



# POLICY

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<b>POLICY NO:</b>	401	<b>APPROVAL DATE:</b>	May 23, 2006
<b>TITLE:</b>	Employee Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest	<b>REVISION DATE:</b>	May 13, 2013
<b>SECTION:</b>	Human Resource	<b>PAGE 1 OF 5</b>	
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>			

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## POLICY STATEMENT

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The City of Grande Prairie (the “Employer”) is committed to service in the public interest. Employees must ensure that the best interests of the Employer are not jeopardized and that the public have confidence in the integrity of Employees. Conduct must be ethical, professional and above reproach at all times and an Employee’s position is not to be used for personal advantage.

Employees must avoid any conflict of interest situation and will not engage in actions which are or could reasonably be perceived as prejudicial to the trust, confidence and faith of the public in the integrity of its civic administration.

Employees should enjoy the same rights in their private dealings as others unless it can be shown that a restriction is essential in the public interest.

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## REASON FOR POLICY

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The purpose of this policy is to establish the Employer's expectations for appropriate conduct, to provide consistent guidelines for all employees and to establish the consequences for non-compliance. Further, it is the purpose of this policy to ensure that Employees recognize their obligations as public servants to carry out their duties impartially, fairly and honestly.

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## APPLICATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

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The following provisions apply to all Employees while they are engaged in the Employer’s business, working on Employer premises or worksites, and operating Employer vehicles and equipment. Violations of these provisions will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

All Employees are expected to read and understand the policy and their responsibilities under it.

**1. General**

An Employee shall not engage in any business or transaction or have any financial or other personal employment interest, direct or indirect, which would be incompatible with the proper discharge of his or her duties or impair his or her independent judgment or action.

An Employee who has access to restricted information relating to tendering or leasing of City-owned land properties and/or assets will be ineligible to bid or lease.

An Employee shall not accept any personal gift, commission, reward, favour, service, advantage or benefit of any value from any person, firm or corporation which could be viewed as a payment for future consideration for services rendered as a City Employee. This excludes items such as:

- a) the normal exchange of gifts between friends;
- b) the normal exchange of hospitality between friends doing business together;
- c) personal gifts, seasonal gifts and other tokens of appreciation which do not exceed one hundred (\$100.00) dollars;
- d) meals provided during business meetings, conferences, workshops and similar events; or
- e) the normal presentation of gifts to persons attending and/or participating in public functions.

An Employee is required to report to his or her Employer any offers of gifts, rewards, etc., which may appear intended to influence him or her in the discharge of his or her duties.

All Employees are required to sign an Oath of Confidentiality upon hire and shall not disclose confidential information, or information which has come to them as a result of their employment, concerning the property, government, or affairs of the Employer where such information is not generally available to the public, without prior written authorization from the Employer. In any event, no such information shall be used directly or indirectly for the purpose of benefiting the Employee.

An Employee shall not use or permit the use of City-owned vehicles, equipment, material or property for his or her personal convenience or profit. An Employee, within reason and with the awareness and approval of the Employer, has the personal use of a City telephone, cell phone or computer. The Employer also recognizes that personal use of a City vehicle may occur in certain instances, for example, where the Employee is in on-call status or has the use of a vehicle for travel to a conference or meeting.

An Employee shall not grant any special consideration, treatment or advantage to any person beyond that which is available to everyone else. An Employee shall not place himself or herself in a position where he or she may be under obligation to any person who might benefit from special consideration or favour or who might seek preferential treatment in any way.

**2. Non-City Employment**

An Employee may engage in non-City employment as long as such employment:

- a) does not interfere with the performance of his or her duties as a City Employee;
- b) does not use advantages derived from his or her employment with the City;
- c) will not adversely influence or adversely affect the carrying out of duties as a City Employee;
- d) is not performed in a manner as to appear to be an official action or policy;
- e) does not involve performance of work which must be inspected or approved by another City Employee;
- f) does not directly result in any matter contributing to a proposal or contract which may require City consideration or approval; or
- g) does not involve the use of City premises, vehicles, supplies, equipment, including cell phones and computers, and/or other City Employees on a City job.

Prior to initiating non-City employment where a possible conflict of interest may arise, an Employee is required to notify the Employer in writing.

In a situation where non-City employment is acceptable, an Employee must make it known to the other employer that the service is provided on a personal basis only and is in no way authorized, endorsed or supported by the City of Grande Prairie.

An Employee who engages in non-City employment shall conduct himself or herself in a manner which assures that a conflict of interest does not exist or appear to exist.

**3. Political Activity**

**School Boards**

If an Employee plans to run for election to a School Board, he or she must do so in accordance with the Local Authorities Election Act. The Employee must advise the City Manager at least two weeks prior to nomination day. The City Manager may require that the Employee take a leave of absence without pay during the campaign. In coming to this decision, the City Manager will consider whether or not:

- a) the Employee is likely to impair public confidence in the existing or subsequent performance of his or her official duties; or
- b) the campaign is likely to interfere with the time and attention the Employee is able to devote to his or her civic position.

If it is determined that either or both of these conditions exist, the Employee will be required to take a leave of absence without pay.

**Municipal**

An Employee may run for the office of Mayor or Council in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities Election Act.

### **Provincial/Federal**

An Employee shall be entitled to a leave of absence without pay if he or she seeks to run as a candidate in a Provincial or Federal election. Upon election, the Employee must resign from his or her employment with the Employer. An Employee who seeks election and is not elected shall be entitled to return to the same or similar employment effective the day after the official election results have been announced.

An Employee may:

- a) join a Provincial or Federal political party or other political organization;
- b) participate actively in the internal affairs of a Federal or Provincial political party or organization;
- c) hold an office in a Provincial or Federal party or organization; or
- d) solicit financial or other contributions for Federal or Provincial elections or campaigns.

provided these activities are not done on City time or on City property and do not adversely affect the Employee's ability to perform his or her civic duties.

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### **CONSEQUENCES**

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All Employees will have access to this policy. The Employer views the rules contained in this policy to be of the utmost importance. Any deviation from the above terms will result in disciplinary action that may include immediate dismissal. Any resulting dismissal will be considered as "dismissal with cause" and not subject to notice or remuneration in lieu.

In all situations, an investigation will be conducted to verify that a policy violation has occurred before disciplinary action is taken. Therefore, management has the authority and discretion to hold out of service, with pay, any Employee who is believed to have violated this policy, pending the results of the investigation. The appropriate discipline in a particular case depends on the nature of the policy violation and the circumstances surrounding the situation.

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### **DEFINITIONS**

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**Conflict of Interest** may arise when:

- a) an Employee takes advantage of his or her employment with the City to derive benefit for themselves and/or their families or for corporate identities with which they and/or their families are concerned;
- b) an Employee's job performance or fitness for work is compromised by his or her undertaking non-City employment.

**Employee** refers to all Employees who occupy a full-time, part-time, temporary or casual position with the Employer.

**Family** is defined as current spouse (including common-law spouse), parents, children, and siblings of an Employee.

**Non-City employment** includes:

- a) self-employment; or
- b) activity which results in a monetary reward or personal benefit.

**Restricted information** means technical or commercial information, the release of which could jeopardize the future position of the bidder or lessee.