



REPORT

Council

Meeting Date: September 29, 2025

FROM: Clerk's Department

DATE: September 16, 2025

SUBJECT: Corporate Policy Update

WARD: Town-wide

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the updated Professional Development and Educational Assistance Policy be approved.
2. That the updated Occupational Health Safety and Workplace Violence Policy be approved.
3. That the updated Employee Code of Conduct be approved.
4. That the updated Respectful Conduct Policy be approved.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- The corporate policy and procedure review is an ongoing process facilitated by the Clerk's department to assist departments in bringing policies forward for Council review as part of Council's governance initiatives.
- All policies and procedures listed in this report have been reviewed by the Policy Review Administration Group.
- Unless otherwise noted, updated documents included in the appendices of this report have tracked changes to easily identify updates.

BACKGROUND:

As part of the ongoing corporate policy and procedure review, staff continue to present reports to introduce new policies, update and reconfirm current policies, and recommend the replacement or rescinding of former policies. Current policies and procedures are reviewed in accordance with established review periods and updates are provided to Council, as required. All policies, along with any procedures established under Council's authority, are submitted to Council for approval. New or significantly updated procedures under the CAO's authority will be shared with Council for information via a memo through the Council Information process, on a quarterly basis. Reporting outside of this schedule will occur as needed, particularly for issues involving public awareness or health and safety.

The corporate policy process aims to optimize operations and improve responsiveness to evolving requirements. It strengthens decision-making efficiency and enables Council to focus on policy-setting and strategic governance, aligning with the Town's commitment to continuous improvement and organizational efficiency. This report addresses the policies and procedures which have been addressed by the Policy Review Administration Group since the last report to Council in May 2025. All departments are continuing to address policy requirements. Future policy reports will be coordinated through the Clerk's department or submitted departmentally, as required.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Human Resources

Develop

The Professional Development and Educational Assistance Policy (HR-DVL-001) has been reviewed in accordance with established review periods, minor updates are proposed.

Manage

The Occupational Health Safety and Workplace Violence Policy (HR-MNG-005) requires an annual review in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. Staff have reviewed the policy and outside of incorporating more inclusive language, no updates are proposed.

The Employee Code of Conduct (HR-MNG-006) has been updated to reflect the Town's new guiding principles (values) stemming from the 2023-2026 strategic plan. Updates include expanded definitions and examples of fraud, specifically addressing the fraudulent use of benefits. It introduces clearer language regarding the misuse of Town time and resources for personal purposes, and adds a new section outlining expectations around personal cell phone use and the presence of recording devices in the workplace. Additionally, the policy now provides more detailed guidance on political activity within the workplace to ensure neutrality and professionalism. To improve readability, tracked changes have been omitted, however, all significant edits have been identified in this summary.

The Respectful Conduct Policy (HR-MNG-008) has been reviewed in accordance with Council-approved timelines. Minor updates have been made to the policy statement and purpose, and seasonal employees have been added to scope.

As part of this comprehensive policy review, for Council's awareness and information the following new or revised Human Resources procedures, established or updated under the authority of the CAO, as follows:

Manage

The Workplace Violence Procedure (HR-MNG-005-002) has been reviewed and updated. Updates include a new section outlining investigation outcomes, providing greater transparency in how incidents are addressed. References to sexual harassment have been removed, as this topic is now fully covered under the Respectful Conduct Policy. The definition of work sites has been expanded to include remote locations, in accordance with updated legislation and reflecting modern work environments. Additionally, the section on work refusals has been elaborated to offer clearer guidance on employee rights and procedures in situations involving potential workplace violence.

The Substance Use Procedure (HR-MNG-006-002), under the Employee Code of Conduct, is new and provides a framework for awareness, education, early detection, assessment and treatment, successful recovery, and return to work for situations where an employee is suspected or confirmed to be under the influence of alcohol, illicit drugs, cannabis, or the misuse of prescription medication while at work.

The Respectful Conduct Procedure (HR-MNG-008-002) has been significantly updated to strengthen its clarity, inclusiveness, and alignment with legislative changes. The purpose statement now includes guiding principles, and the scope has been expanded to include seasonal employees. Roles and responsibilities have been revised, and definitions, particularly those for workplace and sexual harassment, now reflect conduct in virtual forums in accordance with updated legislation. The complaint process has been enhanced with an informal resolution option and clearer guidance on the information required at submission, while use of the complaint form is encouraged but not mandatory. An alternative reporting pathway has been introduced for cases involving the Director of HR. The procedure now specifies that investigations will apply the balance of probabilities as the standard of proof and outlines the steps investigators may take. Updates also include expanded sections on confidentiality, non-retaliation, and investigation outcomes, along with new provisions on sharing findings, timelines, record-keeping, and handling vexatious or bad faith complaints.

The Accommodations Under the Ontario Human Rights Code Procedure (HR-MNG-008-003) has been renamed to clarify its focus on accommodations under prohibited grounds other than disability, which is now addressed in a separate procedure. Enhancements include a more detailed, stage-by-stage explanation of the accommodation request process, framed through an inclusion lens to support equitable outcomes. New sections have been added to address privacy and confidentiality, as well as to define roles and responsibilities, ensuring greater transparency and accountability throughout the process.

The related form to the Accommodations Under the Ontario Human Right's Code Procedure has been revised to focus solely on accommodations under prohibited grounds other than disability, which is now addressed through a separate procedure. Introductory paragraphs have been added to guide users, including examples of supporting documentation that may be required. The form now includes more specific questions to gather detailed information upfront, enabling more timely and effective evaluation. An Employee Acknowledgement section with a signature has also been added, and all changes were made using an inclusion lens to promote equity and clarity.

This newly separated Accommodations for Employees with Disabilities Procedure (HR-MNG-008-004) focuses specifically on medical accommodations, recognizing the distinct processes and personnel involved compared to other accommodation types. It provides a clearer, step-by-step outline of the request process, guided by an inclusion lens to support equitable access. The procedure also introduces dedicated sections on privacy and confidentiality, along with defined roles and responsibilities, to ensure transparency and consistency in handling accommodation requests.

The related form for the Accommodations for Employees with Disabilities Procedure has been updated to specifically support accommodation requests related to disability. Introductory guidance has been added, including instructions and examples of supporting documentation to assist employees in completing the form. To improve response times and clarity, more targeted questions have been included to gather comprehensive information upfront. An Employee Acknowledgement section with a signature has also been added, and all updates were made using an inclusion lens to promote accessibility and equity.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

Corporate policies and related procedures are posted to the town website for public information. Public notification is issued prior to Council's consideration of policies and procedures having a direct impact on the public.

(B) FINANCIAL

There are no financial considerations with respect to the consideration of policies and procedures. The administration of procedures which relate to financial matters, grants and financial incentives will be subject to annual budget approval.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

Corporate policies and procedures impact all members of Council and staff. Departments are continuing to review existing policies within their departments

to ensure, where applicable, that a corporate view is presented in all new or revised policies and procedures.

(D) COUNCIL STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

This report addresses the corporate strategic priority of accountable government. The established corporate policy process promotes accountable governance and service excellence, by promoting consistency, minimizing inefficiencies, and ensuring proper controls and compliance.

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

This matter does not impact climate change.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Professional Development and Educational Assistance Policy

Appendix B – Employee Code of Conduct Policy & Guide

Appendix C – Occupational Health, Safety and Workplace Violence Policy

Appendix D – Respectful Conduct Policy

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Approved by:

William Short, Town Clerk