a shared responsibility of all Town Employees. Managers are responsible for ensuring that Employees are aware of any potential work hazards, are trained in safe work practices and comply with Provincial/Federal safety and health laws, rules and regulations. All Employees are to take every reasonable and necessary precaution to ensure their personal safety and health as well as that of their colleagues.

11. Use of Town Property

Town Property should only be used by an Employee to perform work related duties and responsibilities or for community activities which are supported by Council. Town Assets/Property are to remain on Town property at all times unless it is necessary to take the items off site in order to perform the Employee's job. Where Town Assets/Property are in the care of an Employee, the items must be protected and kept secure at all times.

12. Confidentiality

Every municipal employee must hold in strict confidence all information of a confidential nature acquired in the course of his or her employment with the municipality. Confidential information means information that is not part of the public domain and information designated by council as confidential, internal policies, items under legal proceeding, etc.

Without restricting the scope of this principle, it is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct for an employee to use information that is obtained as a result of his or her employment and that is not available to the public to:

- further, or seek to further, his or her private interests or those of his or her family; or
- seek to improperly further another person's private interest.

13. Use of Influence

The municipality strives to ensure fairness and objectivity in its decision-making process.

Without restricting the scope of this principle, it is considered a breach of the Code of Conduct for an employee to use his or her position to seek to influence a decision of another person so as to:

- further, or seek to further, his or her private interests or those of his or her family; or
- seek to improperly further another person's private interest.

14. Procedures – Conflict of Interest

Employees are expected to comply with the Code of Conduct. Employees have a responsibility to request an interpretation of the Code from the Administrator if they are unsure whether their behavior, circumstances, or interests contravene the Code.

Where an employee suspects that he or she is, or may potentially be, in conflict with any of the provisions of the Code, the employee must disclose the conflict or potential conflict in writing, to:

- his or her direct supervisor, in the case of an employee; or
 - the supervisor must immediately advise the Administrator
- council in the case of the Administrator.

The disclosure should include a detailed description of the conflict or potential conflict.

Where a disclosure is made, the matter will be treated seriously and in confidence. The supervisor must review the disclosure within five (5) business days, from the date of disclosure is made, and determine an appropriate course of action to address the actual or potential conflict.

15. Gifts and Benefits

a) Acceptance of Gifts and Benefits

In order to preserve the image and integrity of the Town, gifts and benefits are not to be accepted. This general prohibition on accepting gifts exists whether or not it was solicited or offered by an individual or business.

b) Exceptions

The Town recognizes that moderate hospitality is an accepted courtesy of a business relationship. Accordingly, incidental gifts, hospitality or other benefits associated with an individual's official duties and responsibilities may be accepted provided that such hospitality or other benefits:

- a) are appropriate, a common expression of courtesy or within the normal standards of hospitality;
- b) do not put the recipients in a position where they may be or be seen by others to have been influenced in making a business decision as a result of accepting such benefits;
- c) would not compromise the integrity of the Town; and

16. Freedom from Reprisal

All individuals will be guaranteed freedom from reprisal, harassment or other discriminatory practice as a result of exercising their obligation to report a breach or suspected breach under any section of this Code. When a violation or suspected violation of this Code is reported and an investigation is initiated:

- 1) The identity of the complainant or reporting individual will be kept confidential, except as permitted or as may be required by law;
- 2) Retaliation will not be tolerated where reporting of a potential violation of the Code is made in good faith;
- 3) If retaliatory action occurs, the Employee should report the action to the Administrator or Mayor/Deputy Mayor or Council where necessary.
- 4) Individuals violating the Code will receive the appropriate response in accordance with section 8 and/or the relevant terms of a collective agreement and may also be prosecuted criminally, and/or subject to civil proceedings.

17. How to Report Violations of the Code and/or Reprisal

Where a violation or a suspected violation of this Code occurs, a complaint may be made, in writing, to the Administrator or when necessary the Mayor/Deputy Mayor or Council. It must be clearly understood that anonymous, unfounded and/or malicious allegations will not be tolerated and if the initiator of such allegations is identified, appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

18. Revisions

Council may, in its discretion and through a resolution of Council, augment or amend the Code.

APPROVED by the COUNCIL of the TOWN OF GULL LAKE on the 13th day of January, 2015.

Appendix A

CODE VIOLATION FORM

Employee's Name: _____

Date: _____

Position: _____

Details of the Violation:

Employee's Signature

Date

Action taken by Administrator/Mayor/Deputy Mayor:

Town Administrator's Signature

Date: _____

Appendix B

ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Town of Gull Lake's Code of Conduct. I have read and understand the provisions of the Code of Conduct. I acknowledge that I must comply with its provisions and any revision that is made to it and accept that my continued employment may be dependent upon my compliance with the Town's Code of Conduct.

Signature: _____

Printed Name: _____

Witnessed By: _____

Date: _____