



Policy Title: Workplace Conduct Policy **Policy #:** HR 2020-03

Section: HUMAN RESOURCES

Initially Approved:	<u>N/A</u>
Last Reviewed:	<u>N/A</u>
Council Approval:	<u>2020-02-10</u>
Next Review Scheduled:	<u>2021-01</u>

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to outline expectations regarding Village of Warfield employees' behavior towards their colleagues, supervisors and overall Village organization.

POLICY GOAL:

The Village of Warfield promotes freedom of expression and open communication; however, all employees are expected to follow this code of conduct. Employees' conduct and language are expected to meet acceptable social standards of courtesy, dignity, trust and respect. Employees are expected to foster a well-organized, respectful and collaborative workplace environment.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all Village of Warfield employees regardless of employment agreement or rank. Where there is an inconsistency between a collective agreement and this policy, the collective agreement shall prevail to the extent of the inconsistency.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS:

Employees are expected to act ethically and responsibly when dealing with Village finances, products, partnerships and public image. Employees are required to follow this Employee Code of Conduct; the components are as outlined below.

Compliance with Laws

Employees shall act in full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations when fulfilling their employment obligations to the Village. They should comply with all environmental, safety and fair dealing laws.

Respect in the Workplace

The Village of Warfield is committed to:

- ensuring that all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, free from discrimination, harassment and bullying and are supported in managing workplace differences; and
- providing an environment that respects and promotes human rights and personal dignity.

The Village supports the principle that all individuals are entitled to a work environment that is free from any form of discrimination and discriminatory harassment.

To this end, The Village supports the maintenance of a respectful workplace by providing a process for the reporting and investigation of respectful workplace complaints, including discrimination and discriminatory harassment.

All employees are required to follow the Workplace Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Inappropriate Conduct

Employees shall not engage in conduct that may be considered inappropriate by any reasonable standard. Inappropriate conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- conduct that disrupts the work environment or impedes the delivery of Village services;
- conduct that creates an atmosphere of hostility, intimidation, discrimination, bullying or disrespect for others;
- conduct of a violent or non-violent nature that endangers or threatens to endanger or subject any person to physical, mental or verbal abuse, or potential injury.

Conflict of Interest

Employees must not allow their private interests, whether personal, financial, or of any other sort, to conflict or appear to conflict with their duties and responsibilities as Village employees.

Employees must not place themselves in a position where they are, or appear to be, under personal obligation to any person who might benefit or seek to gain special consideration or favour resulting from the relationship.

An employee shall avoid any situation in which there is, or may appear to be, a potential conflict which could appear to interfere with the employee's judgment in making decisions in the best interest of the Village of Warfield.

Employees shall exercise care so as not to benefit, or be perceived to benefit from:

- the use of information acquired solely by reason of their employment;
- any Village transactions over which they can influence decisions (e.g.: investment, borrowing, purchases, sales, contracts, grants, and appointments).

There are a variety of situations that could give rise to a conflict of interest. These include but are not limited to accepting gifts, favours, discounts or "kickbacks" from suppliers or other organizations, close or family relationships with outside suppliers or other organizations or using confidential information inappropriately.

If, at any time during their employment with the Village an employee:

- perceives that their actions/activities may be deemed, by a reasonable person, as an actual or potential conflict of interest, or an employee becomes aware of a conflict before or after a transaction is complete;
- is concerned that another employee is in a conflict of interest situation; or
- is in doubt whether a situation involves a conflict;

the employee shall disclose, in writing, to the Chief Administrative Officer (or Chief Financial Officer) the nature, facts and extent of their concern immediately upon becoming aware of a potential conflict of interest.

Should the concern identified by the employee be in regard to the Chief Administrative Officer (or Chief Financial Officer), the employee shall disclose the nature, facts and extent of their concern to the Village of Warfield Mayor, or the auditor of record for the Village of Warfield.

Confidential Information

In the course of employment employees may have access to, or become aware of, confidential information of the Village or of a third party, such as other employees, contractors, and suppliers.

Confidential Information includes proprietary information, technical information, operational information, business information, financial information, personal information relating to Village personnel or residents. Employees shall maintain the confidentiality of such information and shall protect such information from loss, theft, misuse and improper disclosure. Employees shall notify their immediate workplace leader if they have reason to believe that Confidential Information has been lost, stolen, misused or improperly disclosed.

Employees shall not use or disclose confidential information received in the course of their employment that is not available to the general public unless prior authorization is given for its use or disclosure. Employees who are in doubt as to whether certain information is confidential must ask Chief Administrative Officer (or Chief Financial Officer) before disclosing, releasing, or transmitting it.

The Village will comply with the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* regarding the collection, retention, and distribution of information.

The obligations set out in this section continue to apply to individuals after they have left the employ of the Village.

Protection of Company Property

All employees should treat Village owned property, whether material or intangible, with respect and care.

Employees:

- Should not misuse company equipment or use it frivolously;
- Should respect all kinds of incorporeal property. This includes trademarks, copyrights and other property (information, reports etc.) Employees should use them only to complete their job duties.
- Should protect company facilities and other material property (e.g. Village owned vehicles and equipment) from damage and vandalism, whenever possible.

Compliance, Reporting, and Retaliation

The Village of Warfield shall behave, and be perceived, as an ethical organization and accordingly, each employee shall adhere to the standards described herein and to the standards set out in applicable policies, guidelines or legislation.

Employees are responsible for making themselves aware of, understanding and complying with all Village of Warfield policies, including this policy, and are expected to seek clarification

where necessary. Normally, the Chief Administrative Officer or Chief Financial Officer will be responsible for providing guidance on a policy.

Integrity, honesty, and trust are desirable attributes of the Village of Warfield's operating environment. Any employee who knows or suspects a breach of this policy has a responsibility to report it the Chief Administrative Officer or Chief Financial Officer.

The Village of Warfield and its employees will not retaliate against any employee, who in good faith, reports a known or suspected violation of this policy. This means that employees will not be terminated, demoted or discriminated against in any way for reporting legitimate concerns about matters in accordance with this policy, including giving information in relation to an investigation. However, given the seriousness of a false allegation and the resources which will be expended to investigate complaints, the Village reserves the right to discipline anyone who knowingly makes a false accusation or knowingly provides false information.

Breach of Policy

Employees found to have breached their duty by violating the requirements of this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination, that will be addressed through relevant Village of Warfield policies, Collective Agreements or contracted terms of employment.

Decisions that have an impact on employees who are parties to a Collective Agreement may be grieved through the appropriate grievance process.

If a violation of law is involved, the matter may also be referred to the appropriate law enforcement agency

Related Policies, Bylaws or Legislation:

BC Human Rights Code, [RSBC 1996], c.210

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, [RSBC 1996], c.165

Workers Compensation Act, [RSBC 1996] c. 492

Reg: *Occupational Health & Safety Regulations*, Part 8, Section 8.2

Village of Warfield Workplace Bullying & Harassment Policy HR 2020-11

CUPE Local 2087 and Village of Warfield Collective Agreement, 2018-2021