



CUSTOMER CONDUCT POLICY

General Government Policy # 005

POLICY STATEMENT

The Municipality encourages respectful and considerate relationships between the Municipality and its customers and all members of the public. The Municipality strives to provide the best customer service possible for all customer service interactions and provide a customer experience that is meaningful, fair, and respectful. Likewise, the Municipality expects that all customers and members of the public are respectful in their communications and interactions as well.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the definitions included are as follows:

Customer – includes but is not limited to residents, individuals, business, not-for-profit organizations, stakeholders, community and corporate organizations, and members of the public in general that interact with the Municipality and its employees.

Frivolous – means a complaint that is reasonably perceived by the Municipality to be (a) without reasonable or probable cause, (b) without merit or substance, or (c) trivial.

Vexatious – means a complaint that is frivolous and which is pursued in a manner that is reasonably perceived by the Municipality to be (a) malicious, (b) intended to embarrass or harass the recipient, or (c) intended to be a nuisance.

Unacceptable Customer Conduct – is any action by a customer, which because of its nature or frequency, has a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on the Municipality, council, staff, other customers, services, time and/or resources. For further information and examples refer to page 3 of this policy.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a positive, safe, and supportive approach to promoting acceptable and appropriate customer conduct between members of the public and the Municipality, including municipal staff and members of Council.

The Municipality is dedicated to providing a positive and respectful atmosphere in which communications and interactions occur with customers and members of the public. Equally, all customers of the Municipality are responsible for behaving in a respectful manner to promote an environment that can be shared by all.

The success of the Municipality depends on the collective ability to work and perform functions in the most effective and efficient ways, balancing the needs of the individual with the overall needs of the Municipality.

In addition, this policy will outline the process that describes how the Municipality of Boissevain-Morton will manage unacceptable conduct by customers.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all forms of customer service and conduct by customers requesting information, a service, filing a complaint or compliment, or providing feedback, and includes but is not limited to online, electronic, print and verbal communications, including telephone and in-person interactions.

GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

1. Providing excellent customer service is important to the Municipality delivering high quality programs and services. Municipal staff, volunteers, and anyone acting on behalf of the Municipality is expected to conduct themselves in a respectful manner.
2. Equally, customers are responsible for behaving in a respectful manner to promote an environment that can be shared by all. The Municipality recognizes that customers are unique with varying interests and concerns. Customers are expected to be respectful in their communications and their conduct dealing with the Municipality.
3. Any customer who wishes to express their dissatisfaction related to operations, a municipal service or program facility, or staff member, is encouraged to submit a Service Request form. The Service Request is a written document that provides the customer's concern or complaint and is reviewed by the Municipality accordingly. For more information on the service request process, please refer to Municipality of Boissevain-Morton's Service Request/Municipal Complaint Policy (General Government #004).
4. Harassment and disrespectful behaviour will not be tolerated, as per the Municipality's Harassment and Respectful Workplace Policy. For further details see the Municipality of Boissevain-Morton's Harassment & Respectful Workplace Policy (Human Resources #001).

UNACCEPTABLE CUSTOMER CONDUCT

5. For the purposes of this policy, unacceptable customer conduct is any action by a customer, which because of its nature or frequency, has a disproportionate and unreasonable impact on the Municipality, council, staff, other customers, services, time and/or resources. Some examples of what might be considered to be unacceptable conduct are listed below. The list is not exhaustive, nor does one single action on its own necessarily imply that the customer conduct will be considered as unacceptable:

- Verbal including threats, profanity, rude or inappropriate language, attempts to goad or incite anger in others, harassment, discrimination
- Physical including aggressive or intimidating approaches to another individual, throwing articles in a deliberate or aggressive manner, physical striking of another individual
- Illegal activity including illegal consumption of alcohol or drugs, theft, possession of weapons, vandalism
- Any act that violates Municipal permits, policies or by-laws
- Any act that gives rise to concern for public safety
- Demanding responses within an unreasonable timeframe and not within the Municipality's customer service standards
- Insisting on outcomes that are not possible or appropriate in the circumstances
- Demanding services that are of a nature or scale that cannot be provided by the Municipality
- Unwillingness or refusing to accept the Municipality cannot provide a particular service or action on a particular issue
- Persistently contacting the Municipality about the same matter when it has been considered and dealt with
- Repeatedly sending phone calls, voicemail messages, visits, letters, emails after being asked not to do so
- Contacting different staff seeking a different outcome or response
- Arguing frequently about a solution in the face of valid contrary explanations
- Displaying unhelpful behaviour such as withholding information, misquoting others

- Refusing to cooperate with the complaints investigation process while still wishing their complaint to be resolved
 - Making unjustified complaints about staff who are trying to deal with the issue or filing complaints about staff that are frivolous or vexatious in nature
 - Making excessive demands on the time and resources of staff with a high volume or frequency of correspondence, or mingling requests with accusations and complaints
6. Any customer that is in violation of this policy could be subject to significant consequences, including having their access to Municipal programs, services, and/or property restricted. Before deciding to apply any restrictions, the Municipality will ensure that:
- The complaint or request for information has been dealt with properly and in line with the relevant procedures and statutory guidelines, and
 - Staff have made every effort to satisfy the request or resolve the complaint
 - When the above steps have been applied and where appropriate as a result of a repeated pattern of unacceptable conduct or a single significant incident, staff will notify the CAO regarding the situation. The CAO will review the incident and follow up with the subsequent actions including review with Council, notifying the authorities, etc.
7. Any restrictions made under this procedure are on a case by case basis.

REFERENCES

Manitoba Human Rights Code
 Government of Manitoba—Respectful Workplace Policy
 Municipality of Boissevain-Morton Service Request/Municipal Complaint Policy (GG #004)
 Municipality of Boissevain-Morton Harassment & Respectful Workplace Policy (HR #001)

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