



## Township of Algonquin Highlands Policies and Procedures Manual

# Volunteer Policy

## Schedule "A"

Approved by By-Law Number: 2013-41

### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this policy is to develop a process that supports municipal volunteers, whether appointed by Council or an ad hoc committee and encourages volunteerism by establishing best practices and minimizing risk to the organization.

The Township of Algonquin Highlands recognizes the essential role that volunteers play in building a healthy and vibrant community and this policy will assist volunteers in understanding their responsibilities and commitments to the Township while providing a high quality, meaningful volunteer experience.

This policy will ensure that:

- > Conflicts of interest are declared.
- > Appointments are not used for personal gain.
- > Appointees hold membership for the benefit of the public and community at large.
- > There is fairness and respect for differences.
- > The privileges of the board/committee are maintained
- > Personal information is protected.

### **DEFINITION:**

#### **Volunteer**

A person who provides service to the community while under the general supervision of the Township, or as a member of a board, or any advisory, ad hoc, or special purpose committee appointed by Council, generally without compensation or other consideration.

### **ADMINISTRATION OF POLICY:**

This policy will be implemented by Department Heads and/or Committee Chair and will be overseen by the CAO.

### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES:**

#### Community Participation

The Township of Algonquin Highlands encourages citizens to volunteer and contribute their expertise to improve their community.

### Qualified and Dedicated People

The Township invites citizens with skills and qualifications to share both their time and talent freely for the benefit of their community.

### Recognized Contributions

The Township and the community appreciate the commitment and time given by their volunteers and recognize their valuable contributions and the spirit in which it is given.

### Balance

Volunteer policies balance the interests of the community, the volunteers and the Township by ensuring that these interests are clearly defined and agreed upon.

### Orientation/Training

The Township will provide any orientation, training and/or materials necessary for the volunteer to fulfill his/her duties.

### **GENERAL:**

In representing the Township, a volunteer is required to maintain a high standard of personal and professional conduct, conduct themselves with integrity, competency and impartiality, and preserve the trust and confidence placed in them by Council and the community.

### **INSURANCE COVERAGE AND IMMUNITY:**

During the volunteer term and in the performance of the volunteer activities, volunteers will have access to the insurance and immunity outlined below.

#### General Liability Insurance

The Township's liability insurance protects both the Township and the volunteer against claims from third parties while the volunteer is performing volunteer activities. This does not cover loss of, or damage to, the volunteer's property. There is no cost to the volunteer for this liability insurance coverage.

#### Auto Liability Insurance

Volunteers are not authorized to use Township-owned or Township-leased vehicles. The Township does not provide auto liability coverage to any volunteer's personal vehicle driven on behalf of the Township during their volunteering duties.

#### Workers' Compensation

Workers' Safety Insurance Board (WSIB) does not provide coverage for volunteers. Any person incurring injury or illness while volunteering will not be covered by the Township's WSIB policy.

#### Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance

The Township provides volunteers with insurance for accidental death or dismemberment, paralysis, accident disability and for medical and dental expenses. There is no group life insurance provided to volunteers.

## Immunity

In addition, Section 448 of the *Municipal Act, 2001*, S.O. 2001, provides volunteers with certain immunities from liability. If the volunteer is participating in the delivery of municipal services under the supervision of a municipal employee, the section establishes a statutory bar to claims against the volunteer unless the volunteer is guilty of dishonesty, gross negligence or malicious or willful misconduct, or has libeled or slandered another party.

## **VOLUNTEERS:**

### Selection Screening

Council will evaluate volunteer applicants based on their expertise and experience in the Township of Algonquin Highlands. Residency, either permanent or seasonal, within the Township is preferred. Those suitable will be selected as members of the board or committee for which they have applied.

### Appointment

Council will appoint the suitable applicant as a member of the appropriate board or committee for a specific period.

### Performance

Volunteers will be encouraged to complete their duties and/or attend meetings on a regular basis, for which the volunteer freely gives his/her time and expertise to the community, generally without financial compensation. If a volunteer is going to miss three (3) consecutive meetings, the committee shall be advised. If more than three consecutive meetings are missed without proper notice to the committee, the Township reserves the right to relieve the volunteer from their duties.

### Safety and Security

Volunteers are responsible for their own safety and the safety and security of all their personal property and possessions.

### Expenditures

Any expenditure on behalf of any committee must be made in accordance with the Township's Procurement Policy, with the Committee's concurrence and within the Township's approved budget for that year.

### Criminal Reference Checks

Criminal Reference checks will be required for all board and committee members.

### Conflict of Interest

It is recognized that volunteers have a broad range of interests that may from time to time lead to potential, actual or perceived conflicts of interest.

Volunteers will be considered to have a conflict of interest where their private objectives conflict with municipal objectives. As such volunteers shall not:

- > Benefit financially from their membership other than an honorarium that may be paid in certain circumstances.

- > Place themselves in a position where they are under obligation to any person who may benefit from the circumstances.
- > Deal with any application, agreement or contract in which their spouse, child, grandchild, parent, grandparent, partner, or company has an interest.
- > Gain personal benefit from any knowledge about a municipally related matter.
- > Give preferential treatment to any person, partner, organization or company where the member has a financial interest.

Where a conflict of interest exists, the volunteer shall declare the conflict, or possible conflict, and withdraw from direct involvement in the matter and refrain from any discussion or comment that might influence a decision.

Volunteers shall ensure the conflict or possible conflict of interest is recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

Volunteers who are, or become involved in legal proceedings with the municipality, will be asked to step down from the appointed committee.

### Deliberative Privilege

Boards and committees speak with one voice, that being through a recommendation to Council. Discussion on how a member reaches a decision is a matter of privilege of that member.

Volunteers, whether they are in favour or opposed to a recommendation shall support the position of the board or committee once a consensus is reached.

### Privacy

A volunteer shall not disclose any personal information they may become aware of in the conduct of their responsibility as a member of a board or committee.

### Social Media

It is recognized that volunteers may engage in social media including, without limitations, blogging, social networking, tweeting or other similar websites and services, photo sharing, video sharing or webcasting (collectively "social media"). Volunteers may not use the Township's information system for social media, unless authorized to do so.

Volunteers should refrain from communicating about Township related business through their personal social media. If a volunteer chooses to do so, he/she must ensure that the information posted is accurate and consistent with Township information. The volunteer must also clearly disclose his or her affiliation with the Township and that the views expressed in the posting are their own personal views and do not reflect the views of the Township.

Derogatory or disrespectful language directed toward the Township, Township staff or any Council member by a volunteer on his or her personal social media regarding Township business is likely to cause deep or widespread offense and will not be tolerated. The Township reserves the right to relieve a volunteer of their duties if such postings are discovered.

### Code of Ethics

A volunteer will be required to adhere to the following:

1. Provide their time as a volunteer in the best interest of the Township of Algonquin Highlands.

2. Conduct themselves with honesty and integrity while serving the Township of Algonquin Highlands.
3. Pledge to treat members of the public, staff and Council with respect.
4. Comply with all written policies and guidelines provided relevant to the board or committee on which they will serve.
5. Maintain an equitable, honourable and cooperative relationship with Council in matters relating to the board or committee activities.
6. Ensure their position as a volunteer will not be used to grant special privileges to any person or group, and avoid all other conflicts of interest which may arise from their position as a volunteer.
7. Ensure their position as a volunteer will not be used for business or personal benefit or gain.
8. Not discriminate against or harass a member of the board or committee, Council, staff or public because of (including but not limited to) race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age marital status, physical or mental disability or record of offences.
9. Ensure that any personal use of Social Media regarding Township business is accurate and consistent with Township information and does not express a derogatory or disrespectful opinion of the Township, Township staff or any member of Council. The volunteer will also disclose his or her affiliation with the Township and that the views expressed in the posting are his or her own personal views and do not reflect the views or opinions of the Township.

#### Confidentiality Agreement

A volunteer will be required to agree to the following:

1. That any written or oral information disclosed to them as “confidential” during their term will remain in the strictest confidence.
2. That all “confidential” material given to them as a result of their volunteering on the board or committee, will be maintained, and when necessary, disposed of in a secure and confidential manner.
3. Not to publicize any of the confidential aspects of their work orally or by written word or any other medium of communication.
4. To exercise due care to ensure that any information they may give to others in the course of their term will be given only to persons they believe are entitled to receive such information.

## **VOLUNTEER DECLARATION**

During my term as a volunteer appointed by the Corporation of the Township of Algonquin Highlands, I agree to adhere to the following:

### **Code of Ethics**

1. I pledge to provide my time as a volunteer in the best interest of the Township of Algonquin Highlands.
2. I pledge to conduct myself with honesty and integrity while serving the Township of Algonquin Highlands.
3. I pledge to treat members of the public, staff and Council with respect.
4. I pledge to comply with all written policies and guidelines provided relevant to the board or committee on which they will serve.
5. I pledge to maintain an equitable, honourable and cooperative relationship with Council in matters relating to the board or committee activities.
6. I pledge to ensure my position as a volunteer will not be used to grant special privileges to any person or group, and avoid all other conflicts of interest which may arise from their position as a volunteer.
7. I pledge to ensure my position as a volunteer will not be used for business or personal benefit or gain.
8. I pledge to not discriminate against or harass a member of the board or committee, staff, Council or public because of (including but not limited to) race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, sexual orientation, age marital status, physical or mental disability or record of offences.
9. I pledge to ensure that any personal use of Social Media regarding Township business is accurate and consistent with Township information and does not express a derogatory or discriminatory opinion of the Township, Township staff or Council member. I will also disclose my affiliation with the Township and that the views expressed in the posting are my own personal views and do not necessarily reflect the views or opinions of the Township. I understand that the Township reserves the right to relieve me from my duties as a volunteer if this policy is violated.

### **Confidentiality Agreement**

1. I agree that any written or oral information disclosed to me as “confidential” during my term will remain in the strictest confidence.
2. I agree that all “confidential” material given to me as a result of my volunteering on the board or committee, will be maintained, and when necessary, disposed of in a secure and confidential manner.
3. I agree not to publicize any of the confidential aspects of my work orally or by written word or any other medium of communication.
4. I agree to exercise due care to ensure that any information I may give to others in the course of my term, will be given only to persons I believe are entitled to receive such information.

I have received a copy of the Township of Algonquin Highlands' Volunteer Policy, and I confirm I understand and agree to adhere to the policy and the above statements, or as otherwise directed to me in writing by Council during my term.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date