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RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE POLICY

PURPOSE:

This policy establishes rules and guidelines to ensure a positive, safe, and respectful environment for everyone. This policy outlines expectations for a supportive and respectful work environment and outlines measures taken to address inappropriate behaviour if it occurs.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Municipality of North Perth employees, members of the public, council, committee members, and contractors. This policy applies to all in-person interactions and all forms of communication including social media, telephone, and written correspondence.

POLICY:

The Municipality of North Perth is committed to fostering an environment where there is respect for yourself, respect for others, and responsibility for your actions (RZone). The municipality will work in partnership with the community to ensure everyone can enjoy a respectful and positive environment. All parties are encouraged to listen with intent, understand both perspectives, participate in respectful and open communication, and work together to find productive solutions. Employees are not expected to put themselves at risk or jeopardize anyone's safety when dealing with difficult situations.

Inappropriate Behaviour

Inappropriate behaviour or actions include, but not limited to, the following:

- Attempts to incite anger in others
- Throwing articles in a deliberate or aggressive manner
- Unwanted physical contact/violence
- Theft of property
- Possession of weapons
- Illegal consumption of alcohol or drugs
- Contravention of Municipal by-laws, policies, or procedures
- Vandalism: the deliberate destruction, damage or defacing of property
- Harassment (any form)
- Targeted vulgarity and rudeness



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- Use of profanity and obscene language that is derogatory or insensitive such as racial slurs
- Yelling and shouting in anger or frustration
- Causing distress to municipal employees. This could include use of hostile, abusive, or offensive language, or unreasonable fixation on an employee causing fear.
- Criticism that frightens, belittles, or demeans people
- Persistent threats of retaliation
- The use of all cell phones, cameras, video recording devices, personal digital devices, or any other equipment with video or photographic abilities in public change rooms or public washrooms

Action Taken in response to Inappropriate Behaviour

When inappropriate behaviour/actions occur, the following steps are encouraged:

1. Employees will make reasonable efforts to resolve issues in a professional manner for everyone's dignity.
2. Without jeopardizing anyone's safety, attempt to de-escalate the situation in a calm and collected manner. Employees are not expected to respond to occurrences if they feel unsafe or threatened.
3. Empathize with the individual and let them know their behaviour is unacceptable and if it continues, they will be asked to leave (ex. I understand you're frustrated, but we will only continue this conversation if it's in a respectful manner. If not, you will be asked to leave.)
4. If the individual does not cooperate, respectfully ask them to leave. If needed, call for your Leader to support.
5. As a last resort, if the individual refuses to leave, do not engage in an argument or physical confrontation. Call the police and wait for them to arrive while ensuring that you and any others in jeopardy, are in a safe location. (**OPP non-emergency contact: 1-888-310-1122**)
6. Notify your Leader who will then initiate appropriate next steps with HR. If the incident warrants an incident report, the employee will be asked to complete an Incident Report within 24 hours of the incident.



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Incident Reporting Measures

When an incident report is initiated, the following steps will be taken:

1. The CAO, in consultation with HR, will thoroughly investigate to understand if communication with the alleged offender has been adequate and fair. Following those steps, the situation may be deemed as either disrespectful/inappropriate and/or further employee training/support is required.
2. Incident reports will be investigated on an individual case-by-case basis and the CAO may seek external legal advice, where appropriate.
3. If the incident has been deemed disrespectful and inappropriate by the CAO, the applicable Department Head will collaborate with HR to provide appropriate notice to the identified individual of action to be taken, within 14 days of the incident.
4. Depending on severity and circumstances of the incident, the following notice measures may apply, but not limited to:
 - Verbal Warning from the applicable Department Head
 - Written warning Letter outlining incident and further consequences if behaviour continues
 - Specified length of ban from a facility depending on severity and further consequences may apply (OPP involvement/measures)
 - Pursuing legal action, including the issuance of a Notice of Trespass, or pursuing cost recovery
 - Limiting the individual to one method of contact or limiting to one Municipal point of contact
5. Applicable employees will be notified of any individual who have been subject to remedial action for their awareness
6. Incident reports will be retained in HR in a confidential and secure manner.

*If members of the public want to report acts of inappropriate behaviour from Municipal employees, they are encouraged to speak to the applicable Supervisor to review the situation and find a solution. If they are wanting to pursue further action, they are encouraged to submit an incident report on the Request Portal through the Municipal Website and the above incident report measures will apply.

(Link: <https://v4.citywidesolutions.com/csr/northperth/>)



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Appeal Process

If an individual wishes to appeal any action taken by the Municipality in response to inappropriate behaviour, the individual can complete the following steps:

1. Address concerns in writing to the Council of the Municipality of North Perth, within 14 days of the decision. The appeal will be reviewed by North Perth Council and a response will be given. Any decision made is final.
2. If the individual doesn't agree with Council's decision, all further concerns regarding the incident can be referred to the Ontario Ombudsman.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:

Applicable Training for departments and policy review will be provided to employees during orientation to support a positive customer service relationship and service delivery. HR is responsible for monitoring violations of this policy and following up with appropriate employees, as necessary.

All employees agree to report to their Direct Supervisor with any known violation of this Policy. Failure to comply with all components of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

POLICY REVIEW:

This Policy may be amended as deemed necessary and appropriate and aligns with North Perth's workplace violence and harassment policies. Also, this policy complies with the Ontario Employment Standards Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, Human Rights Code, Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and all other applicable law and regulations.

REVISION HISTORY:

Revision	Date	By-Law/Resolution	Comments
1	February 2014	93.02/14	Issue Date (RZone Policy)
2	January 2024	401.08.23	Policy Overhaul, updated incident reporting measures and steps

