



Proposed Amendments to the City of Brampton's Code of Conduct

INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

MARCH 26, 2025

Agenda

1. Methodology & Overview
2. Proposed Amendments
3. New Rules
4. Questions & Discussion

Methodology

- ▶ Code has not been updated since 2016
- ▶ Comparative Analysis of other Cities' Code of Conduct
 - ▶ Toronto
 - ▶ Mississauga
 - ▶ Kitchener
 - ▶ London
- ▶ Ontario Ombudsman's Municipalities Code of Conduct Guide (2023)
- ▶ Bill 241 *Municipal Accountability Act*, 2024

Overview of Proposals

- ▶ Code expanded to apply to conduct of local boards and Committees of Council
- ▶ Applicable legislation explicitly referenced
- ▶ New Rules
 - ▶ Social Media Conduct
 - ▶ Conduct Respecting Lobbyists
 - ▶ Fundraising Activities
- ▶ Additional commentary added for clarification
- ▶ General formatting and updating

Proposed Amendments

Framework and Interpretation

New Addition

- ▶ This Code of Conduct also applies to Members of local boards and Committees of Council insofar as it pertains to the performance of their official duties.

Legislation

New Additions

- ▶ *Provincial Offences Act;*
- ▶ *Public Inquiries Act;*
- ▶ *Occupational Health and Safety Act;*
- ▶ *Ontario Human Rights Code;* and
- ▶ the by-laws and policies of the City Council as adopted and amended from time to time.

Definitions

New Additions

- ▶ 8. “Social Media” refers to freely accessible, third-party hosted, interactive web technologies used to produce, post and interact through text, images, video, and audio to inform, share, promote, collaborate or network. A non-exhaustive list of examples of social media includes X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube and LinkedIn.
- ▶ 9. “Pecuniary interest” has the same meaning as in the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.
- ▶ 10. “Harassment” means engaging in a course of vexatious comments or conduct that are known or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome. It can involve words or actions that are known or should be known to be discriminative, offensive, embarrassing, humiliating or demeaning.

Definitions (Cont.)

- ▶ 11. “Lobbyist” means an individual, corporation, partnership or organization governed by the City’s Lobbyist Registry By-law.
- ▶ 12. “local board” means any board, commission, committee, body or local authority established or exercising any power under any Act with respect to the affairs or purposes of the City of Brampton.
- ▶ 13. “Committees of Council” means a body of all Members of Council, except the Mayor (ex-officio), that discusses municipal matters with less formal rules than Council meetings.

Rule No. 1 General

Amendment

- ▶ Rule No. 1 General Conflict of Interest

Rule No. 5 Election Campaign Work

New Addition

▶ *Commentary*

Members shall be respectful of the role of the City Clerk in managing the municipal election process and meeting all statutory requirements in respect thereof. The Clerk must ensure all candidates are treated equally, and no candidate for elected office should interfere with how the Clerk carries out these duties.

Rule No. 6 Business Relations

Amendment

▶ *Commentary*

Members of Council are mindful to avoid any activity that may give rise to consideration of personal gain as a result of holding public office. This rule does not prohibit activities in which a Member would normally engage on behalf of constituents in accordance with the duties of their office.

Rule No. 14 Harassment

Amendment

▶ *Commentary*

~~The City of Brampton's is developing a Respectful Workplace Policy (Harassment and Discrimination) to ensure a safe and respectful workplace environment and appropriate management of any occurrences of harassment and discrimination as defined by the policy.~~

The City of Brampton's Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Respectful Workplace Policy have been developed to ensure a safe and respectful workplace environment and appropriate management of any occurrences of harassment and discrimination as defined by the policies.

Proposed Rules

Rule No. 18 Social Media Conduct

1. The provisions of this Code of Conduct and all Council policies govern the use of social media by Members.
2. Posts or communications made by a Member on any social media platform shall be regarded as public statements. Members shall not obscure, conceal, or misrepresent their identity or role as elected representatives of the City.

Commentary

Members must ensure their social media activity reflects the key principles underlying the rules of this Code of Conduct. Members should avoid posting or sharing content that is discriminatory, defamatory, or undermines public trust. They must engage with the public on social media respectfully and constructively, even when responding to criticism or differing opinions. Harassment, personal attacks, and inflammatory language are strictly prohibited.

Rule No. 18 Social Media Conduct (Cont.)

3. Members must ensure that all social media communications are accurate, truthful, and consistent with official municipal messaging. Errors should be promptly corrected in a transparent manner to maintain credibility.
4. Members must clearly distinguish their personal opinions from official municipal positions. When using personal social media accounts, Members must avoid implying municipal endorsement or support for their personal views.
5. Social media conduct during a municipal election must comply with the Use of Corporate Resources Policy.

Rule No. 19: Conduct Respecting Lobbyists

1. A Member must not knowingly engage in communications defined as "lobbying" under the City's Lobbyist Registry By-law with a person who is not registered as required under that by-law. A Member must also not knowingly communicate with a registered lobbyist who is acting in violation of the City's Lobbyist Registry By-law.
2. If a Member becomes aware that a person is in violation of the City's Lobbyist Registry By-law, they must refuse to engage with the lobbyist or, where appropriate, terminate the communication immediately.

Commentary

In the midst of communications with a lobbyist, a Member may become aware that the lobbyist is violating the City's Lobbyist Registry By-law. If the Member judges it appropriate to continue the communication, they should remind the lobbyist of their obligations under the by-law at the conclusion of the conversation.

Rule No. 19: Conduct Respecting Lobbyists (Cont.)

3. A Member must report any violation of the City's Lobbyist Registry By-law to the Lobbyist Registrar.
4. No Member shall act as a lobbyist before Council, its committees, or any agency, board, or commission of the City except in compliance with the terms of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

Rule No. 20: Fundraising Activities

1. Members must act with utmost transparency in all fundraising efforts, whether for their own initiatives, external organizations, or constituent initiatives.

Commentary

As part of their role, Members may publicly support or encourage donations to registered charities, not-for-profit organizations, and community-based groups. Members must ensure transparency, avoid any financial or personal benefit from the fundraising activity, and prevent any perception of pressuring potential donors or offering preferential treatment to donors.

Rule No. 20: Fundraising Activities (Cont.)

2. Members must not directly or indirectly manage, control, or handle funds flowing to or from external organizations. Donation cheques must not be made payable to a Member or the City.

Commentary

Members must maintain an arm's-length relationship from the financial aspects of fundraising for external organizations and constituent initiatives. Members should never accept cash.

3. For member-organized community events, Members must report to the Integrity Commissioner the names of all donors and the value of their contributions that supplement the event.

Questions & Discussion