



Procedure

Procedure Name:	Integrity Commissioner Procedures
Parent Policy:	Code of Conduct for Council and Local Board, Code of Conduct for Local Boards and the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act
Procedure Owner:	Director, Legislative Services/ City Clerk and Integrity Commissioner
Approved by:	Council
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Procedure Status:	Revised

Purpose:

These Integrity Commissioner Procedures establish the practices and procedures to be observed by the Integrity Commissioner in fulfilling his or her Office. These procedures also set out the process to follow in any complaint that a Member has contravened a Code or the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

Definitions:

The definitions applicable to this Procedure are included in Appendix "A".

Scope

This procedure applies to any complaint made to the Integrity Commissioner pursuant to the Code of Conduct for Council and Local Boards, or the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

Procedure

1. Application & Limitations

- 1.1 These Integrity Commissioner Procedures establish the practices and procedures to be observed by the Integrity Commissioner in fulfilling his or her Office.
- 1.2 Without limiting the generality of Section 1.1, these Procedures establish the complaint process for enforcement of the:
 - (a) Code of Conduct for Council and Local Board
 - (b) Municipal Conflict of Interest Act; and,

(c) Any other matter assigned by Council to the Integrity Commissioner.

1.3 Without limiting the generality of Section 1.1, these Procedures also establish the administrative and reporting requirements for the Integrity Commissioner.

1.4 Nothing in these Procedures shall be deemed to limit any authority granted to the Integrity Commissioner by the Municipal Act, Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, or any law.

1.5 Nothing in these Procedures shall be deemed to limit any responsibility or duty imposed on the Integrity Commissioner by law.

2. General Duties of the Integrity Commissioner

2.1 The Integrity Commissioner shall

(a) Provide Members with advice in accordance with these Procedures;

(b) Investigate complaints that a Member has contravened a Code;

(c) Investigate complaints that a Member has contravened the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act;

(d) Provide an annual report to Council in accordance with these Procedures; and

(e) Maintain full and complete records of the activities of the Integrity Commissioner.

2.2 The Integrity Commissioner shall preserve secrecy with respect to all matters that come to his or her knowledge in the course of his or her duties, unless otherwise required by law or as otherwise required, as determined by the Integrity Commissioner, to fulfill any duty or responsibility imposed on the Integrity Commissioner.

2.3 The Integrity Commissioner shall observe the tenets of procedural fairness in fulfilling his or her responsibilities under a Code, the Act and these Procedures.

2.4 Any record of the Integrity Commissioner may be provided to the Clerk to be maintained in accordance with any records retention rules of Richmond Hill, having regards to the provisions of section 223.5 of the Municipal Act.

3. Advice

3.1 A Member may request that the Integrity Commissioner provide that Member with advice respecting his or her obligations under a Code, the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, or any other policy or procedure applying to that Member.

3.2 Any request by a Member for advice shall be made in writing in such form or manner as deemed appropriate by the Integrity Commissioner.

3.3 Any advice provided to a Member by the Integrity Commissioner shall be provided by the Integrity Commissioner in writing.

- 3.4 A Member may consent, in writing, to the disclosure of any advice received from the Integrity Commissioner.
- 3.5 Any written advice given by the Integrity Commissioner to a Member binds the Integrity Commissioner in any subsequent consideration of the conduct of that Member in the same matter as long as all the relevant facts known to the Member were disclosed to the Integrity Commissioner.
- 3.6 The Integrity Commissioner may provide educational information to Members of Council, Local Board Members, Staff and the public about Codes and/or the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.
- 3.7 Any educational information provided by the Integrity Commissioner pursuant to section 3.6 of these Procedures to the public may be summarized and disclosed, but shall not disclose any confidential information that could identify a person concerned.

4. Code of Conduct Complaint – General Rules

- 4.1 A complaint that a Member has contravened a Code may be filed by any person or entity, including but not limited to a Member of Council, a Local Board Member, Staff or members of the public.
- 4.2 Any complaints shall be filed in writing on the forms established by these Procedures.
- 4.3 A complaint that a Member has contravened a provision of a Code must be submitted within six weeks of the complainant becoming aware of the alleged contravention, and no more than six months after the alleged violation, unless otherwise provided in a Code.
- 4.4 The Integrity Commissioner shall decline to investigate any complaint that is not received within the timeframe set out in section 4.3 of these Procedures unless otherwise required to do so by law, and shall notify the complainant in writing that the time period for submitting the particular complaint has passed.
- 4.5 In accordance with subsection 223.4(9) of the Municipal Act, during the Election Period no complaint that a Member has contravened a provision of a Code may be submitted by any person despite anything in these Procedures to the contrary.

5. Code of Conduct Complaint – Informal Complaint

- 5.1 Any individual who has identified or witnessed behaviour or activity by a Member that appears to be in contravention of a Code may address their concerns through an informal complaint process.
- 5.2 The informal complaint process will normally be:
 - (a) Advise the Member that their behaviour or activity contravenes a Code.
 - (b) Encourage the Member to stop the prohibited behaviour or activity.

- (c) If applicable, confirm to the Member your satisfaction or dissatisfaction with his or her response to the concern identified.

- 5.3 A complainant who has followed these informal complaint procedures should maintain a written record of the incidents including dates, times, locations, other persons present, and any other relevant information, including steps taken to resolve the matter.
- 5.4 If not satisfied with the response received through the informal process, a complainant may proceed with a formal complaint through the Integrity Commissioner as outlined in Section 6 of these Procedures, provided that the complainant shall commence the formal complaint within four weeks of the conclusion of the informal complaint process.

6. Code of Conduct Complaint – Formal Complaint

Complaint Submission

- 6.1 Any individual who has identified or witnessed behaviour or activity by a Member that appears to be in contravention of a Code may address their concerns through the formal complaint process.
- 6.2 A formal complaint must be submitted on the approved Code Complaint Form
- 6.3 The complaint shall be filed with the Clerk who shall confirm that the information submitted on the Code Complaint Form is complete.
- 6.4 The Clerk will forward a complete Code Complaint Form to the Integrity Commissioner.
- 6.5 Upon receipt of a complete Code Complaint Form, the Integrity Commissioner will send to the complainant a Consent and Confidentiality Agreement for review and signature. The Integrity Commissioner will not review the Code Complaint Form until he or she receives a copy of the Consent and Confidentiality Agreement signed by the complainant.
- 6.6 Upon receipt of a signed Consent and Confidentiality Agreement, the Integrity Commissioner will determine whether the matter is, on its face, a complaint with respect to an alleged contravention of a Code.
- 6.7 The Integrity Commissioner may request additional information from the complainant.

Complaint Outside Jurisdiction of the Integrity Commissioner

- 6.8 If the Integrity Commissioner determines that the matter referred to in a Code Complaint Form is not, on its face, a complaint with respect to an alleged contravention of a Code, the Integrity Commissioner shall advise the complainant in writing.

Refusal to Conduct an Investigation

- 6.9 The Integrity Commissioner may refuse to conduct an investigation if, upon review of a complaint, the Integrity Commissioner is of the opinion that the complaint:
 - (a) is frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith; or

- (b) that there are no or insufficient grounds for an investigation.
- 6.10 The Integrity Commissioner may cease an investigation if, upon review of the evidence gathered and the complaint, the Integrity Commissioner comes to the conclusion that the complaint:
- (a) has become frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith; or
 - (b) that there are no or insufficient grounds to continue an investigation.
- 6.11 If the Integrity Commissioner decides not to conduct an investigation, or to cease an investigation, that decision shall be communicated in writing to the complainant, the Member and the Clerk.

Opportunity for Informal Resolution

- 6.12 If at any time, following the receipt of a formal complaint or during the investigation process, the Integrity Commissioner believes that an opportunity to resolve the matter may be successfully pursued without a formal investigation, and both the complainant and the Member agree, efforts may be made to achieve an informal resolution.
- 6.13 The Integrity Commissioner shall notify the complainant, Member and the Clerk of any such completed informal resolution.

Investigation

- 6.14 If the Integrity Commissioner determines that a formal investigation is required he or she shall, subject to the Integrity Commissioner's ability to elect to exercise the powers of a commissioner under Parts I and II of the *Public Inquiries Act*, proceed in the following manner:
- (a) The Integrity Commissioner shall provide a copy of the complaint and any supporting materials to the Member who is alleged to have contravened a Code with a request that a written response to the allegation be provided to the Integrity Commissioner within ten (10) days.
 - (b) The Integrity Commissioner shall give a copy of the response provided by the Member to the complainant with a request for a written reply within ten (10) days.
 - (c) If necessary, after reviewing the submitted materials, the Integrity Commissioner may request further information from the complainant or the Member, speak to anyone, access and examine any other documents or electronic materials, and may enter any Richmond Hill work location relevant to the complaint for the purpose of investigation and potential resolution.
- 6.15 The Integrity Commissioner may extend the timelines for submission of any responses from either the Member or the complainant as he or she deems it fair or necessary.
- 6.16 The Integrity Commissioner will complete and report on any investigation normally within ninety (90) days of having received the signed Consent and Confidentiality Agreement. If the investigation process is going to take more than ninety days, the Integrity Commissioner shall

provide an interim report to the complainant, Member and the Clerk indicating when the investigation is anticipated to be completed.

- 6.17 Notwithstanding anything else in these Procedures, if an investigation has not been completed by the Integrity Commissioner before Nomination Day, the Commissioner shall terminate the investigation on Nomination Day.
- 6.18 If an investigation is terminated pursuant to section 6.20 of these procedures, the Integrity Commissioner shall not commence another investigation of the same matter unless, within six weeks after Voting Day, the complainant or the Member who was the subject of the complaint requests, in writing, that the Commissioner commence the investigation.
- 6.19 At any time the complainant may abandon the request for an investigation and the Integrity Commissioner will cease his or her investigation.
- 6.20 If an investigation is being abandoned pursuant to Section 6.22 of these Procedures, the Integrity Commissioner shall notify, in writing, the complainant, the Member and the Clerk.

Recommendation Report

- 6.21 Upon completion of an investigation, the Integrity Commissioner shall provide a draft report to the complainant and the Member and allow ten (10) calendar days for both the complainant and the Member to review and provide any comments or suggested revisions.
- 6.22 If upon completion of the investigation the Integrity Commissioner finds that a Member has contravened a Code, the Commissioner shall report his or her findings to Council and may make a recommendation on whether Council should impose one of the penalties provided for in the Municipal Act, and any other remedial measures. The Integrity Commissioner may choose to report to Council on investigations where the Member has not been found to have contravened the Code.
- 6.23 Notwithstanding anything in these Procedures to the contrary, during the Election Period, the Integrity Commissioner shall not submit any report to Council, and Council shall not consider the imposition of any penalty on a Member.

7. Municipal Conflict of Interest Act Complaint

Timelines

- 7.1 A complaint that a Member or a Member of the Local Board has contravened section 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act may be filed by an elector or person demonstrably acting in the public interest as determined by the Integrity Commissioner.
- 7.2 A complainant who alleges that a Member has contravened the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act must submit their complaint within six weeks of becoming aware of the alleged contravention, unless:
 - (a) The complainant became aware of the alleged contravention within the period of time starting six weeks prior to Nomination Day and ending on Voting Day; and

(b) The complainant submits a complaint to the Integrity Commissioner within six weeks after Voting Day.

7.3 The Integrity Commissioner shall decline to investigate any complaint that is not received within the timeframe set out in section 7.2 of these Procedures unless otherwise required to do so by law, and shall notify the complainant in writing that the time period for submitting the particular complaint has passed.

7.4 In accordance with subsection 223.4.1(9) of the Municipal Act, during the Election Period no complaint that a Member has contravened the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act may be submitted by any person despite anything in these Procedures to the contrary.

Complaint Submission

7.5 Any complaint that a Member has contravened sections 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act shall be submit to the Clerk using the MCIA Complaint Form.

7.6 The Clerk will forward a complete MCIA Complaint Form to the Integrity Commissioner.

7.7 Upon receipt of a completed MCIA Complaint Form, the Integrity Commissioner may request additional information from the complainant.

Refusal to Conduct an Investigation

7.8 The Integrity Commissioner may refuse to conduct an investigation for any reason that the Integrity Commissioner deems reasonable.

7.9 If the Integrity Commissioner decides not to conduct an investigation, that decision shall be communicated in writing to the complainant, the Member identified in the MCIA Complaint Form and the Clerk.

Investigation

7.10 The Integrity Commissioner may conduct such investigation of an alleged contravention of sections 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act as he or she deems necessary.

7.11 The Integrity Commissioner may have a public meeting to discuss the investigation.

7.12 In conducting an investigation of an alleged contravention of sections 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, the Integrity Commissioner may elect to exercise the powers under sections 33 and 34 of the *Public Inquiries Act, 2009*, in which case those sections apply to the inquiry.

7.13 The Integrity Commissioner shall complete any investigation of an alleged contravention of sections 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act within 180 days after having received the completed MCIA Complaint Form.

7.14 Notwithstanding anything else in these Procedures, if an investigation of an alleged contravention of sections 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act has not been

completed by the Integrity Commissioner before Nomination Day, the Commissioner shall terminate the investigation on Nomination Day.

- 7.15 If an investigation is terminated pursuant to section 7.15 of these procedures, the Integrity Commissioner shall not commence another investigation of the same alleged contravention of sections 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act unless, within six weeks after Voting Day, the complainant or the Member, including a former Member, who was the subject of the complaint requests, in writing, that the Commissioner commence the investigation.

Completion of Investigation

- 7.16 Upon completion of an investigation the Integrity Commissioner may, if he or she considers it appropriate, apply to a judge under section 8 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act for a determination as to whether the Member has contravened section 5, 5.1 or 5.2 of that Act.
- 7.17 If the Integrity Commissioner decides not to make an application to a judge, he or she shall notify the complainant.
- 7.18 Upon completion of an investigation by the Integrity Commissioner, and having decided whether or not to apply to a judge, the Integrity Commissioner shall publish reasons for the decision.
- 7.19 The Integrity Commissioner shall provide a copy of the reasons referred to in section 7.19 of these Procedures to the complainant, the Member and the Clerk.

8. Annual Report

- 8.1 The Integrity Commissioner shall provide an periodic, and generally annual, report to Council of the activities of his or her Office in an accessible format.

Appendix A

Definitions

In this Procedure:

“Clerk”	means the person appointed by Council pursuant to section 228(1) of the Municipal Act, or his or her designate.
“Code”	means any Code of Conduct applying to a Member of Council or Local Board Member.
“Code Complaint Form”	means the form established by the Clerk in accordance with these Procedures for the purpose of submitting a formal complaint to the Integrity Commissioner that a member has allegedly contravened a Code.
“complaint”	means an alleged contravention of the Council and Local Board Member Code of Conduct, or the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, whether made through an informal complaint process or through the filing of a formal written complaint.
“complainant”	means a person who has either made an informal complaint or who has filed a formal complaint in accordance with these Procedures.
“Consent and Confidentiality Agreement”	means the form established by the Integrity Commissioner that requires a complainant to maintain confidentiality in respect to all aspects of the complaint and any investigation until the Integrity Commissioner has reported his or her findings or closed the file.
“Code of Conduct”	means a code of conduct for Members of Council and Local Board Members adopted by Council pursuant to section 223.2 (1) of the Municipal Act.
“Council”	means the Council of Richmond Hill.
“Election Period”	means the time period starting on Nomination day and ending on Voting Day in a regular election year.
“Elector”	means a person who is a qualified elector as determined by section 17 of the Municipal Elections Act.
“frivolous”	means something that is not worthy of serious consideration, or that is of little or no importance, due to its lack of seriousness or sense and includes matters defined as frivolous under the City of Richmond Hill Public Conduct and Complaints Policy (June 14, 2023).

“good faith”	means in accordance with standards of honesty, trust and sincerity.
“Integrity Commissioner”	means the person appointed by Council pursuant to Section 223.3 of the Municipal Act, or his or her designate.
“Local Board”	has the same meaning as set out in subsection 223.1 of the Municipal Act.
“Local Board Member”	means a person appointed to a Local Board.
“Member”	means either a Local Board Member or a Member of Council.
“Member of Council”	means the Mayor, a Regional & Local Councillor, or a Local Ward Councillor.
“Municipal Act”	means the <i>Municipal Act, 2001</i> , S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended.
“MFIPPA”	means the <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i> , R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56, as amended, and any regulations adopted under that legislation.
“Municipal Conflict of Interest Act”	means the <i>Municipal Conflict of Interest Act</i> , R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50, as amended.
“MCIA Complaint Form”	means the form established by the Clerk in accordance with these Procedures for the purpose of submitting a formal complaint to the Integrity Commissioner that a member has allegedly contravened the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.
“Municipal Elections Act”	means the <i>Municipal Elections Act, 1996</i> , S.O. 1996, c. 32, as amended.
“Nomination Day”	means the date set out in section 31 of the Municipal Elections Act, currently the fourth (4th) Friday of July in a regular election year.
“Procedures”	means the procedures contained in this Complaint Protocol
“Staff”	means all full-time and part-time persons hired by Richmond Hill including the Chief Administrative Officer, Commissioners, Directors, Managers, Supervisors, Salaried Employees’ Association Staff, Members of C.U.P.E. Local 905, members of the Richmond Hill Professional Fire Fighters Association, Local 1957, Administrative Staff, contract and temporary employees, students, secondments, co-op placement staff, volunteers, and hired contractors.

“Richmond Hill”

means the Corporation of the City of Richmond Hill.

“vexatious”

means troublesome or annoying in the case of being instituted without sufficient grounds and serving only to cause irritation and aggravation to the person being complained of, and includes matters defined as vexatious under the City of Richmond Hill Public Conduct and Complaints Policy (June 14, 2023).

“Voting Day”

means the date as set out in section 5 of the Municipal Elections Act, currently the fourth (4th) Monday in October of a regular election year.