



## **Code of Conduct**

**FOR COUNCIL, COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND STAFF**

APPROVED: DEC. 2007

FIRST REVISION APPROVED: MAY 2009

## **THE CORPORATION OF LOYALIST TOWNSHIP**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Corporation of Loyalist Township is a progressive corporation that strives to enhance the quality of life for present and future generations and to make Loyalist Township a healthy and safe community in which to live and work.

To achieve this mission, Loyalist Township is committed to:

- Open communication between Loyalist Township staff and its residents and internally within and between departments.
- Teamwork and cooperation. We are equally responsible to work together to achieve our common goals.
- Maintaining working relationships based on mutual respect and dignity. We treat others as we want to be treated.
- Maintaining a standard of professional integrity. Through honesty and integrity we earn the trust and respect of our peers and residents.

## **Definitions**

**Employee** includes elected officials, individuals appointed to serve on Committees of Council and Boards, individuals employed by the Township and those individuals employed on a personal services contract.

**Manager or Management** includes Supervisors, Managers and Department Heads.

**Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)** means the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.M.56 as amended from time to time.

**Other Employment** is the paid performance of duties for another employer, including self-employment.

**Personal Information** is recorded information about an identifiable individual, including, but not limited to the individual's name, home or business address or home or business telephone number. For a complete list see the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.M.56, Section 2 (1).

**Township** shall mean The Corporation of Loyalist Township.

**Township Assets** includes all property of the township including equipment, financial assets, land, vehicles, material, computers, electronic mail, internet services, information and work time.

## **Introduction**

Loyalist Township (subsequently referred to as the "Township") offers a wide range of essential services to the residents of Loyalist Township. As such, our workforce includes many individuals with the diverse backgrounds and skills required to provide quality services.

Each employee is required to be knowledgeable about the Code, all related Township policies, laws, regulations, government guidelines and internal controls applicable to their positions. All Township employees are expected to act in compliance with this Code and its related policies. The Township Policy Manual is available in workplaces and on the internal website.

All employees are expected to perform the duties of their positions and generally conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with this Code. The Employer will investigate any contravention of this Code. The employee who may have contravened the Code will have an opportunity to present his or her case to a supervisor and, if required, progressive discipline will follow.

The Code will be periodically reviewed and modified to reflect the current environment and new policies. Employees will have an opportunity to review revisions and suggest changes prior to consideration and approval by Council.

## **Responsibilities**

### **General**

- Employees must be professional, courteous and objective in all interactions. All employees must treat everyone, including co-workers, with respect and courtesy in the execution of their duties.
- During the performance of daily duties, all employees shall follow sound environmental practices, as commonly accepted by a reasonable person.
- Employees are requested to be mindful of their attire and to dress appropriately for their job. Each employee must also be cognizant of the requirement for protective clothing as noted in the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Township's Municipal Health & Safety Procedure manual.

### **Conflict of Interest**

A conflict can occur when, in carrying out his or her duties, an employee makes a decision or takes action that may be affected by:

- a) the employee's personal, financial or business interests; or
- b) the personal, financial or business interests of relatives, friends or associates of the employee.

Examples of potential conflicts of interest are as follows:

- In the performance of official duties, employees shall not give preferential treatment to relatives, friends or to organizations in which relatives or friends have an interest, financial or otherwise.
- Employees shall avoid dealing with an application to the Township for a loan, grant, award, or other benefit which involves themselves, immediate relatives or friends unless permitted by Township policy (e.g. Computer loan);
- Employees shall ensure they are not in a position where the employee could derive any direct or indirect benefit or interest from any contracts about which the employee can influence decisions.

### **Management**

- As part of effective management, Managers in each Department must ensure that its employees are aware of, and act in compliance with this Code and its related policies. It is the responsibility of Management to ensure that each incident of suspected wrongdoing is investigated.
- Upon receiving written disclosure of an actual or potential breach of the Code, the Manager or Department Head shall either determine that no breach exists or take

reasonable steps to ensure that the matter is addressed in the appropriate manner. “Reasonable steps” will include the opportunity for a hearing for the suspected wrongdoer, and may also include investigation and interviews with involved parties either before or after the hearing, then, if warranted, progressive discipline will take place.

- Prior to taking action on a suspected incident of wrongdoing, Management shall seek the advice of the Chief Administrative Officer who, in turn, may seek legal advice. This consultation will protect the Township's legal interests in potential subsequent disciplinary actions, protect the rights of those employees involved, and prevent further losses or damage to the Township. This clause does not take away the responsibility of all supervisors to respond immediately to disciplinable actions by the staff they supervise.

### **Township Assets and Information**

Only with proper authority will employees give or release to anyone, confidential information acquired in the course of that person's duties with the Township. (See also Media and Public Relations)

Information acquired in the course of duties and to be protected from illegal, unauthorized or inadvertent use and disclosure includes:

- information contained in business strategies and plans,
- items under litigation,
- pending proposals or contracts,
- estimates prior to tender openings,
- sources of complaints about a variety of matters where the identity of the complainant is given in confidence,
- items under negotiation,
- research results,
- financial data and projections,
- proposed acquisitions and divestitures,
- computer programs and software,
- professional expertise,
- inventions,
- any information that has been discussed during a closed session meeting of Township Council.

**Also Refer to Policies listed in Schedule A, specifically Computer Use-Information Technology, Personal Use of Township Property, Use of Township Owned Equipment and Vehicles, and Township Vehicles – Use by Employees.**

### **Media and Public Relations**

The official spokespersons for the Township shall be the Reeve and/or the Chief Administrative Officer or a Township Department Head if specific information is

requested that relates to their area of expertise. Prior approval for any media comments or public relations activities should be sought from these officials.

It is not the intent of this Code to restrict the ability of employees to express a personal opinion on matters of general interest. In such cases, the employee must make it clear that the comment is being made in their capacity as a private citizen, and not as a representative of the Township.

Similarly, the employee must use caution to ensure that the Township's interests are not compromised in any way, either by the use of Township letterhead, email addresses or by any other implication.

### **Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)**

The following information must **not be** used or disclosed, except in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("MFIPPA"):

- information which is personal,
- information that constitutes the proprietary information of a third party, individual or group,
- information that might reasonably be regarded as having been disclosed to the employee in confidence,
- information of a sensitive nature, or that imparts to the person in possession of such information an advantage not available to the public generally,
- all commercial, financial or technical information belonging to the Township, supplied to the Township by a third party, or information that has a monetary value to the Township, should only be released where to do so would be in the best interest of the Township.

Staff should consult with the Township Clerk if clarification on any Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act concern is required.

### **Gifts and Entertainment**

Employees may not accept or provide any gift, entertainment, benefit, favour or obligation in exchange for special consideration or influence, or where it may be perceived to be in exchange for special treatment.

Employees may receive promotional items (typically caps, T-shirts, pens) or accept work day lunch invitations on the employee's time and subject to the approval of a supervisor. However, employees are strongly encouraged not to accept any gift or hospitality of significant value (i.e., in excess of \$50.00) from any company, firm or individual that has, or seeks to have, a business relationship with the Township. It is the responsibility of the individual employees to disclose to their supervisor that they have received any gift, hospitality or entertainment with a value exceeding \$50.00. (In the case of Members of Council, the receipt of gifts or hospitality should be disclosed to the Reeve and, for the Reeve, receipt should be disclosed to the Chief Administrative Officer.)

**Other Employment**

Employees shall only engage in Other Employment that does not conflict with their Township duties or the Code of Conduct, or that puts the employee in competition with services provided by the Township.

Employees shall disclose to their immediate supervisor if they accept any non-Township employment that could present a real or perceived conflict or affect the employees' ability to safely and adequately perform the duties of his or her Township employment.

**Political and Community Activity**

To ensure public trust in the Township, employees must be, and appear to be, both personally impartial and free of undue political influence in the exercise of their official duties.

Employees engaged in political activities must take care to separate those personal activities from their official positions. Township staff, especially at the Management level, are discouraged from direct involvement in Township election campaigns, including posting election signs on their property.

**Related Policies and Acts**

Policies and Acts related to Code of Conduct (attached as Schedule A) apply as part of this Code.

## **Schedule A**

### Acts relating to the Code of Conduct

1. Occupational Health and Safety Act, as amended from time to time
2. Municipal Conflict of Interest Act

### Policies/Procedures which relate to the Code of Conduct:

1. Loyalist Township Municipal Health & Safety Procedure Manual (See Section 14 – Discipline)
2. Alcohol Free Workplace
3. Computer Use – Information Technology
4. Harassment
5. Hiring Practices (Family & Personal Relationships – Nepotism)
6. Procurement – By-law
7. Personal Use of Township Property
8. Use of Township Owned Equipment and Vehicles
9. Township Vehicles – Use by Employees