



Municipality of Meaford Corporate Policy

Policy: Administrative Penalty System – Prevention of Political Interference

Division: Legislative Services

New Policy: July 2026

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Policy Statement

The Municipality of Meaford is committed to ensuring the Administrative Penalty System (APS) program is conducted in a fair and independent manner without any political interference whether intentional or unintentional.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to prevent political interference of any kind in the administration of the Administrative Penalty System program, and to

minimize and restrict opportunities for political interference, intentionally or unintentionally.

Pursuant to O. Reg. 333/07: Administrative Penalties, made under the Municipal Act, 2001, a municipality establishing an APS is required to have a policy for the prevention of political interference in the APS

Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, all terms are defined in accordance with the Administrative Penalty By-law 2026-47 and the Screening and Hearing Officer By-law 2026-48.

“Chief Administrative Officer” or “CAO” means the senior executive appointed by Council who is responsible for managing the Municipality’s staff and operations.

“Council Code of Conduct” means the Municipality of Meaford Code of Conduct for Council and Local Boards, as amended, supplemented or replaced from time to time, or any successor code or policy.

“Power of Decision” means a power or right, conferred by or under the Administrative Penalty By-law, to make a decision deciding or prescribing the legal rights, powers, privileges, immunities, duties or liabilities of any Person.

“Reprisal” means any measure taken or threatened as a direct result of disclosing or being suspected of disclosing an allegation of wrongdoing, initiating or cooperating in an investigation into an alleged wrongdoing, and includes but is not limited to:

- disciplinary measures;
- demotion of the employee or individual;
- termination of the employee or individual;
- intimidation or harassment of the employee or individual;

- any measure that adversely affects the employment or working conditions of the employee or individual; and
- directing or counselling someone to commit a reprisal.

Scope

This policy applies to the Mayor, members of Council, all employees of the Municipality, volunteers, contractors and consultants to the Municipality of Meaford.

All persons involved with the enforcement and administration functions of the APS program shall endeavor to carry out such duties in a manner, which upholds the integrity of the administration of justice.

Policy Requirements

Principles of Preventing Political Interference

No Person shall attempt, directly or indirectly, to communicate with any Municipal employee or other person performing duties related to the administration of the APS for the purpose of influencing or interfering, financially, politically or otherwise, with the administration of the APS or with any particular Penalty Notice.

No Person shall attempt, directly or indirectly, to communicate with a Screening Officer or Hearing Officer for the purpose of influencing or interfering, financially, politically or otherwise, the Screening Officer or Hearing Officer respecting a Penalty Notice and/or respecting a Power of Decision in a proceeding that is or will be pending before a Screening Officer or Hearing Officer, except:

- a Person who is entitled to be heard in the proceeding or the Person's lawyer, licensed paralegal or authorized representative; and

- only by that Person or the Person's lawyer, licensed paralegal or authorized representative during the hearing of the proceeding in which the issues arise.

Nothing in this Policy prohibits the giving or receiving of legal advice.

In addition to this Policy, the Administrative Penalty By-law sets out a prohibition on attempting to influence a Screening Officer or Hearing Officer and creates an offence for any contravention of the provisions of the Administrative Penalty Bylaw. Such a penalty is in addition to any action taken pursuant to this Policy. All individuals involved with the enforcement and administrative functions of the APS shall carry out such duties in a manner which upholds the integrity of the administration of justice.

Accountability

A Screening Officer or Hearing Officer, Municipality of Meaford employee, or any other individual performing duties related to the APS shall report any attempt at influence or interference, financial, political, or otherwise, by any Person to the Director of Legislative Services as soon as possible. No action shall be taken against the Screening Officer, Hearing Officer, employee or other person(s) for making any such report in good faith.

Where any employee, Screening Officer, Hearing Officer, or other person performing duties related to the APS, is contacted by a member of Council or Municipal official with respect to the administration of the APS or a specific Penalty Notice, he or she shall immediately disclose such contact to the Director of Legislative Services in order to maintain the integrity of the APS.

Any interference with or attempt to interfere with the APS by any Person may result in charges under the Criminal Code of Canada, as applicable, or any other applicable law, in addition to any disciplinary action.

Any interference with the APS or attempt to interfere with the APS by a member of Council will be addressed pursuant to the Council Code of Conduct.

Reprisal

In addition to and without limiting the "Accountability" section of this Policy, no person shall take any Reprisal against a Municipal employee or other individual performing duties related to the administration of the APS because the employee or individual, in good faith:

- has sought information or advice about making a disclosure about wrongdoing contrary to this Policy;
- has made a disclosure about wrongdoing contrary to this Policy in good faith;
- has initiated or cooperated in an investigation or other process related to a disclosure of wrongdoing contrary to this Policy;
- has appeared as a witness, given evidence or participated in any proceeding relating to the wrongdoing contrary to this Policy, or is required to do so;
- has alleged or reported a Reprisal; or
- is suspected of any of the above actions.

The identity of employees or other individuals performing duties related to the administration of the APS involved in an investigation, including the identity of an individual alleging political influence contrary to this Policy, will be protected to the fullest extent possible.

If an employee believes that they have suffered Reprisal, this should be reported immediately to the Director of Legislative Services or, where appropriate, to the employee's direct manager and/or Chief Administrative Officer, as well as the Manager of Human Resources.

Implementation

All members of Council shall be provided with a copy of this policy.

This policy shall form part of the orientation for all members of Council at the start of a new term of Council, as well as all current and new municipal officials and staff, with the potential for interaction with the APS program.



This policy shall form part of the orientation for all current and new Screening Officers and Hearing Officers and APS administrative staff.

Compliance

In accordance with the Municipality of Meaford policies and applicable legislation, any employee or appointee found to be demonstrating actions and/or behaviours that are not consistent with the terms of this Policy will result in an investigation, subject to possible discipline up to and including revocation of appointment and/or termination of employment and/or investigation by the Municipality's Integrity Commissioner.

Review

This policy shall be reviewed once during the term of Council.

Monitoring

The Director of Legislative Services shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this policy.

Authority

This policy is established pursuant to Section 11 (2) of the Municipal Act, 2001 which provides for the passing of by-laws and adoption of policies pertaining to the accountability and transparency of the Municipality.

Contact

Director of Legislative Services
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