



THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
LA MUNICIPALITÉ DU COMTÉ DE
RICHMOND

Employee Policy Manual

Preface

This Employee Policies Manual is provided to you by THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND (herein known as “THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND”).

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is not responsible for any errors or omissions that might have occurred during printing.

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND reserves the sole and unfettered right to make changes to this document without any impact upon the employment relationship and without prior notice.

Purpose, Distribution, and Familiarity with Policies Manual

The purpose of this manual is to share the “rules” of the workplace and ensure positive employee relations.

Department Directors shall ensure that all employees receive a copy of this manual, have access to this manual, have an opportunity to ask questions for clarification and sign the “Creating Accountability” page.

All employees are subject to the policies described in this manual.

Foreword

These policies are intended as a reference for all employees. It is important that all employees consult these policies when “in doubt”.

It is important that all employees read this manual and be fully familiar with its contents. Questions around any policies should be directed to your department Director.

Thank you for your dedicated and loyal service to THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND and its residents.

Employee Classification:

Labour legislation does not define employee classifications. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND categorizes employees based on the number of hours worked and expected duration of the position. It is important that positions be classified, and employees understand the classification of their position, so there is a sensible and understandable system of reward and claim.

Full Time:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND requires full time employees to work a regular work week comprised of 35 paid hours. It is assumed that, under normal circumstances, the need for this position will be indefinite. Having said this, the tenure of this position is at the discretion of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND. Should there be change appropriate notice shall be given to the incumbent.

Part-Time:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND requires regular part time employees to work all hours as scheduled by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND. These hours may fluctuate over the calendar year and are based on business requirements. It is assumed that under normal circumstances, the need for this position will be indefinite. Having said this, the tenure of this position is at the discretion of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND. Should there be change appropriate notice shall be given to the incumbent.

Casual Full-Time or Casual Part-Time:

From time-to-time THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND requires casual employees to respond to peak work periods. These peak work periods may result from normal and perhaps predictable work cycles or through the absence of regular employees. It is assumed that casual full/part time employees will terminate once the workload returns to normal and accordingly there is no implicit or explicit guaranteed continuance of employment.

All casual employment perimeters shall be set out within each contract. Employees under a casual full/part time contract will not exceed the stated contractual period unless otherwise amended by the Director, and approved by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Full-Time Term or Part-Time Term:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND requires full/part time term temporary employees to complete specific tasks or projects and within a specified period of time; with no assumption of continuance of employer. All full/part time term employees shall be hired under contract and the work period shall not exceed the contract period unless otherwise amended by the Director, and approved by the Chief Administrative Officer.

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1.0 Attendance Management

Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is committed to operational excellence. It is therefore critical that employees be punctual and attend work as scheduled.

Principles of Policy:

This policy has been developed in accordance with the following principles:

- a. To ensure operational excellence by having all employees attend work as scheduled;
- b. To proactively manage absenteeism and minimize absences;
- c. To approach attendance in a positive and concerned manner; and
- d. To share with all employees expectations around regular attendance.

Definitions:

Absence -Defined as any time an employee is out of the workplace for reasons other than those listed under "Exceptions".

Occurrence -An "occurrence" of absenteeism takes place when an employee is not present when scheduled, for whatever reason. An occurrence may be for part of a day, an entire day, consecutive days, arriving late or leaving early. (e.g. missing Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday is 1 occurrence, or leaving early is 1 occurrence, or missing a single day is 1 occurrence).

Excused Absenteeism -When documentation (typically a doctor's note) is provided to THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND substantiating the absence. Note, however, that excessive excused absenteeism may lead to discipline.

Excessive Excused Absenteeism - When absenteeism is excused but the employee has incurred the highest number of absent days among peers or there is a pattern of absenteeism

Unexcused Absenteeism -When:

- (1) an employee is absent, late or leaves early without substantiating documentation or without notification;
- (2) a pattern of absenteeism, late arrivals or early leaves exists (for example, missing every Monday or missing each day following a holiday); or,
- (3) when excused absenteeism becomes excessive.

Exceptions:

For the purposes of attendance management, the following items are not to be considered as absences:

- a. Pre-planned vacation days;
- b. Holidays for which the employee is scheduled off;
- c. Approved leaves, e.g. Maternity or paternal leave, Jury or Court duty, bereavement leave; or,

d. Director approved unpaid time-off and with 48 hours' notice.

Reporting Procedure:

Any employee who is going to be late, who is looking to leave early, or who is unable to attend their shift as scheduled, is required to report this directly to the director at least one (1) hour prior to the start of their shift. The director may withhold their approval to leave early depending upon operational needs.

If the employee calls the director prior to starting their workday the employee may leave a voice message but is required to follow-up directly with the director later that same day.

If an employee is hospitalized or has been in an accident and is unable to call, another person may notify THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND of the absence.

Probationary Period Attendance:

Regular attendance during the probationary period is critical. Except in extraordinary circumstances, any employee who has three (3) occurrences of absenteeism during the probationary period is subject to an employment review which could lead to either a written extension of the probationary period or further disciplinary action.

Attendance after Probation:

Any occurrence of absenteeism, lateness or leaving early could lead to a review of an employee's attendance records. If the employee has an attendance issue, or issues around arriving late and/or leaving early, the director will meet with the employee to discuss the reasons for the absence(s), relay THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND's expectations around regular attendance and to take progressive steps, as necessary. All resulting documentation will be placed in the employee's personnel file.

The attendance matrix below is a guideline only when determining the level of action to be taken.

Occurrences (In a rolling 12 month period)	Action Required
4-5	First Warning
6-7	Second Warning
8-9	Last Chance Warning
10-11	Termination recommended

Attendance issues should be documented using Appendix "D" Employee Contact form.

The director will not deliver a termination notice without first having the approval of the CAO.

Documentation:

Attendance issues should be documented using Appendix "D" Employee Contact form. Copies of all documentation will be retained within the employee's personnel file.

Attendance records are maintained on a rolling twelve (12) month basis. For example, an employee is placed on a First Warning February 15 and then a Second Warning March 7. If the employee does not receive a Last Chance Warning by March 7 the next year the First and Second Warnings documentation will be placed in a sealed envelope within the employee's personnel file. The envelope will state the employee's name, "attendance" and a date.

Employees in a critical attendance situation may be required to provide substantiating documentation for each and every subsequent absence, late arrival or leave early.

Discussion Guidelines:

When the director speaks with an employee about an attendance issue, the discussion will include:

1. A review of this policy with the employee;
2. A review of past discussions and documentation with the employee;

Additionally:

3. The director will make employees aware of the impact of their absences upon their colleagues and operations;
4. Employees are to be advised of the necessity of pro-actively managing their absences and the need for continued dialogue with their director;
5. Employees will be presented with short-term shift options, if feasible and at the sole discretion of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND, to reduce their absences; and
6. Employees will be advised of the need to provide documentation to substantiate further absences, late arrivals, or leave early, as requested.

Responsibilities:

Employees - Employees are responsible for reporting to work on a regular and timely basis and work as scheduled. They are to attend to personal obligations outside normal working hours, whenever practical. They are to use vacation days to minimize absenteeism. They are to report all late arrivals, missed shift or early leaves.

Director- The director is to educate employees on this program and the impact of absenteeism upon operational excellence. All employee attendance issues are to be addressed in a timely and discreet manner. No director is to terminate an employee without the implicit approval from the Chief Administrative Officer.

2.0 Bereavement Leave

Policy:

Requests for bereavement time-off must be made to, and approved by the director.

Principles of Policy:

Employees experiencing the loss of a loved one will be granted time-off from work, beginning on their first full day of employment.

Provisions of Paid and Unpaid Bereavement Time-off:

Paid time-off entitlements for full-time employees are as follows:

Spouse (inc. legal common law and legal partners), child or step-child, parent or step-parent or any person who permanently resides with the employee.	5 days
Sibling or step-sibling, parent-in-law, sibling-in-law, Grandparent, grandchild or step-grandchild	3 days
Other family (aunt, uncle)	1 day
Current or past employee, close friend	Funeral time depending upon operational need

Non-Familial Unpaid Bereavement Time-off:

Because relationships are of a personal nature, sometimes an employee may request, or require, time-off for people not included in the previous sections of this policy. Any time-off requests for time off are at the discretion of the Director.

Additional Unpaid Bereavement Time-off:

Sometimes employees will require additional time-off. In the event that additional time-off is required, the employee may request, in writing, additional unpaid leave, or available vacation days should the employee wish to use them. This additional time-off is granted at the discretion of the Director.

Responsibilities:

Employees - Employees are required to request time-off under this policy as soon as practical, under the circumstances. Employees may be required to provide documentation, as requested.

Director– The Director will treat requests for unpaid time-off in a fair, consistent and compassionate manner.

3.0 Code of Conduct

Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND has expectations of all employees. This policy is a guide only and cannot comprehensively address every issue of conduct or ethical dilemma which might arise.

Principles of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND's success depends largely on the conduct of individual employees, their approach to their peers and their approach to customers, suppliers and the general public. The objective of the Code of Conduct is to reinforce principles by which THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND does business and make a public statement of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND's commitment to the highest standards of quality, teamwork, transparency and customer focus.

General Rules of Conduct:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND strives to provide a safe and healthy environment, free of conflict. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND expects all employees to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this direction and shall not conduct themselves in a manner which may bring discredit to THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND or in a manner unbecoming of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND employee.

Generally, all staff, in day-to-day business activities, will have contact with: colleagues, customers, the general public, suppliers, etc. When interacting with others, employees are expected to be helpful, courteous and pleasant and act with the utmost integrity and professionalism. Informal dialogues are to be kept to a minimum in the presence of customers, suppliers and the general public. Further, employees must adhere to Rules of Professional Conduct as issued by their governing body.

No employee will insult any colleague, Councillor, customer, member of the public, or supplier. Employees will use tact at all times.

Chain of Command:

For the proper management of its workplace, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND has an established chain of command. As a rule, employees deal with the Director and thereafter the CAO.

Obeying Directives:

Failure or refusal by an employee to obey any policy or procedure, or the good faith order of the director, is insubordination and conduct unbecoming of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND employee.

Mistreatment of Subordinates:

Directors shall treat their subordinates in a reasonable and professional manner and always with dignity and respect. Unless there is an emergency situation, all corrective or disciplinary action shall be taken in private, in a dignified manner, and with the aim of improving future performance.

No director shall issue a directive to any employee knowing that the directive is not lawful or does not comply with THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND policies and procedures. Any employee who feels they have been subject to such an order may have the directive reviewed by the Director, and if still unresolved, the CAO.

Criminal Offences:

Employees should clearly understand that THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND reputation may be placed at risk and consequences could be incurred should an employee commit a criminal offence. Any employee who is criminally charged shall advise the Director. Should the criminal offense be in conflict with the employee's duties, or be of a repugnant nature, the employee may be placed on an unpaid leave until a disposition of the charge is made. If the employee is found guilty, the employee may be dismissed by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND, and without any notice or compensation.

Racial and/or Religious Comments and Profanity:

Employees shall not use racial, religious, bigoted, offensive, foul, obscene or abusive language while at work. See *Harassment and Discrimination* policy.

Comments or Complaints about Conditions of Service:

As a matter of expected discretion, employees shall not discuss nor correspond in writing about conditions of service, or the business of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND or its customers, with any person who is not a COUNTY OF RICHMOND employee, including members of the media. Comments or complaints may be directed to the Director.

Conflict of Interest:

Employees must avoid any interest, influence or relationship that might conflict or appear to conflict with the best interests of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND. Any conflict of interest is to be immediately disclosed to the Director.

Customer Service:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND prides its' self as a transparent, team orientated and customer focused municipality. To ensure that all customer service inquiries and issues are handled with priority and resolved in an efficient manner THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND employees' will work collectively within a flexible, efficient and problem solving team unit to achieve consistent customer satisfaction.

Highly Confidential Information and Non-Disclosure:

During the course of employment, employees may become privy to THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND's and its customers and residents proprietary information, including but not limited to personal customer information, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND and customer financials and revenue, fee schedules, marketing strategy, County holdings and records, etc. Employees are to treat all fore mentioned information as "Highly Confidential". The employee will hold Highly Confidential information in the strictest of confidences and will not disclose at any time, either during or after the employment period, to any

person, any Highly Confidential information except as authorized expressly in writing by CAO of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND. Further, Highly Confidential information is not to be discussed in public areas or public places or members of the media or Council.

Dress:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND expects that all employees will use sound judgement and dress appropriate for the professional environment THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND wishes to nurture.

Note: There will be no visible underwear or thongs and appropriate foundation garments are to be worn under sheer materials. Logos are not acceptable except THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND logos.

Scent and Personal Hygiene Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is committed to providing all its employees with a safe and healthy workplace. Because employees share workspace, perfumes and colognes are not permitted. Employees must exercise good personal hygiene.

Smoking:

There is to be absolutely no smoking in any COUNTY OF RICHMOND office, vehicle or facility. Employees are to smoke only in designated areas. Employees are to take cigarette breaks only on approved break times.

Responsibilities:

Employees -It is the employee's responsibility to comply with the Code of Conduct and to take any concerns or questions to their director.

Director – The director is to ensure employees are familiar with the Code of Conduct and comply with both the written policy and the intent of the policy.

4.0 Computer, Communication Devices and Social Media

Policy:

Technology has made communications more efficient and productive. With technology, however, come inherent risks to the business. This policy is to provide a consistent means to administer usage of computers, internet, communication devices and social media. This policy applies to both desktop computers as well as mobile lap top computers and all handheld devices.

Computer Usage Guidelines:

Responsibility for policy compliance rests with each employee, and accountability remains with each employee should they allow others to break this policy.

The use of computers, networks and social media sites is restricted to authorized business purposes only. Personal use of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND computers, including the internet and social media sites, is strictly prohibited, unless on a scheduled break. At all times employees are expected to limit their internet and social media use to appropriate sites as defined under *Computer Usage Restrictions*.

Only authorized personnel can download or install software onto company computers. There will be no downloading or installation of software where not specifically related to the support of the operation. All software installed or downloaded onto a COUNTY OF RICHMOND computer must be licensed as the product and its use warrants.

No software, files or licenses owned by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND may be transferred off THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND's computer onto a personally owned, competitive or third party location without the express written consent of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND.

Computer Control and Monitoring:

All network accesses as well as computer folders, files, data, and messages stored and/or conveyed electronically are the sole property of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND. Any of the aforementioned can be reviewed, intercepted and/or monitored at any time, with or without notice to employees. There is no right to privacy.

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND reserves the sole and unfettered right at all times to restrict or prohibit access to certain internet sites and will report any suspected illegal activities to appropriate enforcement authorities. There is no right of privacy.

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND reserves the sole and unfettered right to deploy software and systems that monitor, block and record internet access, as well as internal activity. Privately owned equipment connected to THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND network will be subject to the same monitoring activities. There is no right of privacy.

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND reserves the sole and unfettered right to restrict or block any devices, services or applications which have or could potentially have an adverse effect on THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND network. There is no right of privacy.

Computer Usage Restrictions:

The following usages are strictly prohibited:

- Distribution of Highly Confidential information, see *Code of Conduct*;
- Forwarding work-related emails to personal email accounts;
- Accessing or distributing any pornographic materials;
- Engaging in any online gambling or any illegal activities;
- Playing computer games or accessing personal social media sites while on paid time;
- Accessing or distributing any materials that expresses or promotes discriminatory attitudes, hatred or contravenes the prohibited grounds of discrimination;

- Knowingly using or distributing messages, documents or software that contains viruses or other items designed to interfere with or disrupt operations or internal or external networks;
- Deliberate misrepresentation of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND, its residents or its suppliers;
- Participating in any electronic discussion group or social media sites not related to the support of the operation;
- Participating in any form of chain letters; or,
- Using the internet to access other networks or computers to which the employee does not have authorized access.

Failure to Comply:

Contravention of any item of this policy may result in:

1. Revocation of access to THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND computers and/or the internet, either in whole or in part;
2. Investigations which may result in charges being laid by a law enforcement agency under the *Criminal Code*, other federal statute or regulation, or a provincial law; Civil liability.

Social Media:

The rise of social networking, blogging and other forms of internet publishing means that anyone with an internet connection has an instant audience. To this end, there are several ways that an employee can cause harm to THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND when internet publishing, including, but not limited to:

- (1) Inappropriate and/or negative comments about THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND, its employees, its Councillors, residents, clients, partners and its suppliers;
- (2) The sharing of confidential information; and,
- (3) The posting information which conflicts with the employee's job duties.

Employees are forewarned and understand that anything they post online should be considered as being for public consumption. Employees will be held accountable for causing harm to THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND's interests through internet publication (eg. blogging, FaceBook, Twitter, etc).

Email:

Due to recent court decisions employees can expect reasonable email privacy. Having said this there are situations and circumstances which warrant authorized personnel to access employees email accounts. Email access will only be granted with the approval of the CAO. Under no circumstances are employees allowed to access a co-workers', or Directors' email account contents without explicit consent.

Communication Devices:

Employees may access their personal communication devices during paid break time only. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND may provide some staff with communication devices however these staff will not access same while operating a motor vehicle (unless hands-free is used), while completing work that requires

strong attention to detail and which might result in an unsafe condition and not in front of a customer unless it is for the specific support of the customer.

Responsibilities:

Employee - It is the employee's responsibility to adhere to this policy. Should employees encounter any operational difficulty as a result of this policy, they are to immediately contact the director for assistance.

Director - Should implementation of this policy create operational difficulties the Director is to escalate the issue to the Chief Administrative Officer for advisement purposes.

5.0 Conditions of Employment

Policy:

This policy is a guideline of the requirements to be satisfied as a condition of employment.

Principle of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND endeavours to employ staff who are loyal, dedicated, and trustworthy and who represent THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND positively to customers, suppliers and members of the public. By ensuring employees meet these expectations, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND can continue to provide its customers' and residents with the customer service excellence that they have come to expect.

Requirements of Employment:

To be considered for employment, all candidates must satisfy the following conditions:

1. References – Candidates must provide two directory references attesting that they left their previous employment in good standing. Students new to the workplace may provide character references, from teachers or ministers, for example, in lieu of directory references.
2. Interview - To be considered for employment, candidates must submit to and pass the interview.
3. Testing – Testing may be part of the recruitment process and, if testing is part of the recruitment process, candidates must submit to and pass all testing.
4. Criminal Background Checks – Upon the offer of employment, the employee is to provide a “satisfactory” background check as a condition of employment.
5. Probationary Period – Employees must successfully complete their probationary period.
6. Required Forms - To be considered for employment, personnel must agree to complete and sign required documents including, but not limited to, the Employment Agreement, TD1s, Privacy Policies & Procedures, etc.
7. Training - Training is a condition of employment with THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND. Employees who fail, without reasonable excuse, to competently demonstrate that they understand and can apply training may be considered unsuitable for continued employment and terminated “without cause”.

8. Designation - If a designation is inherent to the duties of the position, the employee must maintain that designation.
9. Availability - Employees must be available for work as scheduled and be available for overtime.
10. Drivers' License and Insurability – Employees required to drive as part of their duties are to maintain a valid drivers' license and insurance, or be insurable.

Withholding Information:

Any applicant or employee who withholds detrimental information while making application, including but not limited to resume fraud, criminal convictions(s) for which a pardon has not been granted, etc, will be refused employment or will be subject to dismissal, as the case may be.

Attendance and Punctuality:

From time to time, overtime may be required. Employees must make every effort to report for work regardless of weather or personal conditions. Employees must be prepared to start work at the immediate commencement of their scheduled work day. See *Attendance Policy*.

Failure to Report for Work:

Employees who fail to report to work as scheduled and without notifying the employer for three consecutive work days will be considered to have resigned their position.

Responsibilities:

Employee - It is the employee's responsibility to comply with these conditions of employment. Should an employee have questions, they must take their concerns to the director for clarification.

6.0 Corporate Citizenship and Volunteerism

Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is a proud corporate citizen and as such supports its employees through volunteerism with in-kind time off.

Principles of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND understands that it is part of a larger community and that community is, partly, founded on volunteerism. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND also understands that its employees support their community and are actively involved in trying to make a difference. To this end, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND supports and rewards employees who participate in volunteerism with in-kind time off; pending eligibility.

Eligibility:

For every hour of approved volunteerism employees are eligible for one (1) hour off.

Before volunteering with the intent of receiving this reward, employees are to seek written approval from their department Director. Approval may be withheld if the volunteer activity is not in keeping with the expectations of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND or if the organization is in breach of any of the prohibited grounds of discrimination; see *Harassment and Discrimination* policy.

Finally, employees will have to provide proof that they did complete the volunteer activity before receiving any reward of in kind time off.

County of Richmond Volunteerism:

From time-to-time, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND will coordinate its own volunteer activities. In-kind time off for municipal volunteer activities will be at a ratio of one (1) hour of volunteerism to one (1) hour of in-kind time off.

Responsibilities:

Employees – Employees are to seek approval for in-kind time off.

Director – The Director will not withhold their approval provided the volunteerism meets eligibility and does not interfere with operational needs as set out in this policy and will accurately track all in-kind time off.

7.0 Employee Contact and Information

Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND has a requirement for up-to-date employee information. This policy establishes the requirement and provides guidelines.

Principles of Policy:

Maintaining accurate and up-to-date employee information is paramount to the effective delivery of employee services. Accordingly, whenever there is a change in employee contact or general information the expectation is that the affected employee will complete an *Employee Contact and Information* form. This form can be found in the appendix section of this manual.

Required Notification:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND shall be notified in the event of any change to any of the following information:

- a. Employee legal name
- b. Employee address or telephone number
- c. Social Insurance Number
- d. Change in citizenship

- e. Change in marital status
- f. Change in emergency contact information
- g. Any change in allergy or medical information – this is a 100% voluntary provision with the intent of ensuring the health and well-being of the employee.

Responsibilities:

Employees – It is the employee's responsibility to complete an *Employee Contact and Information* form if there is any change in noted information and give the updated form to their director.

Director – It is the director's responsibility to forward a completed *Employee Contact and Information* form to the Department of Finance.

8.0 Harassment and Discrimination

Policy:

All employees are entitled to a supportive work environment in which individuals are treated with respect, provided with equal treatment and opportunity, and are free of harassment or discrimination, per the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act, 1989*.

Principles of Policy:

Employees are required to report situations of harassment or discrimination whether they themselves are being subjected to such behaviour or whether they observe or know of a fellow employee or group of employees who are being subjected to harassment or discrimination.

Harassment and discrimination may occur as a single encounter or a series of incidents, persistent innuendoes or threats. Harassment and discrimination is often a matter of personal perception. Tolerance for what is considered acceptable behaviour may vary widely among individuals. As a general rule, harassment and discrimination is considered to have taken place if a person knows, or ought reasonably to have known, that the behaviour was unwelcomed.

Acts of harassment or discrimination constitute unacceptable behaviour and will be subject to corrective action up to and including dismissal, even for a first offence. Retaliation in any form against a complainant or witness is also unacceptable and will be subject to corrective action up to and including dismissal.

All complaints of harassment and discrimination will be taken seriously and will be investigated in a prompt and impartial manner. Note, abuse of this policy by using it as a means of addressing differences that are not related to workplace harassment or discrimination is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Finally, know that, harassment does not include normal directory activities, such as counselling, performance appraisals, and discipline, as long as these are conducted in an impartial and professional manner.

Definitions:

Prohibited Grounds of Discrimination –In Nova Scotia, discrimination in employment is prohibited on the grounds of: age, race, colour, religion, creed, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, irrational fear of contracting an illness or disease, ethnic/national/aboriginal orientation, family status, source of income, marital status, political belief or association with an individual or class of individuals.

Harassment- Objectionable conduct that may have the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment interfering with an individual's work performance, adversely affecting an individual's employment relationship and/or denying an individual dignity and respect and is known to be or should reasonably be known to be unwelcome.

Sexual Harassment -Unwanted sexual advances including derogatory comments, gestures, looks, unnecessary/unwanted physical contact, jokes, slurs, derogatory or demeaning posters, cartoons, graffiti, drawings or displays of sexually suggested pictures.

Differential Treatment -Treating an employee differently and less than others, in the term and conditions of employment because of prohibited grounds or because of an employer's failure to accommodate. Differential treatment refers to the formal terms and conditions of employment such as work assignment, training, performance management, and promotion.

Accommodation -An employer must make the workplace physically accessible or the job duties able to be performed, unless such accommodation would cause undue hardship. That could mean modifying job duties to not include lifting for someone with a medically documented back disability.

Bullying- In Nova Scotia bullying means behaviour, typically repeated, that is intended to cause or should be known to cause fear, intimidation, humiliation, distress or other harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem, reputation or property, and can be direct or indirect, and includes assisting or encouraging the behaviour in any way.

Cyber Bullying- means bullying by electronic means that occurs through the use of technology, including computers or other electronic devices, social networks, text messaging, instant messaging, websites or e-mail.

Quid Pro Quo -Implied or expressed promises of reward or benefit for complying with a sexually oriented request. It is also an implied or expressed threat of reprisal in the form of either actual reprisal or denial of opportunity for refusal to comply with a sexually oriented request.

Racial Ethnic Harassment - Unwanted actions, derogatory comments, jokes, slurs, derogatory or demeaning posters, cartoons, graffiti, drawings, innuendoes, or taunting about or motivated by a person's race, colour, citizenship or national origin.

Poisoned Environment -Jokes, offensive literature or pictures, derogatory comments or other activities based on sex or racial characteristics that intrude upon a person's dignity, or that create an intimidating, hostile or offensive atmosphere constitute what is referred to as a poisoned environment.

Condonation - This relates to director(s) who are aware that discrimination and/or harassment is occurring and who do not demonstrate due diligence in stopping it. Directors have a legally defined role, which

requires them to ensure that the workplace is free from discrimination and harassment. If a director fails to use their authority in appropriate ways when they are aware of potential incidents, it may be found that they “condoned” the behaviour.

Interference -Interfering in any way with an employee’s right to resolve an alleged incident of discrimination and/or harassment, or interfering in the investigation of a complaint of discrimination and/or harassment.

Retaliation – Is anyone who retaliates in any way against a person who has complained of harassment, given evidence in a harassment investigation, or been found guilty of harassment.

Vicarious Liability -The responsibility of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND for the discriminatory conduct of its employees in the course of their employment; e.g. Director(s).

External Resources:

Employees who feel they are being subjected to harassment and/or discrimination have the right to file a complaint with the Human Rights Commission.

If You Are Being Harassed:

Employees who believe that they are being subjected to harassment or discrimination, or who observe of know of a fellow employee or group of employees who are being harassed or discriminated against, may contact either their director or any member of management. Having said this, they are encouraged to first contact their director.

The following steps will tell you what to do if you or someone else is being harassed. This section will also tell you exactly what you can expect from the complaint process.

Make notes -You could speak to the person directly, or write them a letter. If you write a letter, date it and keep a copy. If you speak to them, make notes of the conversation and tell them what the bothersome behaviour was, the date it happened, how you felt, what you did about it, and who else was present, if there were witnesses. Ideally, the harassment will stop. If it does not, continue to keep notes. These will be useful later, if there is an investigation.

Speak up –The first thing to do if you are being harassed is to tell the person harassing you to stop, if you are comfortable with confronting him/her. Let them know that you are embarrassed, humiliated, demeaned, or otherwise bothered by what they are doing or saying. Often, a person may not be aware that her or his behaviour is bothersome, and will change the behaviour once they realize this.

Informal procedures – It may be that communicating directly with the person will not be enough, or that you feel unable to deal with her or him directly. In that case, you can speak to your director, or any member of the directory or management group, whomever you are comfortable with.

The person you speak to will ask you for details of what happened; will make sure you understand the policy, will document your complaint and will ask how you want to proceed. You may ask them to help you write a letter or to speak to the harasser on your behalf. You may ask them to arrange for mediation. If these attempts to informally resolve the situation don't work, you can file a Formal Complaint.

Mediation -If the circumstances permit it, mediation can come before a formal investigation. Mediation is a process by which a third party helps the people involved in the complaint reach a solution which is acceptable to both parties. If you want to work toward a mediated settlement, the CAO will appoint a mediator, from within the organization or, in extraordinary circumstances, from outside it, who is acceptable to both parties and who is not otherwise involved in the complaint.

Either party has the right to refuse mediation. You are the only one who can decide if mediation is appropriate for you. Do not agree to it if you feel pressured into it. If someone suggests mediation but you are uncomfortable with it, you can say so. If mediation does occur, each person has the right to be accompanied and assisted during the sessions by someone with whom they feel comfortable.

Formal Complaints - If the informal or mediation routes for resolving a harassing situation does not succeed or is not appropriate, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND supports its employees in making a formal complaint. It will be investigated, either by a person from within the organization or, in extraordinary circumstances, an external consultant. He or she will interview the complainant, the alleged harasser, and any witnesses. All employees have a responsibility to cooperate in the investigation.

The investigator will need to know the following information so please be prepared to supply:

1. your (the complainant's) name and position;
2. the name and position of the alleged harasser;
3. details of what happened;
4. dates, times, and how often these things occurred;
5. where they happened; and,
6. the names of any witnesses.

If You Are Accused of Harassment:

The following steps will tell you what to do if you have been accused of harassment. This section will also tell you exactly what you can expect from the complaint process.

Informal procedures -If someone complains to you informally about your behaviour, take a good look at it. It may be that without intending to you have spoken or acted in a way that has offended, humiliated, or degraded another person or group of people. It is your responsibility to change your behaviour if it is harassing or offensive to others. You may also want to consider apologizing.

Keep written notes- of any conversation you have where someone suggests you have harassed them or another person including the date it happened, how you felt, what you said or did and who else was present, if there were any witnesses.

If you and the person who is complaining to you are unable to resolve the situation, you can turn to a director or any member of the directory or the Director.

Mediation - If someone has accused you of harassment, and you have not been able to resolve the situation with that person informally, mediation is a possible next step. Mediation may make a Formal Complaint unnecessary. You can ask for mediation; or you may agree if it is suggested to you. You do not

have to agree, however, if you think that you are being pressured into something that does not feel right to you.

If you want to work toward a mediated settlement, the CAO will appoint a qualified mediator, from within the organization or, in extraordinary circumstances, from outside it. If mediation does become part of the informal process, each person has the right to be accompanied and assisted during the sessions by someone of their choosing.

Formal complaints - If someone files a formal complaint about your behaviour, you will have to participate in the investigation. You will be expected to cooperate, give your perspective on what happened, and, if the investigation shows that you did harass another person or group of people, you will be expected to change your behaviour. You will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, even for a first offence.

Separation of the Complainant and Alleged Harasser During Investigation:

If the complainant and the alleged harasser are in a subordinate/director relationship, the director will assign the alleged harasser to a different work area during mediation or investigation. Co-workers may also be separated during an investigation, if necessary.

Management and Investigative Duties:

A good investigation may resolve or eliminate potential problems early. However, an inadequate investigation can do more harm than good. When an accusation of harassment or discrimination is made, the Director should consider the following:

1. There is a duty to escalate the issue. Harassment and discrimination are serious accusations. The director(s) and Director are to immediately escalate accusations of harassment and discrimination to the CAO.
2. There is a duty to investigate in a timely manner. Accusations of harassment and discrimination are to be treated seriously and dealt with in a prompt and sensitive manner. An investigator should be appointed immediately.
3. There is a duty to maintain confidentiality. Complaints specifics should not have a wide audience. Only those in a need to know position should be made aware of the complaint while it is in the investigative stage. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND should protect the confidentiality of the complainant, witnesses and those being investigated as much as is reasonable.
4. There is a duty to elicit specific details. The Investigator is to follow-up with all witnesses or any others potentially being discriminated against or harassed. Without having all the details the complaint cannot be fully assessed and addressed.
5. There is a duty to act. Resolutions must be timely and reasonable given the circumstances.
6. There is a duty to communicate. Findings and actions are to be communicated to the complainant in a timely manner. Broader messages and lessons learned, including that THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND will not tolerate harassment and discrimination, are to be widely communicated to all employees.

Appeals:

A person directly involved in a complaint may appeal to the CAO, in writing, within a week after learning of the decision. If the CAO believes there is sufficient reason to re-investigate or to change the penalty, compensation, or work assignment, the CAO must make that decision within seven (7) business days.

Responsibilities:

Employee - Employees are required to contact their director or the Director. Employees are required to keep written records of unacceptable behaviour, witnesses to incidents, dates and times. All employees are responsible for cooperating in the investigation of a harassment complaint. All employees are responsible for maintaining confidentiality in matters of harassment complaints.

Director- It is the responsibility of the director to ensure that all employees are familiar with this policy, that the workplace is free from harassment and discrimination, and if there is reason to believe harassment or discrimination exists, that it be reported to the Director. The director is required, to participate in any investigation, as required.

Director- The Director will provide the employee and / or the director with counselling, as appropriate. The Director will also ensure that any accusation of harassment or discrimination are fully documented and investigated, as required.

9.0 Holidays

Policy:

Statutory holidays are those specified in the *Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code*. Municipal-Provided holidays are holidays over and above Statutory Holidays. It is the intention of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND to provide holiday pay and time-off to employees who qualify, when possible. Note, scheduling of Statutory- or Municipal-Provided holiday time off is according to operational needs.

Statutory Holidays, Municipal-Provided and Pay:

Statutory holidays are those specified in the *Nova Scotia Labour Standards* and include New Years' Day, Good Friday, Canada Day, Labour Day and Christmas Day.

Municipal-provided holidays are those holidays recognized by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND but not statutory under the *Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code* and include Victoria Day, Natal Day, Thanksgiving, Remembrance Day, Easter Monday and Boxing Day.

Qualifying employees who work a holiday are eligible for a mutually agreed to paid day-and-a-half off within 90 days of the holiday having occurred.

Qualifying employees who do not work the holiday(s) will be granted the day off with regular pay.

If the holiday falls on a weekend, the holiday will be observed on the following Monday.

If the holiday falls within an employee's vacation period, the employee may add the holiday(s) to the end of the vacation period or, subject to the vacation policy, take the day(s) at another approved time.

Holidays and Leaves:

No employee will be eligible for statutory or substituted holidays during a leave of absence or when an employee is being paid under Workers' Compensation.

Religious Holidays:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is fully willing to accommodate an employee's specific religious beliefs to follow their faith as much as possible. Employees must notify their director at least 30 calendar days in advance of their intention to be absent from work without pay due to their need to celebrate a specific religious holiday.

Responsibilities:

Employees - Employees are required to understand the nature of the business and the need to substitute holidays when business circumstances dictate.

Director–The director is responsible to track holiday substitution arrangements.

10.0 Hours of Work and Overtime

Policy:

Regular office hours are 8:30 am to 4:00pm, Monday to Friday. Employees weekly hours of work depend upon their job classification and according to their Employment Agreement. All other employees will work hours as scheduled by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND, including working on weekends. Overtime may be required from time to time and is a condition of employment.

Principles of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND operates according to operational requirements, and overtime may be required. A stable and accountable workforce is critical to meeting customer expectations and providing service delivery excellence. Accordingly, employees will work as scheduled and will not alter their hours without the explicit written consent of the supervisor.

Breaks:

In a standard work day, employees will be granted an unpaid thirty (30) minute lunch break and two (2) paid fifteen (15) minute breaks. Generally lunch breaks will be scheduled at 12noon but scheduling of breaks is contingent upon the break not unduly disrupting the work flow or task at hand. Employees working greater than 9 hours will be granted an additional fifteen (15) minute paid break.

Overtime:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND does require all its employees to work overtime, as needed, and is a condition of employment.

Rest Period

Employees required to work more than 16 hours in a day (a day is defined as a 24 hour period beginning at 8:30 am) or 4 or more hours after 12 midnight are entitled to a rest period of 8 hours. Employees will be credited for normally scheduled working hours that fall within a rest period. Should employees not return to work following their rest period they will be required to submit a time-off request for the remainder of the work day.

Banking of Overtime Hours

Employees are entitled to bank approved overtime hours worked.

Should a qualifying employee exceed their regular scheduled work hours in a week that employee can, with the prior approval of their Director, "bank" those additional hours worked at straight time.

Should a qualifying employee work more than 12 hours in a day (a day is defined as a 24hr period beginning at 8:30 am) or 48 hours in a week that employee can, with the prior written approval of their Director, "bank" those additional hours worked at time-and-a-half (1.5x).

The purpose of banked time is to provide for extra paid time-off in lieu of overtime worked. Should the employee have banked time and cease to be employed by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND the employee will be paid-out for all banked time.

Employees may bank up to a total of 21 hours at any given time or as approved by the Director.

Note, employees cannot bank time from working lunches or breaks. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND expects all employees to take their lunches and breaks. If, due to time constraints, an employee is required to work through their lunch then that employee should take their lunch thereafter.

Overtime accumulated for evening meetings must be taken the afternoon of the meeting or the following day depending on the length of the meeting.

Conferences, and travel to and from conferences, do not qualify for overtime unless expressly stated by the Director.

Meals:

Employees required to work more than 1.5 hours beyond the end of their regular scheduled shift will be provided a meal or be eligible for a meal allowance.

Employees called in after hours or working a day off will be entitled to a meal or expense after four hours worked and every 4 hours thereafter.

Weekend Coverage:

The Public Works department may schedule employees for weekend coverage and on call. Employees performing weekend coverage shall be compensated for the time spent performing the field checks and for being on-call at a rate to be set by the CAO. The on-call scheduling shall be at the discretion of the Director of Public Works.

Responsibilities:

Employees – Employees are to work their scheduled hours or seek explicit written permission to deviate from their director.

11.0 Leave of Absence (LOA)

Policy:

From time to time employees will seek, for their own reasons, leaves of absences. No leave of absence will be granted for the employee to take other employment.

Principles of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND recognizes that employees have obligations outside of the workplace. Employees may be granted a leave of absence for certain situations, outside of those covered by vacation days.

A leave of absence is considered a period of not less than 30 days and not more than one year, except as directed otherwise under law; e.g. *Reservists' Leave, Maternity Leave, etc.*

The awarding of any leave of absence is based on the nature of the request, legislative requirements, and the operational needs of the municipality and at the sole and unfettered discretion of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND.

Guidelines:

Except those leaves of absences granted under law, any other leave of absence is at the discretion of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND according to operational needs and the nature of the request. To be eligible for a leave of absence the following conditions must be met:

1. The employee may be eligible for a leave of absence after one year of service with THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND;
2. The employee must complete and submit a written request to the director, no less than 30 days before the anticipated commencement of the leave. The request must include the anticipated start of the leave and a firm return to work date;
3. The leave must be no less than 30 days and no more than one year, unless otherwise directed under law;

4. Any employee granted a leave of absence in excess of 365 days shall not be guaranteed immediate or full time employment upon their return, nor shall their position be protected, unless legally obligated otherwise;
5. Employees must take all earned paid-time off prior to the commencement of the leave;
6. A leave of absence will not be granted for an employee to work at another job, with the explicit exception of those employees performing Reservists duty;
7. An unpaid leave of absence will not be granted for sick time, the employee must be in receipt of EI Disability or Long Term Disability benefits;
8. An unpaid leave of absence will not be granted for an employee to take other employment; and,
9. Employees who are unable to return to work after the approved leave period must immediately notify the director or be possibly terminated for failing to return from an approved leave of absence. Any continuation of leave of absence is at the sole and unfettered discretion of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND.

Legislated Leaves:

The *Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code* legislates a number of leaves including the *Reservists Leave*, *Compassionate Care* and *Parental (Maternity and Paternity) Leave*. For full details related to these leaves and other leaves, contact your director or see the *Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code*.

Reservists may have an open ended leave provided they are being called to active duty in an operational theatre and provided they provide THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND with documentation substantiating their call out for active duty.

Paid Time Off, Length of Service and Benefits:

Before being granted any unpaid leave of absence, the employee must take all earned paid time-off, e.g. paid vacation time earned but not yet taken.

Note, the employee will continue to accrue length of service during any approved leave.

Employees may choose to keep their benefits during any approved leave of absence but will be responsible for 100% of the premiums; including the employers' and the employee's share. Employees wishing to keep advance and must provide monthly post-dated cheques for the length of the leave.

Responsibilities:

Employees - Employees are responsible to notify their director as soon as possible of any request for a leave of absence. Further, it is the employee's responsibility to provide all documentation as per this policy or as required under law.

Directors- The directors are to ensure all legislated intentions are met and that full documentation supporting the request is filed within the employee's personnel file.

12.0 Maternity, Child Care, and Adoption Leave

Policy:

In accordance with the *Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code*, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND provides for Maternity and Child Care Leave. This policy outlines the specifics around time-off and benefits.

Principles of Policy:

Nova Scotia workers are eligible for 17 weeks of Maternity Leave and 35 weeks of Child Care (including adoption) Leave to a maximum of 52 weeks of unpaid leave.

Eligibility:

The employee must have completed one year of continuous full time employment to be eligible to receive maternity, child care or adoption leave.

Leave Provisions:

Maternity leave commences not more than 16 weeks in advance of the expected delivery date. Only the birthing mother is eligible for the 17 weeks unpaid Maternity Leave. Either biological or adoptive parents are eligible to receive 35 weeks unpaid Child Care Leave upon the birth or adoption of one or more children.

Non-birthing parents may have up to three (3) full days off in conjunction with the birth or adoption of their children.

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is entitled to at least four (4) weeks advance written notice to the beginning of any Maternity, Childcare or Adoption Leave, and whatever notice is practicable for the adoptive parent(s).

At least four (4) weeks written advance notice of returning from a Maternity, Child Care or Adoption Leave is required.

When the employee returns to work upon the expiration of Maternity, Child Care or Adoption Leave, the employee shall resume work in the same position they held prior to the commencement of the leave, or if that position is no longer available, in a comparable position at not less than the same wage, schedule and benefits.

Leave Top Up:

The Municipality will top the employee's Maternity or Child Care Leave to 75% of the employee's regular wages to a maximum of 17 weeks.

Responsibilities:

Employees – Employees will provide notice per this policy.

13.0 Personal Leave (Family and Floater) Days**Policy:**

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND recognizes that employee's may, from time-to-time, be absent from the workplace for non-vacation reasons; i.e. personal appointments, family illness, family appointments, etc. Accordingly, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND has provided for two(2) paid family days and two (2) floater days per year.

Principles of Policy:

A personal day is considered a personal leave day. It can be used for any reason including medical or dentist appointments, family sick time, family appointments, etc.

Personal Days and the Probationary Period:

Personal days will be pro-rated in the year of hire.

Request Procedure:

Personal days can only be taken with prior approval from the director. Except under extraordinary circumstances, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND requires minimally 48 hours' notice of a personal day request. In the event of an extraordinary event, the director may approve a personal/family day with less than 48 hours' notice or retroactively. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND reserves the right to determine what constitutes an extraordinary circumstance. All requests for Personal Days will be fairly considered, however, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND also reserves the right to deny a request for a floater/family day based on operational need.

Restrictions:

No employee will be allowed unpaid time-off if they have paid Personal Days available to them.

Family days cannot be used in conjunction with vacation days off nor with Holidays; Floater days may be used in conjunction with vacation days off and Holidays.

Family days will not be carried over from year to year.

In the event of voluntary or involuntary termination, no Employee will be eligible to be paid out for any personal days not taken.

Responsibilities:

Employee - It is the employee's responsibility to book off personal days per this policy.

Director - It is the director's responsibility to duly consider all requests for personal/family days and to accurately track all paid time off.

14.0 Probation Period

Purpose:

This policy outlines the intent of the probationary period and provides guidelines around same.

Principles of Policy:

All newly hired, rehired or newly promoted employees are subject to a six (6) month(or 1040 hour) probationary period. The designation of this time frame does not constitute an obligation on behalf of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND to retain the employee until the end of the period specified, rather, the intent of this period is to give THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND the opportunity to evaluate the employee's capabilities, work habits and overall performance against the job requirements of the position. If THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND deems the employee's performance to be unacceptable, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND can dismiss the employee, with cause, or extend the probationary period.

Extension of the Probationary Period:

If the director determines that the probationary period was not sufficient to thoroughly evaluate the employee's overall performance, they may extend the period for up to an additional three (3) months. Any extension of the probationary period must be presented to the employee in writing, outlining performance deficiencies, actions to be taken and expected outcomes must be noted. An extension of the probationary period is at the sole discretion of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND. There will be *no change* in remuneration for any employee who enters into a subsequent probationary period.

Alternate Probationary Periods:

Some positions within THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND require a longer than six (6) month period to assess the employee's performance. In the event of a longer probationary period, the Employment Contract will clearly state the period requirement.

Responsibilities:

Employees - Open communications are expected and all employees are to bring to the attention of their director any situations or issues that are a barrier to their performance during the probationary period, for consideration only. Employees are to readily accept performance feedback as provided by their director and strive to improve.

Director – The director is to objectively and consistently coach and assess employees' performance against the expectations of the job. The director should document performance deficiencies and actions taken. Employees are to be advised of any jeopardy surrounding their continued employment status.

15.0 Progressive Discipline and Coaching

Policy:

It is the policy of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND to be fair and just in dealing with its employees. Under certain circumstances it may become necessary to initiate formal Progressive Discipline in order to ensure that the workplace remains professional, safe and effective. This policy provides a clear framework to address employee behavioural and / or performance issues that do, or have the potential to, negatively impact the employment relationship.

Principles of Policy:

Progressive discipline is intended to constructively assist employees in meeting workplace standards in a timely manner through a fair and transparent process; including attendance, see *Attendance* policy.

The expectation is that by clearly identifying and focusing on the performance and/or behavioural issue, and by taking timely and decisive corrective actions, the employee will reach and maintain the required standards of performance and/or behaviour.

Formal Progressive Discipline could ultimately result in termination should the desired standards of performance and/or behaviour not be met and / or maintained or should the behaviour and/or performance implications be so egregious as to undermine the employment relationship.

Formal Progressive Discipline should be documented using Appendix "D" Employee Contact form.

Performance or Behavioural Issues Which Could Warrant Progressive Discipline:

The clear identification of performance and/or behavioural issues is paramount to taking timely and decisive corrective actions. Examples of performance and/or behavioural issues which might result in Progressive Discipline include, but are not limited to:

- Neglect or unsatisfactory performance of duty;
- Failure to comply with the established Policies and Procedures;
- Insubordination or not following direction as given by a director;
- Excessive and / or unexcused absenteeism;
- Unprofessional conduct including poor customer service or work quality;
- Rude, abusive or obscene language;
- Inappropriate or unauthorized use of company resources; and
- Instances of fraud, theft, sabotage, violence, harassment or other wilful and/or serious inappropriate behaviour or misconduct could result in immediate termination.

For the Director - Items to Consider Prior to Issuing Progressive Discipline:

The director must have a clear understanding of the performance and/or behavioural issue(s) before issuing Progressive Discipline. To this end, the director should consider whether:

1. the employee has been properly trained in the area of the deficiency;
2. the performance and/or behavioural issue has been clearly identified and addressed and not misrepresented or overlooked previously;
3. the employee has made a concerted effort towards improvement and some improvement, if only incremental, has been noted;
4. the employee has made mention of an impediment outside of their control which is hindering performance and/or behaviour;
5. the employee has been made aware that if improvement is not achieved and maintained that the employee will be subject to progressive discipline, up to and including termination;
6. documentation exists to substantiate any or all of the above

Due Process:

As a rule, no employee shall be dismissed or given any formal warning without first having been informally coached and given an opportunity to improve his/her performance. Having said this, serious breaches of policy or performance, or the commission of an offence, may result in escalated discipline or immediate termination. Any escalation of discipline, or immediate termination, is the sole and unfettered right of the CAO.

Informal Coaching:

The majority of employees come to work each day wanting to do a good job. Even good employees require feedback. Informal Coaching is the verbal feedback provided by the director before the issue at hand is considered to be serious enough to be escalated and formally addressed through the different levels of Progressive Discipline.

A director shall informally coach an employee until the point that the director feels there is no improvement or if improvement has not been sustained.

Formal Progressive Discipline Process:

As a rule, only the director will document and deliver First, Second or Last Chance Warnings. In the absence of the director, documentation and delivery will be delegated.

Formal Progressive Discipline should be documented using Appendix "D" Employee Contact form.

Level 1 – First Warning: According to the deficiency, the director is to first verbally coach the employee and is to:

1. Clearly identify the performance and/or behavioural issue, and clearly state the required performance and/or behavioural standard;
2. Establish with the employee if there is any mitigating circumstance to the issue;
3. Coach the employee and provide tangible suggestions for improvement;
4. Establish expected timelines for improvement and follow-up meetings, as well as the potential for progressive action should the employee not meet required performance and/or behavioural standards;
5. Document the discussion and file within the employee's personnel file.

The employee will remain at the First stage as long as the director is satisfied that the employee is demonstrating improvement. What constitutes “improvement” is at the discretion of the director.

Level 2 – Second Warning: Should the behavioural and/or performance issue continue, the director is to:

1. Clearly identify the performance and/or behavioural issue, the required performance and/or behavioural standard, coaching efforts to-date, the expected timeline for improvement and the potential for progressive action should the employee not meet required performance and/or behavioural standards;
2. Establish with the employee if there is any mitigating circumstance to the issue;
3. Coach the employee on the required actions or changes to be made and seek the employee’s commitment to improvement and subsequent follow-up meetings;
4. Document the issues, the impact of these issues, the warning and the actions to be taken and by what time and file within the employee’s personnel file.

The employee will remain at the Second Warning level as long the director is satisfied that the employee is demonstrating improvement. What constitutes “improvement” is at the discretion of the director.

Level 3 – Last Chance Warning: Should the behavioural and/or performance issue continue, the director is to:

1. Discuss with the employee the behavioural or performance issue, the actions taken to-date including coaching and verbal warning initiatives;
2. Clearly identify the actions the employee needs to take immediately to reach the desired performance and/or behavioural standards, stressing the urgency of the situation;
3. Clearly and firmly state that failure to achieve required performance and/or behavioural standards will result in progressive actions up to and including dismissal;
4. Document the issues, the impact of the issues, the warning and the actions to be taken and by what time. Forward this documentation and any accompanying or supporting documentation for filing within the employee’s personnel file.

The employee will remain at the Last Chance Warning stage as long as the director is satisfied that the employee is demonstrating improvement. What constitutes “improvement” is at the discretion of the director.

Level 4 – Termination: Should the employee not reach or maintain the required performance and/or behavioural standards, and it becomes necessary to terminate an employee, the director must first seek the approval of the CAO.

At the termination meeting the director will explicitly tell the employee why the decision has been made to terminate the employee’s employment. Prior to termination, the CAO should ensure that:

1. That all appropriate steps and procedures have been followed;
2. That the employee has been afforded appropriate opportunities for improvement, without impediments;

3. That all necessary documentation, including termination documentation, has been completed; and
4. All documentation related to the termination will be placed within the employee's personnel file.

Duration of Progressive Discipline:

Progressive Discipline is administered on a rolling 12 months unless the offence is of a quality or quota nature in which case Progressive Discipline is administered on a rolling 24 months. After 12 months of maintaining required performance and/or behavioural standards, the specific Progressive Discipline will be retired. (For example, if an employee receives a First Warning in December, that First Warning will be retired the following December provided that the behaviour and/or performance issue has not been escalated to a higher level of Progressive Discipline.)

Key Elements of Progressive Discipline:

- Documentation of previous discussions around performance and/or behavioural issues including consequences of failure to improve both prior to a formal Progressive Discipline, of the actual Progressive Discipline rendered and the employee's progress (or not) is critical;
- The director is to ensure the employee has received a copy of all disciplinary documents;
- If the employee refuses to sign any disciplinary document, the director is to place his initials on the signature line and indicate the employee refused to sign;
- If during the course of Progressive Discipline, a separate and new performance and/or behavioural issue arises, the director is to ensure that separate documentation is used to record this issue and the employee is placed on a separate Progressive Discipline, if warranted;
- The employee will remain at the current level of Progressive Discipline as long the director is satisfied that the employee is demonstrating improvement, even incremental improvement. The employee will face higher Progressive Discipline levels when there is a failure to improve the performance and/or behavioural standard. What constitutes "improvement" is at the discretion of the director;
- Should the specific performance and/or behavioural issue resurface after the retirement of a Progressive Discipline, the employee will re-enter the Progressive Discipline process and start anew.
- Formal Progressive Discipline should be documented using Appendix "D" Employee Contact form.

Documentation:

Documentation ensures a proper record in support of future discipline or dismissal. All disciplinary actions, including coaching sessions, verbal and formal warnings, must be recorded in writing and safeguarded in the employee's file.

Formal Progressive Discipline should be documented using Appendix "D" Employee Contact form.

Responsibilities:

Employees - It is the employee's responsibility to meet all required performance and/or behavioural standards, and to utilize all available tools and resources to do so. The employee is expected to be open to constructive feedback, acknowledge performance and/or behavioural issues and actively work with their director and the director to meet all required standards.

Director – The director is expected to clearly and objectively articulate any performance and/or behavioural feedback. The director is to provide the employee with a copy of all disciplinary documentation.

16.0 Sick Days

Policy:

Approved sick leave is intended to protect an employee's employment. Sick time will be managed in keeping with this policy and the *Attendance Management* policy. Sick time may be taken in half hour increments.

Principles of Policy:

From time-to-time, employees will be sick or will sustain non-work related injuries. Periodically, an employee will become incapacitated for a period of time. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND endeavours to assist an employee, who has been out of the workforce because of non-work related sickness or injury, to return to full duties as soon as possible, where possible.

Provisions of Policy:

The following guidelines will be applied with respect to sick leave:

- A Doctor's Certificate indicating when she/he is expected to return to work may be required after being absent for three (3) consecutive work days, or if there is a trend in absenteeism. The Doctor's Certificate must clearly indicate whether the employee is fit to carry-out their duties and an expected return to work date.
- THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND will make every effort to return an employee cleared for full duties to the position they vacated. Should that position not be available, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND will ensure that the employee is provided with comparable employment.
- If the employee does not return to work, when medically cleared by their attending physician, the employee may be in a position of discipline, up to and including the point of termination.
- Should an employee not be medically cleared to return to full duties, then THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND may attempt to accommodate the employee. Any accommodation is the sole and unfettered right of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND and might include the reassignment of the employee to another position, shorter hours for a period of time, etc.
- Should the employee request alternative employment and no suitable alternative employment be available the employee may be terminated for shortage of work.

Paid Sick Days:

All Full Time Permanent employees are entitled to up to 18 paid sick days a year. Sick time is intended to be used because the employee is sick or to attend a Doctor or Specialist appointment. Employees requiring other time off may use paid vacation time or come to some other documented arrangement with their director; see *Attendance Policy Exceptions*.

Sick time eligibility will be prorated in the year of hire.

Sick days may accumulate to a maximum to a maximum of 115 days.

Sick time may be taken in half hour increments.

Sick Day Notification Procedure:

A sick employee not intending to be at work as scheduled will advise the director via telephone no less than one (1) hour before the start of their scheduled work shift. The employee will indicate the anticipated length of absence. Should their director not be available the employee may leave a voice mail but must follow-up with their director later that day.

Long Term Medical Accommodation:

In instances of long term illness, where an employee has received a workplace accommodation (e.g. shift preference, etc), the employee will be required to re-submit a Doctor's Certificate every four (4) months thereby providing continued medical evidence that the accommodation is required.

Replacement Personnel:

Replacement personnel shall be chosen according to required skills and qualifications. Replacement personnel shall be informed that their assignment is temporary and when the sick or injured employee returns the temporary employee will be returned to their former position, be re-assigned to another position or be terminated for lack of work.

Responsibilities:

Employees - Employees are to advise the director of any absence in accordance with this policy, the *Attendance Management* policy and provide documentation as requested by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND.

Director – The director is to encourage employees to attend work as scheduled, to offer assistance to any employee who is not attending work regularly and to consistently administer this policy.

17.0 WCB Leave

Policy:

In the event that an employee experiences work related injury or illness, it is THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND policy to take all reasonable steps to return injured and ill employees to their pre-injury job, and as quickly as possible. Having said this THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND retains the sole and unfettered right to return, or not, an employee to the workforce.

Principles of Policy:

In the unfortunate event that an employee is injured at work, helping the injured worker return to work as soon as is safely possible is in everyone's best interest. It helps the employee return to the life they knew before the injury and helps THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND by returning an experienced employee to their labour pool. Accordingly, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND will attempt to reintegrate the injured employees into the workforce and has established a Return to Work program for that purpose.

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND may commit the resources necessary to implement and monitor the Return to Work program, however the success of the program depends on the support and commitment of its employees. It is mandatory that all employees take part in the Return to Work Program, unless Workers' Compensation deems the injured or ill employee physically incapable of doing so.

Where the employee is unable to return to their pre-injury job THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is committed to cooperate in returning an injured employee to safe and suitable alternative employment, consistent with their functional abilities. Alternative work provisions, or accommodations, are at the sole and unfettered discretion of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND.

WCB Leaves and the Director's Role:

Employees, who are unable to perform assigned duties due to an injury or illness sustained in the workplace, as accepted by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND, shall be placed on a WCB leave. While an employee is out on a WCB leave, the director is to maintain regular communications with the employee; providing the employee with THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND / operational / staffing updates, ensuring the employee is returning to work as scheduled, and, generally, inquiring into the employee's well-being. Regular communications to be minimally one time every two weeks.

Return to Work Process:

Employees who are injured in the workplace must immediately report their injury to their director. The director shall notify the Director. The director, in consultation with the employee, will fully and accurately complete the *WCB Accident Report* and submit the form to the Director for review. If the employee sees a medical professional the Director will forward the WCB form to WCB within 5 days of the injury or illness.

Thereafter submitting the *WCB* form, The Director will liaise with WCB and the injured employee to reintegrate the injured employee in the work place, as early as possible, using the following three (3) steps as a guide:

(1) The injured employee will work with WCB, in an expedient manner, and will set up a *physical abilities assessment* and will ask WCB to forward the assessment to the Director.

(2) The injured employee will actively and attentively participate in all prescribed medical treatment, per WCB and / or the attending physician or medical practitioner. Note: malingering or refusing to participate in the return to work program could result in discipline, up to and including termination.

(3) The Director and the director will review progress assessments and determine if and when there are opportunities for accommodation. Accommodation could mean a change to work schedule or work hours, a reassignment of duties, or the provision of specific tools or instruments to assist in the completion of the work. Any accommodation is at the sole and unfettered discretion of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND and any accommodation may be cancelled at any time.

Replacement Personnel:

Replacement personnel shall be chosen according to required skills and qualifications. Replacement personnel shall be informed that their assignment is temporary and when the sick or injured employee returns the temporary employee will be returned to their former position, be re-assignment to another position or be terminated for lack of work.

Long Term Medical Accommodation:

In instances of long term illness, where an employee has received a workplace accommodation (e.g. shift preference, etc), the employee will be required to re-submit a Doctor's Certificate every four (4) months thereby providing continued medical evidence that the accommodation is required.

Responsibilities:

Employee - It is the responsibility of all employees to immediately report work place injury or illness to their director and to actively participate in this Return to Work program. The employee is also responsible to report to the director any change in return to work plans. Note, any employee found to malingering will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Director – The director is expected to understand and value the importance of returning an injured employee to work and must provide assistance, where called upon. The director will immediately notify the Director of any workplace injuries, illnesses or accidents. The director will complete the WCB accident report form and submit it to the Director. During the period that the injured employee is off work the director will be responsible to make regular contact with the employee. The director will, when possible, work with the employee and return the employee to the workplace and make accommodations, where feasible. The director will make monitor and make suggestions to revise the employee's work plan, as needed.

The Director – The Director will review and submit required documents to WCB and liaise with the employee and WCB, as needed.

18.0 Storms and Natural Disasters

Policy:

This policy provides a guideline for continued operations in the event of a storm or a natural disaster.

Principles of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is committed to the health and safety of all employees. During storms or during or after a natural disaster, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND will consult with local authorities on the conditions of the environment including road conditions. Should the environment be deemed safe and roads remain open, the expectation is that employees will make all reasonable efforts to report to work. Employees unable to report to work, despite all reasonable efforts, must immediately notify their Director, may use available paid time off and will be dealt with individually and according to the “Exception to Policy” section below.

Exception to Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND reserves the right to review and consider the ability of peers to report to work, road conditions, other industry closings and the attendance records of individual employees in making a determination as to whether an employee has made all reasonable efforts to report to work, and, hence, whether the absence is excusable or not. In the event the absence is deemed inexcusable, the employee’s absence will be managed according to the provision of the *Attendance Management* policy.

The Municipality reserves the right to open or re-open any facility during the storm day depending upon operational needs. Employees unable to attend work may use a vacation day.

Should the office be closed employees scheduled to work will be paid. Should the office remain open but the scheduled employee is unable to get to work employees may use a vacation or floater day.

Should the office be closed and the employee is on a scheduled vacation that employee may call their Director that morning and cancel their scheduled vacation day and that vacation day will be reimbursed.

Responsibilities:

Employee - Employees are responsible for making all reasonable attempts to report to work during a storm or after a natural disaster. Should an employee be unable to report to work or be late coming to work, he/she is responsible to telephone the director and advise of same.

Directors - In the event of a closure, the Director will notify their employees.

The CAO - It is at the discretion of the CAO to close the operation, or not.

19.0 Substance Usage Policy

Policy:

Being at work “under the influence” (of drugs, alcohol and / or controlled substances for which they do not have a prescription) is contrary to the environment THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND wishes to nurture, is forbidden and will not be tolerated. Similarly, reporting for work smelling of alcohol will be considered as under the influence. Any employee “under the influence” will be asked to immediately leave the premises and will face discipline up to and including dismissal, even for a first offence. Employees are to refrain from using alcohol, drugs or controlled substances for which they do not have a prescription for six (6) hours before the start of their shift. Employees have available to them an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and are encouraged to seek help as appropriate or as directed as a condition of continued employment.

Principles of Policies:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and professional work environment. This policy outlines the procedures and consequences of any employee at work while “under the influence”.

Procedures When Under the Influence:

Any employee under the influence will be asked to leave the premises immediately. The employee will be offered safe transportation home.

The incident will be documented (including date, time, witnesses, impact, previous incidents, etc.) by the supervisor and reported to the department Director and CAO at the very earliest opportunity.

Upon reporting back to work, the employee the CAO will require the employee to attend a counselling meeting with their supervisor. The employee may be required to seek professional assistance, as offered under the EAP or other professional assistance, or face progressive discipline.

Should the employee repeatedly report to work under the influence, or continue the usage during working hours, the employee will face escalated progressive discipline up to and including termination.

Note, where no supervisor is present, and a fellow employee notices signs of impairment or the distinct odour of alcohol, the fellow employee will notify another supervisor, the department Director or the CAO immediately.

Suspected Addictions Procedures:

Employees are advised it is their responsibility to seek assistance before alcohol or drug problems lead to disciplinary action or termination, and are encouraged to utilize all resources available through the EAP or other professional assistance as soon as they recognize an issue. Employees confiding their own substance abuse problems to a supervisor or peer should be referred to the Director, who may assist to arrange counselling treatment as provided through the EAP or other professional assistance.

Employees may be granted a leave of absence for treatment purposes to correct a substance abuse problem. Employees who refuse or fail to submit to treatment will be subject to dismissal. Employees must sign an Appendix “A” Waiver to Monitor Treatment hereby giving the Director permission to monitor any treatment.

Employees in a disciplinary situation who successfully complete a substance abuse rehabilitation program will be reinstated to their previous job, or a similar job, for a six (6) months probationary period provided they successfully maintain the preventive course of treatment as prescribed by the program. Employees will be required to provide proof of success in the program before returning to work. Appendix "A" gives the Director permission to monitor any treatment as needed. Employees who do not follow the prescribed treatments and re-offend will be subject to termination.

Reassignment and Alcohol / Drug Testing:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment. Employees reporting to work under the influence of alcohol, illicit narcotics or controlled substances for which they do not have a prescription, or using same while at work or while on premises, or confiding in a substance abuse problems, may be re-assigned, either temporarily or permanently, depending upon an availability of alternative work for which they are qualified, or be temporarily laid-off for shortage of work.

In instances of accidents, injury or near-misses wherein the employee is believed to be under the influence of alcohol, illicit narcotics or controlled substances for which they do not have a prescription the employee may be re-assigned and / or drug tested. Re-assignment is dependent upon there being an availability of alternative work for which the employee is qualified. Employees failing a drug and / or alcohol test will face discipline to the point of termination.

EAP:

EAP or Employee Assistance Program is an employer provided confidential benefit. EAP is a short term, fully confidential counselling arrangement. EAP provides employees counselling and support in the areas of:

- Substance Abuse and Addiction
- Anger or Behavioural Management
- Child Care or Elder Care
- Divorce or Separation
- Death or Grief
- Trauma
- Finances

Employees may access the EAP by calling the EAP number as found within their Benefits Handbooks.

Responsibilities:

Employee - No employee is to be at work under the influence. The employee is to participate fully in any related alcohol or drug use/addictions discussions with their supervisor and seek professional counselling, as directed and as a condition of continued employment.

Director – The Director is to immediately report any drug or alcohol infraction to the CAO and to document all details of the incident. The Director is to consistently apply this policy and treat any employee's infractions as confidential.

The CAO – The CAO may monitor an employee’s treatment program and ensure all facets of this policy are adhered to. The CAO reserves the sole and unfettered right to arrange for substance abuse treatment, or not.

20.0 Tools and Equipment Policy

Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND employees are required to have, regularly inspect and maintain tools and equipment of their trade.

Principles of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND’s primary concern is safety for their trades employees and as a condition of employment they are required to know, understand and abide by all Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). As a part of sound OHS, trades employees are required to have the specific tools and equipment of their trades. Tool and equipment requirements are according to the level of apprenticeship. *Please see the NS OHS Act or Apprenticeship NS for more information*

Inspection and Maintenance:

Employees will visually inspect tools and equipment prior to use. From time-to-time employees will conduct a more thorough inspection. Tools or equipment in poor repair will not be used and will be immediately replaced.

No employee will remove any tool safety device.

Directors will, from time-to-time, and at least one time per year, inspect employees’ tool, ensuring tools and equipment are in good condition and are safe. Any deficiencies are to be noted and the employee is not to carry-out the job if the tool or equipment is deemed unsatisfactory.

Responsibilities:

Employees – All employees will have, maintain and regularly inspect tools and equipment as outlined within this policy and according to apprenticeship level.

Directors – The Director is required to periodically inspect employees’ tool and equipment, ensuring tools and equipment are in good condition and are safe, and document deficiencies.

21.0 Training and Development Policy

Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND recognizes the necessity and benefit from the systematic upgrading of capabilities, knowledge, qualifications, skills and proficiency of its employees. It is therefore the policy of

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND that courses, seminars and conferences which will enhance or increase the knowledge and skills of employees, and thus their value to the Municipality, be strongly encouraged. When necessary, employees will be given time off from work with pay.

Principles of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND recognizes the importance to provide for the continued development of skills and knowledge of all members of the municipal staff in order to help them perform their tasks at peak performance and to meet future skill needs. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND also recognizes a need to provide an equitable method of allocating municipal financial resources to meet staff training and developmental initiatives.

Definitions:

Eligible Training Program - Any program which is related to an employee’s present or potential position with the municipality, at the approval of the Director.

Tuition Amount – All costs related to training including costs of tuition, registration, lodging/travel/per diem and wages paid during the period of training.

Return to Service and Repayment Agreement:

Whenever an employee is approved to participate in a training program, there will be a written Agreement between that employee and THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND; see Appendix “B”. The ‘Return to Service Agreement’ is signed by both the employee and the Director. The agreement will be based on the assumptions set out below:

<u>Tuition Amount</u>	<u>Service Requirement</u>
Up to \$1000	No return of service required
Greater than \$1000 to \$5,000	12 months
Greater than \$5,000	24 months

In the event the employee (1) does not successfully complete the training activity, (2) leaves prior to the completion of the service requirement or (3) withdraws from the program, the employee will be required to reimburse THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND for tuition amounts according to the table below:

	Up to \$1,000	\$1000 - \$5,000	Over \$5,000
Within 6 months = 100%	0	100 %	100 %
6-12 months = 80%	0	80 %	80 %

12-18 months = 60%	0	0	60 %
18-24 months = 40%	0	0	40 %

The Return to Service and Repayment Agreement may be terminated by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND without prior notice to the employee if any breach of this Agreement occurs. This Agreement may also be terminated by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND where the employee has not yet started studies, with notice effective immediately.

General Guidelines:

Training – As a rule, training should be completed outside normal working hours. Any exceptions must be approved by the CAO and department Director.

Return To Service Agreement - Employees should be given an explanation of the Agreement and its implications before signing. Action to obtain repayment from an employee, if required, should be taken promptly.

Training Funding Opportunities:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND may pay for some, all or part of the following. Whether to pay any of the following, or not, is at the full discretion of the CAO: In the event the employee is seeking reimbursement detailed receipts are required. Funding opportunities are as follows:

- Tuition, registration, admission and other institutional costs;
- Travel costs, including gas, hotel and per diem; but not including room service, entertainment, motor vehicle violations, and any other cost not approved by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND;
- Course materials including texts books.

Responsibilities:

Employees – Employees are responsible to make productive use of the staff training and development opportunities available and to recognize that upgrading and development is important and in some cases an integral part of the job. Upon completion of a training session they are to provide a brief written report to the Department Head, after attending/completing a training session, of the benefits attained.

Department Heads – Department Heads will be responsible to work cooperatively and effectively with the CAO to determine training needs, to establish a suitable training budget and to determine the effectiveness of training programs. They will help to ensure that each staff person has the opportunity and encouragement to acquire, through training, the skills necessary to meet their current and future job requirements,; that the Chief Administrative Officer is notified of all courses taken by departmental employees and to approve, consistent with the intent of this policy the participation of departmental staff in training and development programs that occur on the municipality’s time and or expense. Upon completion

of an employee's training session they will also be responsible to provide to the CAO with a brief written report of the benefits attained.

CAO – The CAO will develop, with input and assistance from the Department Heads, an annual program of staff training and development which will state, in general, the areas that need to be addressed through training. The CAO will also approve the participation of Department Heads in staff training and development programs that occurs on the Municipality's time and/or expense; liaise with educational institutions and to inform Department Heads and other staff of the availability of training and development programs; monitor, with the Department Heads, the effectiveness of training programs; establish training files and to record training programs taken by employees and finally; and, keep Council informed of the training and development program.

Council – The Council is responsible to approve, or not, as part of the overall budget approval process, an allotment that the Municipal Council considers appropriate for staff training and development. Further, Council will also provide encouragement and support to staff for training and development activities. Finally, Council will approve, or not, as part of the overall budget approval process, an appropriate allotment for the training and development needs of Council.

22.0 Vacation

Policy:

For the purpose of administration, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND treats vacation time-off and vacation pay as two distinct items.

Principles of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND recognizes the need of employees to have a work – life balance. Vacation time-off is one key to maintaining this balance. This policy is a guideline for the awarding of vacation time-off and vacation pay for employees.

Principles of Vacation Time-Off:

For the purpose of vacation time-off, the vacation year is January 1 to December 31.

Employees must provide at least two (2) weeks' notice of their intent to take vacation time-off. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND will attempt to schedule vacation time-off as requested. Having said this, requests for vacation time-off are approved on a first come, first served basis and according to operational needs and at the discretion of the department Director.

Employees must send an email and get confirmation from their director when requesting vacation time-off.

Employees may carry-over up to two (2) weeks' vacation time-off from one year to the next. .

Vacation Time-off Entitlement:

In the year of hire, employees will be eligible for prorated vacation time-off. Proration will be calculated based on the date of hire and a fifteen days' vacation time-off entitlement. E.g. an employee who starts April 1 will be entitled to 11.25 days (9 months is 75% of the year and 15 vacation time-off days times 75% is 11.25 days).

In their first full year of employment an employee shall be entitled to fifteen (15) days of vacation time-off.

An employee who has completed five (5) consecutive years of employment as of January 1 shall be entitled to twenty (20) days of vacation time-off.

An employee who has completed ten (10) consecutive years of employment as of January 1 shall be entitled to twenty five (25) days of vacation time-off.

An employee who has completed fifteen (15) consecutive years of employment as of January 1 shall be entitled to thirty (30) days of vacation time-off.

An employee who has completed twenty five (25) consecutive years of employment as of January 1 shall be entitled to thirty five (35) days of vacation time-off.

Vacation Carry Over:

Employees can carry over up to two weeks of vacation upon approval from the department Director.

Employees Absent from the Workplace:

If an employee is absent for less than 30 calendar days, their vacation time-off entitlement will not be affected. If an employee's absence extends beyond 30 days their vacation time-off entitlement will remain the same but their vacation pay will not continue to accrue, with the exception of Maternity and Paternity leave, per the *Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code*.

Responsibilities:

Director – The director is responsible to ensure that all employees schedule vacation time each year and do not schedule more vacation time than the employee is entitled to. The director is to track all approved vacation time-off and carry over requests. Finally, the director is to fairly consider any change in scheduled vacation time-off as requested by the employee.

Employees - Employees are fully responsible to provide at least two (2) weeks' notice to the director to schedule vacation time-off.

23.0 Voluntary and Involuntary Termination

Policy:

It is the policy of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND to be fair and just when dealing with any employee termination, whether voluntary termination or involuntary.

Principles of Policy:

It is an unfortunate fact that, for any number of reasons, an employee's employment may be terminated, for either voluntary or involuntary reasons. Should an employee terminate, or be terminated, THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND endeavour to treat all employees with dignity and respect.

Voluntary Termination:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND will have considered the employee to have voluntarily terminated their employment under the following circumstances:

- Written resignation;
- Failure to return from any approved leave on the date specified without prior reasonable explanation;
- Failure to report to work, as scheduled, without explanation for three (3) consecutive work days.

Involuntarily Termination:

No director shall terminate any employee without first having sought and received the permission of the CAO.

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND retains the sole and unfettered right to terminate an employee, with or without cause. Some reasons for termination, though by no means a comprehensive list, include:

- Poor performance;
- Misconduct;
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness;
- Acts of discrimination or harassment;
- Violation of any policy or procedure;
- Fraud, theft, violence or misrepresentation; and,
- Criminal convictions or criminal convictions of a repugnant nature.

One Chance Opportunity to Cool Down:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND understands that sometimes people act in the heat of the moment and their actions are not in their best interest in the long term. To this end, one time only in the career of any employee, an employee may resign, either verbally or in writing, and then retract that resignation.

Should an employee retract their resignation they must do so in writing and they must explain why they want to continue to their employment with THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND and do so no later than 5pm of the next business day.

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND maintains the sole and unfettered right to re-employ that employee, or not.

Notice Period for Termination:

Should an employee voluntarily terminate their employment they are required to give no less than four (4) weeks written notice of their intent to quit. This notice period does not constitute a duty on behalf of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND to continue to employ the employee, however. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND reserves the sole and unfettered right to pay-out any notice.

Should THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND terminate an employee they will do so according to whether the termination is “with cause” or “without cause”. Employees terminated without cause will be subject to termination per the Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code. It must be noted that in the event of a severance package over and above statutory notice the employee will be required to mitigate their damages. Employees terminated with cause will not be entitled to any notice period or pay in lieu of notice. Examples of cause include, but are not limited to: fraud, theft of any kind, violence, gross negligence of duties, etc.

Termination Letter:

All involuntarily terminated employees, including probationary employees, will receive a termination letter. This termination letter will briefly outline the reason for termination.

Responsibilities:

Employee – It is the employee’s responsibility to be familiar with this policy and to provide written notice to quit as per this policy.

Director – It is the director’s responsibility to advise employees of this policy and to ensure that all resignations are in writing and are filed within the employee’s personnel file. Directors’ are to immediately notify the CAO of any voluntary termination. The director is to seek approval from the CAO prior to terminating any employee.

24.0 Vehicle Policy

Policy:

Some COUNTY OF RICHMOND employees are required to operate either a company or their personal vehicle as a condition of employment. Employees may only use their personal vehicle for work with the explicit approval of their Director.

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND will not knowingly permit an unsafe, unlicensed or uninsured driver to operate a vehicle in the performance of their duties.

Principles of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND is committed to ensuring that employees required to operate a vehicle as a condition of their employment demonstrate safe driving practices appropriate for prevailing conditions, maintain a safe driving record and are compensated fairly for the use of their personal vehicle.

General Requirements:

All municipal vehicles shall be adequately identified as such with the use of decals and the Municipality logo on both sides of the vehicle.

Recruitment and Selection Requirements:

When recruiting to a position where the operation of a vehicle is required as a condition of employment, candidates must provide THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND with:

- A copy of the candidate's valid driver's license;
- Proof of insurability; and,
- A three-year driver's abstract not more than one month old.

All offers of employment are based on the employee providing, and maintaining, a satisfactory driving record, a valid driver's license and insurability.

Should the candidate be hired the candidate will be fully reimbursed for the cost of the abstract upon presentation of the receipt.

Licensing, Maintenance and Insurance Requirements:

Employees who operate a vehicle as a condition of their employment are required to:

- Possess a valid driver's license for the type of vehicle they drive;
- Authorize the release of a driver's abstract to THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND upon request;
- Regularly maintenance their personal vehicle, as a matter of good practice;
- Carry the appropriate insurance for their personal vehicle;
- Be insurable; and,
- Immediately notify their Director upon license withdrawal or suspension.

Employees required to provide THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND with a drivers' abstract will be fully reimbursed upon presentation of the receipt.

Operator Requirements:

- All COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicles will be operated by suitably trained employees holding a valid driver's licence for the class of vehicle being operated.
- All Provincial regulations for operation of motor vehicles will be obeyed, including but not limited to the following:
 - Posted speed limits.
 - Seat belts will be worn by the operator and all passengers when the vehicle is in operation.
 - No vehicle will be operated while the operator is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

- Operators of COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicles are personally responsible for any penalties for violations of Provincial motor vehicle legislation.
- No vehicle is to be left idling if it not in use with the exception that a three minute warm up period is permitted and that vehicles are considered to be in use when an operator or passengers in the vehicle need to keep warm during the winter months.
- Operators shall perform periodic inspections of vehicles (*as per Vehicle Inspection Guidelines below*) and report any vehicle defects to their supervisor immediately.
- Operators will ensure that their designated vehicle is equipped with a working fire extinguisher, a complete #2 First Aid kit, an emergency spill kit, and an eye wash bottle.
- COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicles will not carry passengers who are not being transported for business of THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND.
- No person will ride in the box of a pickup truck.
- Hazard lights will be in operation when a COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicle is on a job site.
- No person will operate a cell phone while operating a COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicle unless a hands-free unit is used.
- No smoking in COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicles is permitted.
- Designated operators of COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicles are responsible to ensure that all required maintenance of the vehicle is carried out at the appropriate frequency and such that the vehicle warranty is maintained.
- The operator will ensure that, if their designated COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicle is unattended, it is locked and the keys have been removed.

Driver Performance:

Unsatisfactory driver performance will be dealt with in the same manner as any other type of performance issue. Examples of unsatisfactory performance include, but are not limited to:

- Involvement in a preventable vehicle accident;
- Vehicle abuse, including negligence and/or incidents of erratic, unsafe behaviour;
- Excessive demerit points, suspension or loss of license; and
- Knowingly operating an un-roadworthy vehicle.

Remedial training or other action may be required when an employee:

- Has more than seven points against their driver's license;
- Is involved in a vehicle accident;
- Has their license suspended; or
- Is the subject of substantial complaints of dangerous/erratic driving behaviour.

Employees who lose their driving privileges and who are required to operate a vehicle as a condition of employment may be terminated or may be assigned to other duties until such time as the license is reinstated, depending upon the availability of work for which the employee is qualified, or be terminated for shortage of work.

Vehicle Accidents:

All work-related vehicle accidents/incidents involving THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND employees, regardless of the severity, must be reported to their Director within one working day. In those cases where there is an injury or the damage exceeds \$1,000.00 a copy of the police report must be provided.

Vehicle Preparation Guidelines:

Safe driving begins with proper vehicle maintenance. It is recommended that employees required to operate a personal vehicle as a condition of employment have their vehicles maintenance each season.

As well, employees should check and ensure the following on a regular basis:

- Tire treads are adequate and are inflated to the appropriate pressure;
- Head, signal, reverse and brake lights are clean and in working order;
- Wipers are good working order and windshield washer fluid is full;
- Fuel, oil and transmission levels are adequate;
- All windows, head, brake and signal lights, and the roof are clear of snow, leaves and other debris;
- Braking system is responsive and in good working order and brake fluid is adequate; and,
- Battery cables and terminals are free of corrosion.

Trip Preparation Guidelines:

Plan Ahead - Think about the amount of time you will need to get to your destination and add extra time to accommodate unexpected and unplanned for road conditions. Employees should dress appropriately for the possibility of severe weather conditions.

Check Road Conditions – Before leaving, phone the Department of Transportation and Public Works' Winter Road Information line 1-800-307-7669. If travel on the planned route is not recommended the employee is to advise their Director.

Safety Equipment – Employees are to use seat belts at all times. As well as the mandatory safety equipment listed under Operator Requirements above, all employees are encouraged to carry the following items:

- jumper cables
- safety goggles and lined rubber gloves (to be worn while using jumper cables);
- flashlight and candles;
- flares or reflectors;
- air compressor;
- spare tire and jack;
- emergency blanket;
- extra clothes

Driving Guidelines:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND employees are to:

- Ensure vehicle speed is appropriate for the road conditions and are to slow down early when approaching vehicles, traffic congestion, bridge decks, etc;
- Watch for hazards such as icy spots, especially at intersections and on bridge decks;
- When following other drivers, keep a safe distance of approximately 4 seconds apart;
- In poor visibility conditions slow down, use low beams or pull over, ideally on a side road or approach, turn on four-way flashers, and wait for conditions to improve, keeping in mind that, with limited visibility, other drivers still may not be able to see your vehicle on the side of the road.

Backing-up And Parking Guidelines:

When driving a company-provided vehicle or a personal vehicle on company business, employees are to:

- Back into all parking spots. Should the employee be unable to back into a parking spot they must park in a spot from they are able to pull through.
- When backing, either a vehicle or a trailer, and there is restricted visibility, the employee must engage another employee, as a spotter. Should no other employee be available at the worksite the employee must complete a circle check.

In the Event an Employee is Stranded:

Becoming stranded can be both dangerous and unnerving. Should an employee become stranded they should:

- Stay with their vehicle unless you are very close to assistance;
- Move their vehicle off the road as much as possible;
- Set-out reflectors;
- Stay inside the vehicle to keep warm and dry;
- Do not run your vehicle for additional warmth as there is always the danger of carbon monoxide poisoning;
- Keep moving for continued body warmth;
- Put on your extra clothing, being careful from becoming wet from perspiration.
- Never fall asleep;
- Watch for other drivers, etc. who may be able to assist; and,
- Call for help.

Storage of County of Richmond Vehicles:

In recognition that THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND requires certain employees to respond to a variety of technical and emergency situations over a 24 hour period, including weekends and holidays on an “on-call” basis, designated operators of COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicles are permitted to take vehicles to their residences provided the following items are adhered to:

- COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicles are to be for COUNTY OF RICHMOND business only.
- Operators are strictly prohibited from use of COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicles for personal reasons.
- Vehicles that are kept at an operator's residence after working hours are the responsibility of the operator and the vehicle is to be protected from damage at all times.

Operators of COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicles who are not serving in an "on-call" capacity will ensure that, outside of normal working hours, vehicles are stored at an approved COUNTY OF RICHMOND site. Such sites include the Richmond Municipal Office, the Richmond Waste Facility, the Arichat/Petit de Grat Water Treatment Plant Compound, the Louisdale Sidewalk Maintenance Building Compound and the Louisdale Workshop.

Record Keeping:

Designated operators of COUNTY OF RICHMOND vehicles will review with their immediate supervisor, at reasonable frequencies, available information and reporting on vehicle operation such as idling time, fuel consumption, kilometers travelled and operating speeds.

Responsibilities:

Employees – Employees will follow this policy. Employees are to seek counsel from their Director, as needed.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee – The JOHSC should review this policy at least every two years for suggestions, or when legislation changes.

25.0 Workplace Solicitation

Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND does not allow, and will not tolerate, solicitation or the distribution of materials while on paid company time, unless authorized explicitly by the CAO.

Principles of Policy:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND endeavours to provide a workplace free of distraction and respectful of people's personal situations. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND does not allow for the solicitation of employee's time or money or the distribution of circulars, handbills or other materials while on paid company time, unless explicitly approved by THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND.

Exceptions:

THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND may support any number of charities. THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND will allow employees to solicit for these charities while on paid company time, but only with the approval of the Director.

Responsibilities:

Employees – Employees are not to solicit or distribute while on paid company time.

Directors – Directors are to ensure that employees adhere to this policy.

CAO– The CAO is to advise employees and the director as to whether solicitation or distribution of materials is appropriate; that is, in keeping with the Exceptions of this policy.

Appendix "A" Waiver To Monitor Treatment

In keeping with the *Substance Usages* policy, *Suspected Addictions Procedures* section, that:

1. It is a condition of my employment that I submit to substance abuse treatment as a condition of continued employment.
2. I understand, and hereby give permission, for the Director to monitor my treatment.
3. I understand that upon successfully completing a substance abuse rehabilitation program I will be reinstated to my previous job, or a similar job, and will be subject to a six (6) months probationary period during which I must successfully maintain the preventive course of treatment as prescribed by the program.
4. I understand that I will be required to provide proof of success in the program before returning to work.
5. I understand that should I not follow the prescribed treatments and / or re-offend I will be subject to termination.

Employee Name

Date

Employee Signature

Appendix "B" Employee Return to Service and Repayment Agreement Form

Employees who have received written approval for training from the Director are to read and complete this form. Any questions are to be directed to the Director prior to signing. Once completed the form is to be placed within the employee's personnel file and a copy given to the employee.

Policy:

The Service and Repayment Agreement is a written and binding Agreement between the employee and THE COUNTY OF RICHMOND for the return of service and repayment of monies invested in training and development activities when training is not successfully completed or the employee resigns from their position before the specified time. The Agreement will be based on the assumptions set out below:

Tuition Amount

Up to \$1000

Greater than \$1000 to \$5,000

Greater than \$5,000

Service Requirement

No return of service required

12 months

24 months

Repayment Schedule for Tuition:

	Up to \$1,000	\$1000 - \$5,000	Over \$5,000
Within 6 months = 100%	0	100 %	100 %
6-12 months = 80%	0	80 %	80 %
12-18 months = 60%	0	0	60 %
18-24 months = 40%	0	0	40 %

I, _____ (*print name*) have read this Agreement, understand the implications of this Agreement and have had the opportunity to ask questions and receive answers.

Signature

Date

Appendix "C" Employee Information Form

Employee Legal Name: _____

Civic Home Address: _____

Mailing Address (if different from civic address): _____

Home Telephone: _____ Cellular Telephone: _____

Email Address: _____

Personal Information

Date of Hire: _____

Date of Birth: _____

SIN number: _____

Allergies or Known Medical Conditions or Required Medication*: _____

**This request for information is 100% voluntary on behalf of the employee. This request for information is only to ensure the health and well being of the employee.*

Emergency Contact Information

Contact Name: _____

Relationship to Employee: _____

Daytime Contact Telephone: _____

Evening Contact Telephone: _____

Employee Signature

Date

~All information collected within this form will not be duplicated and will be maintained in a confidential manner.~

Appendix "D" Employee Contact Form



THE MUNICIPALITY OF THE COUNTY OF
LA MUNICIPALITÉ DU COMTÉ DE
RICHMOND

- Discipline – Verbal Warning
- Discipline – Written Warning
- Discipline – Last Chance Warning

Kudos – Well Done

Employee Name: _____

Date: _____

Incident or Background: _____

Impact of Incident: _____

Witnesses: _____

Corrective Action to be Taken and Date of Expected Completion: _____

Next Steps and Consequences: _____

Employee Signature

Supervisor Signature

Appendix “E” Creating Accountability Signature Page

By signing this page, you acknowledge that you have received a copy of this employee policy manual, that you read these policies, that you have had opportunity to ask questions and that you understand these policies.

Directions: After signing, this Signature Page should be placed within the employee’s personnel file.

Employee Name

Date

Employee Signature