

---

## Code of Ethics and Responsibilities

---

**Date of Approval by Council:** 12/16/82, 11/22/94  
11/23/99; 09/04/2007

**Resolution No:** 1127/82, 1087/94  
786/99; 702/2007

**Lead Role:** Chief Commissioner

**Replaces:** 20-00-018

**Last Review Date:** September 4, 2007

**Next Review Date:** 09/2010

**Administrative Responsibility:** Human Resources

**Special Notes:** Helpful tools to support Policy HUM-001-001 may be found in EDMS in the HR Library, Doc #35948 or by contacting Human Resources.

---

### Policy Statement

---

People who work for or represent Strathcona County will demonstrate excellence in the delivery of services that reflect Council approved direction.

Collectively, we commit to fair and equitable decision making based on balancing the Social, Environmental and Economic impacts for the community.

We will strive to represent our organization and the community positively in our conduct and behaviours.

We commit to demonstrating honesty, integrity and respect in all that we do.

---

### Guidelines

---

This policy applies to work obligations associated with the roles of people who work for or represent Strathcona County. We will strive to promote the highest standards of conduct:

1. By being aware of and acting appropriately when placed in circumstances where we may be in compromising or conflict of interest situations (i.e., where there could be a public perception of preferential treatment for one individual or group, or in situations where there is the potential for personal gain).
2. By recognizing that we are entrusted with information and, and where appropriate, accept that we will treat such with a high degree of confidentiality, while balancing the County's need to be open and transparent.
3. By carrying out our individual and collective responsibilities to prevent putting oneself, others, the County, and the community at avoidable risk.
4. By working together collaboratively to accomplish goals and deliver quality services to the community and to each other.
5. By accepting that this policy is intended to complement any professional codes of conduct or ethics that an individual would normally follow due to their professional affiliation.
6. Through application to all employees, volunteers and contracted personnel acting as representatives of Strathcona County.

**Representatives of Strathcona County**

This policy is intended to apply to:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Contract personnel

**Roles and Responsibilities**

---

**Chief Commissioner:**

- To report to Council on a semi-annual basis the status of violations of this policy.

**Executives and Managers of Strathcona County:**

- To inform their respective employees, in conjunction with any assistance from Human Resources, of the expected ethical conduct and procedures for reporting potential violations of this policy on matters within the scope of the workplace.
- To investigate any reported cases of policy violation in the workplace and, wherever possible, ensure a satisfactory resolution at the department level.
- To follow the same investigative procedures for any matters that may involve disciplinary action.

**Supervisors of Strathcona County:**

- To assist the department manager with any investigation of reported potential violations of this policy on matters with the scope of the workplace and, wherever possible, ensure a satisfactory resolution at the department level.
- To follow the same investigative procedures for any matters that may involve disciplinary action.

**Representatives of Strathcona County:**

- To carefully think through any personal ethical challenge faced in the course of carrying out work responsibilities, and to consider using any of the “Helpful Tools” referenced in this policy; and/or to consider consulting with your supervisor, the Employee and Family Assistance Program, a trusted peer or friend to assist you.
- To take responsibility to report any potential infractions of this policy, and to consider using the “Reporting Tool” referenced in this policy to assist with your reporting.
- To provide your report on any potential infractions of this policy to your supervisor, Department Manager, member of the Executive, or Human Resources representative for further action as required.
- To cooperate with management in the event of the need for an investigation of the potential policy violations.
- To provide verification of awareness and understanding of the policy by completing the sign-off form as part of this policy.

**Human Resources Department:**

- To assist, where appropriate, department manager or their designate in the investigation of any reported cases of potential violation of this policy on matters within the scope of the workplace.
- To notify the appropriate authorities as required, normally the first person in authority, who may be an executive officer, manager or supervisor.
- In cooperation with the department manager or supervisor, report findings to the complainant and the respective Associate Commissioner and Chief Commissioner.
- To provide awareness and education sessions for all representatives of Strathcona County, in conjunction with department managers, on this policy and procedures, via appropriate and timely means

---

## Reporting, Investigation and Resolution Procedures

---

### Reporting of potential policy violation

1. "What can I do IF I think there may have been a violation of this policy?"
2. As a representative of Strathcona County, when you believe there may have been an infraction of the intent of this policy, you are encouraged to:
  - a) Bring your concerns to the attention of the individual for discussion, clarification and possible resolution; or,
  - b) If needed, submit a formal report in writing, signed by you, describing the specific incident(s), the date(s) if available, and any witness(es) who may have been present. (Note: The *Reporting Tool* is one method for reporting a potential policy violation.)
3. The employee is responsible for notifying their immediate supervisor, department manager or Human Resources.
4. The manager, in consultation with Human Resources, shall investigate the incident and may immediately suspend with pay the person of interest, depending on the nature of the violation, pending outcome of an investigation.

### Investigation of potential policy violation:

1. When a supervisor, department manager, or Human Resources receives a formal written allegation of a policy violation, they shall take action to investigate and resolve immediately.
2. The respective department manager or designate and with appropriate assistance from Human Resources, shall take the following actions:
  - a) Ensure the reporting of the alleged policy violation from the complainant is in writing, signed, dated, and includes all relevant details of alleged incident.
  - b) Meet with person of interest to discuss the allegation(s).
  - c) Meet with the parties involved and, if able to do so, resolve the matter.
  - d) The respective manager or supervisor, along with assistance where appropriate from a Human Resources representative, shall as part of their investigation have the right to ask questions of the complainant and the person of interest.
  - e) Person of interest may, if their immediate supervisors deems appropriate, be suspended with pay pending any investigations.

### Resolution of potential policy violation:

1. If the results of the investigation support the allegation(s) in the complaint, a range of sanctions may be imposed on the respondent by the Chief Commissioner. The sanctions depend upon the nature and seriousness of the offence and include a verbal warning, a written reprimand with a copy retained in the respondent's file, transfer, demotion, suspension and termination of employment (as per County policy HUM-001-021). If allegation(s) are resolved between the complainant and the respondent, the Chief Commissioner has the option to take no further action.

2. If the results of the investigation do not support the allegation(s), the complaint will be deemed to be unfounded and a letter will be issued indicating that the respondent has been cleared of the allegation(s). The respondent has the option of requesting that a copy of the letter be placed in the personnel file.
3. If the evidence indicates that the complainant knowingly and wilfully made false allegation(s) in an attempt to cause harm to the respondent, a range of sanctions may be imposed on the complainant by the Chief Commissioner. The sanctions depend upon the nature and seriousness of the offence and include: a verbal warning, a written reprimand with a copy retained in the complainant's file, transfer, demotion, suspension and termination of employment (as per County policy HUM-001-021).

**Course of action for addressing various types of policy violations:**

1. If between employees, address via internal processes.
2. If between "supervisor" and employee, address via internal processes.
3. If between employee and customers, address via internal process as directed by the respective department manager.
4. If between employee and an elected official, address via internal processes as directed by the Chief Commissioner.

Note: The foregoing does not preclude the involvement of police authorities depending upon the nature and particular details of the complaint.

**No retaliation**

1. No employee shall take retaliatory action with the intent of dissuading or punishing an individual for participating in the complaint resolution process. Where appropriate, discipline can be imposed for retaliation.
2. Discipline may be imposed for knowingly making false allegations of policy violations.

**Appeals**

1. Either the complainant or the respondent may appeal to the Chief Commissioner if dissatisfied with the resolution of a formal complaint.
2. Either party has the right to seek civil or criminal redress through the courts or to file a complaint with their union, association or the Alberta Human Rights Commission.