



# **Integrity Commissioner Inquiry Protocol**

*Township of Seguin*

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## 1. Introduction

The Municipality has, pursuant to section 223.2 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, established a Code of Conduct for members of council of the Municipality and members of its Local Boards.

The Municipality will be appointing an Integrity Commissioner whose duties include conducting inquiries in respect of alleged contraventions of the Code of Conduct.

The purpose of this protocol is to set out a framework for the Integrity Commissioner's inquiries into allegations of contraventions of the Code of Conduct.

## 2. Definitions

**“Code of Conduct”** means a code of conduct established pursuant to section 232.2 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*.

**“Elector”** means a person entitled to vote at a municipal election in the Municipality.

**“Integrity Commissioner”** means the Integrity Commissioner appointed by Municipal Council and any individual acting under powers delegated to him or her in writing by the Integrity Commissioner.

**“Local Board”** means a Local Board other than:

- a. A society as defined in subsection 2(1) of the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017*;
- b. A board of health as defined in subsection 1(1) of the *Health Protection and Promotion Act*;
- c. A Committee of management established under the *Long-Term Care Homes Act, 2007*;
- d. A police service board established under the *Police Services Act, 2018*;
- e. A board as defined in section 1 of the *Public Libraries Act*; and,
- f. A corporation established in accordance with section 203 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*;

**“Member”** means a member of the municipal council and any person on his or her staff and/or a member of a Local Board or a Committee of the Municipality and any person on his or her staff.

**“Requestor”** means the person who has submitted a request to the Integrity Commissioner for an inquiry concerning an alleged contravention of the applicable Code of Conduct.

**“Respondent”** means the person who is alleged to have violated the Code of Conduct and whom an Integrity Commissioner inquiry request has been submitted.

## **3. Integrity Commissioner**

### **3.1. Functions**

The Integrity Commissioner reports to council and is responsible for performing in an independent manner, the functions assigned by the Municipality with respect to any of the following:

1. The application of the Code of Conduct for Members.
2. The application of any procedures, rules and policies of the Municipality and Local Boards governing the ethical behaviour of Members.

### **3.2. Powers and duties**

In carrying out the responsibilities described in section 3.1 above, the Integrity Commissioner may exercise such powers and shall perform such duties as may be assigned to him or her by the Municipality.

### **3.3. Delegation**

After satisfying himself or herself that a person is fully capable of carrying out the Integrity Commissioner’s powers or duties, the Integrity Commission may, in writing, delegate to any person, other than a member of council, any such duties or powers. For greater certainty, if the Integrity Commissioner delegates any duties or powers, the Integrity Commissioner may continue to exercise the delegated powers and duties despite the delegation.

### **3.4. Outside assistance**

In performing any of his or her duties, the Integrity Commissioner may engage outside assistance or consult with the Municipality’s legal counsel. When the Municipality’s legal counsel is assisting the Integrity Commissioner, their role is solely to assist the Integrity Commissioner and not any particular individual.

## 4. Inquiry by Integrity Commissioner re Code of Conduct

### 4.1. Request for inquiry

A request for inquiry may be made in writing to the Integrity Commissioner by a Member, staff or member of the public about whether a Member has contravened the Code of Conduct.

### 4.2. Request contents

A request for inquiry under section 4.1 above may be in the form set out in Schedule “A” or, otherwise, shall include sufficient information to set out a prima facie contravention of the applicable Code of Conduct, including, but not necessarily limited to, all of the following:

- The Requestor’s name and contact information.
- What happened – a description of the events or situation.
- When it happened – dates and times of the events or incidents.
- Where it happened – the location(s) where the events or incidents occurred.
- Who saw it happen – the names of any witnesses, if any.

### 4.3. Jurisdiction re workplace violence, harassment, and sexual harassment

Requests for inquiry made under this section must specifically refer to alleged contraventions of the Code of Conduct by a Member. Allegations of workplace violence, harassment, and sexual harassment by a Member must be reported in the manner set out in the Township of Seguin Workplace Anti-Violence, Harassment and Sexual Harassment Policy and must be reported as provided thereunder and that policy shall exclusively apply in respect of any such report.

### 4.4. Request review

The Integrity Commissioner will conduct an initial review of the request to ensure that it is a proper allegation of a breach of the Code of Conduct . If, after the initial review, the Integrity Commissioner determines that the request is not properly an allegation of a breach of the Code of Conduct, there are insufficient grounds to believe that there has been a contravention of the Code of Conduct, or the Integrity Commissioner determines that an inquiry is not appropriate for any other reason in the Integrity Commissioner’s reasonable discretion, the Integrity Commissioner will dismiss the request. When determining if an inquiry is appropriate, the Integrity Commissioner may, among other things, take into account the date of the alleged

breach. Further, the Integrity Commissioner shall, in his or her discretion, dismiss the request if, upon initial review the Integrity Commissioner determines that the Requestor has not supplied the information as mentioned by section 4.2, the Integrity Commissioner will advise the Requestor that he or she must supply additional information and shall take no further action until the information is provided.

#### **4.5. Powers on inquiry**

The Integrity Commissioner may elect to exercise the powers under sections 33 and 34 of the *Public Inquiries Act, 2009*, in which case, notwithstanding anything to the contrary herein, those sections apply to the inquiry.

#### **4.6. Information**

The Municipality, its Local Boards and Committees shall give the Integrity Commissioner such information as the Integrity Commissioner believes to be necessary for an inquiry including free access to all books, accounts, financial records, electronic data processing records, reports, files and other papers, things or property belonging to or used by the Municipality, Committee or a Local Board. For greater certainty, providing the Integrity Commissioner with information concerning legal advice shall be deemed not to constitute a waiver of solicitor-client privilege.

#### **4.7. Penalties the Municipality may impose**

Council may impose any of the following penalties on a Member if the Integrity Commissioner reports to the Municipality that the Member has contravened the Code of Conduct:

1. A reprimand.
2. Suspension of the remuneration paid to the Member for a period of up to 90 days.
3. Other penalties, including but not necessarily limited to:
  - a. Removal from membership of a Committee or Local Board;
  - b. Removal as Chair of a Committee or Local Board;
  - c. Require repayment or reimbursement of moneys received;
  - d. Return of property or reimbursement of its value;
  - e. Request for resignation;
  - f. Trespass Order restricting access except for Council meetings;



- g. A request for an apology to Council, the Requestor or other relevant party;  
and
- h. Revocation of travel or other budget.

#### **4.8. Penalties the Local Board may impose**

A Local Board may impose any of the penalties described in section 4.7 above on a member of the Local Board if the Integrity Commissioner reports to the Local Board that, in his or her opinion, the member of the Local Board has contravened the Code of Conduct applicable to the Member of the Local Board, and if the Municipality has not imposed a penalty on the member of the Local Board under section 4.7 above in respect of the contravention.

## **5. Conduct of inquiry**

The Integrity Commissioner may conduct such inquiry as he or she considers necessary in response to a compliant request under sections 4 above and such inquiry may include all or some of the following:

- Informing the Respondent of the inquiry;
- Interviewing the Requestor, the Respondent, any person involved in the incident, and any identified witnesses;
- Interviewing any other person who may have knowledge of the incidents related to the inquiry or any other similar incidents; and
- Reviewing any information the Integrity Commissioner believes necessary and documenting such review.

## **6. Reference to appropriate authorities**

### **6.1. Referral of matter by Integrity Commissioner**

If the Integrity Commissioner, when conducting an inquiry, determines that there are reasonable grounds to believe that there has been a contravention of the Criminal Code of Canada or any other *Act*, the Integrity Commissioner shall immediately refer the matter to the appropriate authorities and suspend the inquiry until any resulting investigation, including but not limited to police investigations and/or charges have been finally disposed of, and shall report the suspension to council. Contravention of any other *Act* includes, but is not limited to, contravention of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

## **6.2. No derogation of rights**

The provisions of this protocol in no way affect the right of anyone to:

- (a) contact the police, other law enforcement agency, or any other appropriate authority on their own initiative;
- (b) exercise their right(s) under any legislation; or
- (c) take any other available legal action.

## **7. Confidentiality**

### **7.1. Integrity Commissioner's duty of confidentiality**

The Integrity Commissioner and every person acting under his or her jurisdiction shall preserve confidentiality with respect to all matters that come to his or her knowledge in the course of performing his or her duties. This section prevails over the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

### **7.2. Confidentiality of those involved in inquiry**

Out of respect for the relevant individuals, it is essential that the Requestor, Respondent, witnesses and anyone else involved in an inquiry conducted by the Integrity Commissioner hereunder maintain confidentiality throughout the inquiry and afterwards.

### **7.3. Disclosure required by law**

Notwithstanding sections 7.1 or 7.2 above, information may be disclosed in a criminal proceeding, or as required by law.

### **7.4. Retention of records**

The Integrity Commissioner and person providing outside assistance to the Integrity Commissioner pursuant to section 3.4 above, shall retain all records related to any inquiry indefinitely.

## 8. Reports

### ***8.1. Periodic report to council***

If the Integrity Commissioner provides a periodic report to the Municipality on his or her activities, the Integrity Commissioner may summarize advice he or she has given, but shall not disclose confidential information that could identify a person concerned.

### ***8.2. Report about conduct***

After completing an inquiry, the Integrity Commissioner shall provide a written report to the Municipality or the Local Board (the “Report”).

The Integrity Commissioner may disclose in the Report, such matters as in the Commissioner’s opinion are necessary for the purposes of the Report. Where the Integrity Commissioner finds that there has been a contravention of the Code of Conduct, the Report may, at the Integrity Commissioner’s discretion, contain the following:

1. An outline of the Integrity Commissioner’s finding; and,
2. The terms of any recommended corrective action;

Where the Integrity Commissioner finds that there has been a contravention of the Code of Conduct, the Report must contain sufficient information for the Municipality or Local Board to determine whether or not to impose penalties under sections 4.7 and 4.8.

### ***8.3. Report to Council or Local Board***

Upon receipt of the Report, the Clerk shall indicate, on the regular agenda of Council or the Local Board, notice of intent from the Integrity Commissioner to submit a Report for consideration at the following regular meeting.

The Respondent shall have the right of reply when the Report is considered by the Municipality or the Local Board.

Upon review of the Report, Council shall pass a resolution stating whether or not it intends to take action in response to the Report, and if so what action Council will take.

#### **8.4. Publication of reports**

The Municipality and each Local Board shall ensure that reports received from the Integrity Commissioner by the Municipality or by the Local Board, as the case may be, are made available to the public upon request.

### **9. Bad Faith Requests**

If a person or entity makes a request for an inquiry hereunder and the Integrity Commissioner determines such request is made in bad faith, notwithstanding anything to the contrary in protocol, the Integrity Commissioner may disclose all relevant information concerning the request to the Municipality such that the Municipality may pursue any recourse available against the individual or entity. Examples of bad faith include, but are not limited to, making a report knowing the allegations therein are untrue or making a report for an improper purpose.

### **10. Protocol review**

The Municipality will review this Policy as often as it deems reasonably necessary and will post the most current version of this protocol on its website.

## SCHEDULE "A"

### INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER REQUEST FOR INQUIRY CODE OF CONDUCT

This form will be used to request the Integrity Commissioner conduct an inquiry of an alleged Code of Conduct contravention	Submit completed complaint in a sealed envelope to: <b>Integrity Commissioner</b> <b>Request for Inquiry Re Code of Conduct</b> [ <b>Integrity Commission Contact Information</b> ]
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#### REQUESTOR'S INFORMATION

Last Name:	First Name:
Street Address:	Municipality:
Postal Code:	Phone #:
E-mail Address:	Name of Member:

#### DETAILS OF ALLEGED CODE OF CONDUCT CONTRAVENTION

Date(s) of alleged Code of Conduct contravention:	
Provision(s) of Code of Conduct allegedly contravened:	
Facts constituting the alleged Code of Conduct contravention (please use separate page(s) if required)	
Name(s) and contact information of any witnesses:	
<input type="checkbox"/> I agree to release my identity with regard to this request <input type="checkbox"/> I do NOT agree to release my identity with regard to this request	
Signature:	Date: Year:                      Month:                      Day:

#### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received Year:      Month:      Day:	Request #:	Comments:
Personal information contained on this form is collected under the authority of the <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i> and will be used for the purpose of requesting an inquiry.		