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## Election Conduct and Resource

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**Policy Number:** CP71/2025  
**Approval Date:** March 11, 2025  
**Supersedes Policy:** N/A

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### SECTION A

#### 1.0 Policy Purpose

- 1.1 This Policy outlines the appropriate use of municipal resources during election periods, ensuring that all candidates have equitable access to such resources as facilities and information. The intent is to promote fairness and transparency in the election process, preventing any undue advantage or misuse of Municipal resources by incumbents or other candidates.
- 1.2 The Policy establishes clear guidelines for the conduct of Municipal employees and Council members to safeguard the integrity of the election process. Municipal employees are expected to remain neutral, and Council members must avoid using their official roles for personal campaign gain, ensuring public confidence in the neutrality of the Municipality during elections.

#### 2.0 Definitions

- 2.1 “Administration” means individuals who are employed by the Municipality of Morinville.
- 2.2 “Campaigning” means any activity by or on behalf of a candidate, political party or question on a ballot meant to elicit support during the election period.
- 2.3 “Campaign period” means the period from January 1 of the year immediately following a general election and ending on December 31 immediately following the next general election, or the period defined by resolution or bylaw for a by-election, as per the *Local Authorities Election Act*.

- 2.4 “Candidate” means an individual running for the Mayor or Councillor in a municipal election or by-election and has submitted valid nomination papers to the Municipality in accordance with the *Local Authorities Election Act*. This includes both incumbents and new candidates.
- 2.5 “Chief Administrative Officer” or “CAO” means the Chief Administrative Officer of Morinville appointed pursuant to s. 205 of the *Municipal Government Act* or the designate of the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 2.6 “Council” means Council of Morinville.
- 2.7 “Election” means municipal election, by-election, or vote on a question held in accordance with the *Local Authorities Election Act*.
- 2.8 “Incumbent” means a member of Council running for re-election. As a member of Council, the incumbent holds office while campaigning in the municipal election and remains in office until a newly elected Council is sworn in, as per the *Local Authorities Election Act* and the *Municipal Government Act*. Incumbents are also considered candidates, having submitted valid nomination papers for re-election in accordance with the *Election Bylaw and Local Authorities Election Act*.
- 2.9 “Member of Council” or “Council member” means any member of Council, including the Mayor.
- 2.10 “Morinville” or Municipality” means the Municipal Corporation of Morinville.
- 2.11 “Municipal employee” means an individual employed to provide services on a permanent, temporary, contract, or casual basis, either part-time or full-time, for the Municipality, including temporary Election workers.
- 2.12 “Municipal facilities” means any Municipal-owned or leased building, office, structure or parking lot, and any property developed or used by the Municipality as a public park, sports field, playground, or recreational area.
- 2.13 “Municipal resources” means all assets and property owned or controlled by the Municipality, including physical and human resources, as well as financial and non-financial assets. Examples include:
- 2.13.1 Buildings, vehicles, equipment, tools, computers, and telephones;
- 2.13.2 Documents (physical and electronic), promotional materials, website content, and intellectual property (e.g., logos, slogans); and

2.13.3 Municipal services, accounts, or credentials.

2.14 “Third party” means any individual, group, or organization that is not a candidate but may engage in activities related to the election, such as advocacy or campaigning.

### **3.0 Application**

3.1 The Policy is applicable to all municipal elections and by-elections.

3.2 This Policy is applicable during the Campaign period as defined in the *Local Authority Elections Act*.

3.3 The precedence of the rules governing election campaigns, in descending level of authority, is:

3.3.1 Statutory legislation, including but not limited to the *Local Authorities Election Act* and *Municipal Government Act*.

3.3.2 Municipal Bylaws, including but not limited to the *Election Bylaw*, *Traffic Safety Bylaw*, *Land Use Bylaw*, and any amendment thereto.

3.3.3 This Policy.

3.4 For the purposes of this Policy, individuals hired to act as election workers shall be considered Municipal employees.

### **4.0 Policy Statements**

4.1 All candidates will receive equal treatment from the Municipality regardless of whether the candidate is an incumbent.

### **5.0 Use of Municipal Resources During Elections**

5.1 The use of Municipal resources, including facilities, services, equipment, supplies, and employee time, shall not be used for any election-related activities except:

5.1.1 when normally available to the public;

5.1.2 when provided to all candidates; or

5.1.3 in accordance with a valid rental agreement and the *Fees and Charges Bylaw*, if applicable.

- 5.2 Municipal resources shall not be used for any campaign materials, including displaying and distribution of materials, except when made available to all candidates equally as outlined in 5.1, such as an all-candidate forum.
- 5.3 Candidates, incumbents, or an associated third party shall not campaign at Municipally funded events but are permitted to campaign on public right-of-way sidewalks, thoroughfares, and during all-candidates meetings or forums.
  - 5.3.1 Candidates, incumbents, or an associated third party are permitted to attend Municipally funded events in either their capacity as Members of Council or as members of the public, provided no campaigning occurs during the event.
- 5.4 The use of Municipal logos, slogans, images, or branding for campaign purposes is strictly prohibited.
- 5.5 Municipal-owned devices and email systems must not be used for campaign communications.
- 5.6 Municipal-owned websites and social media accounts shall not be used for campaigning except when available to all candidates or related to general election information, such as candidate forums.
- 5.7 Municipal employees shall not be requested to provide campaign-related tasks or campaign advice except when available to all candidates equally, such as the Candidate Handbook.

## **6.0 Requests for Information from Candidates**

- 6.1 Information that is readily available to the public may be requested through the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Office of the CAO, or Legislative Services.
  - 6.1.1 The response will be distributed to all registered candidates simultaneously via email to ensure equal access to the same information at the same time, provided they have supplied their email addresses for election-related correspondence.
- 6.2 All other information requests from a candidate where information is not readily available to the public will be directed to the Chief Administrative Officer, and;

- 6.2.1 the Chief Administrative Officer will direct members of Administration regarding the response; and
- 6.2.2 the response will be distributed to all registered candidates simultaneously via email to ensure equal access to the same information at the same time, provided they have supplied their email addresses for election-related correspondence.
- 6.3 Information requests from incumbents should be requested through personal emails, not municipally owned email systems.

## **7.0 Conduct of Council and Candidates**

- 7.1 Members of Council and Candidates shall not:
  - 7.1.1 Use Municipal funds to acquire resources for any campaign or campaign-related activities.
  - 7.1.2 Use Municipal facilities or property for campaign events unless the facility or property is rented in accordance with valid rental agreements and the *Fees and Charges Bylaw*.
- 7.2 Members of Council and candidates are not permitted to campaign at events organized by the Municipality.
- 7.3 Members of Council and candidates are not permitted to engage in campaign activities directed at Municipal employees while those employees are at their workplace or engaged in work for the Municipality.

## **8.0 Conduct of Administration**

- 8.1 By virtue of their position or responsibilities, employees who have direct input into the conduct of municipal elections or must maintain an impartial relationship with the elected Council shall not participate in the election campaigns of any candidate.
  - 8.1.1 The Chief Administrative Officer, General Managers, and employees within the Office of the CAO regularly interface with elected officials and must maintain an independent and impartial relationship with Council.
  - 8.1.2 The Legislative Services business area is responsible for the administrative conduct of any municipal election, by-election, and vote in question and, therefore, is responsible for ensuring the election is

conducted in a free, fair, transparent, and accountable manner. Members of Legislative Services will assume positions of Returning Officer, Presiding Deputy Returning Officer, and Deputy Returning Officers and are required to take an oath as prescribed under the *Local Authorities Election Act*, which prohibits participation in the election campaign of any candidate.

- 8.1.3 Municipal employees acting in Election Worker roles, including those appointed or employed as a constable or election worker, will be required to make a declaration as required by the *Local Authorities Election Act* and, therefore, shall not participate in the election campaign of any candidate for municipal office.
- 8.2 All Municipal employees shall treat all candidates and incumbents in the same manner, providing equal access to public information. All Municipal employees shall remain neutral while receiving compensation from the Municipality.
- 8.3 Municipal employees shall not participate in or perform any work related to campaigning during hours in which the employee is receiving compensation from the Municipality. Employees may participate in candidate campaigns outside their working hours for the Municipality.
- 8.4 Municipal employees shall not:
  - 8.4.1 Post or distribute campaign material on behalf of a candidate at Municipal facilities.
  - 8.4.2 Display campaign advertising, distribute campaign materials, or otherwise publicly endorse any candidate while representing or performing their duties for the Municipality.
- 8.5 If campaigning outside employment hours or duties, the municipal employee shall not:
  - 8.5.1 Identify themselves as an employee of the Municipality.
  - 8.5.2 Wear or carry municipally issued identification or branded items that identify them as an employee of the Municipality.

## 9.0 Severability

- 9.1 If any section or parts of this Policy are found in any court of law to be illegal or beyond the power of Council to enact, such section or parts shall be deemed to

be severable, and all other sections or parts of this Policy shall be deemed to be separate and independent therefrom and to be enacted as such.

## **10.0 Review Date**

- 10.1 For the purposes of ensuring that this Policy is revised for ongoing relevancy and necessity, a review will occur prior to December 31, 2028. The Policy shall be brought forth and repassed in its present or an amended form or rescinded.
- 10.2 This Policy shall remain in effect if the review date passes prior to Council review.

## **SECTION B**

### **1.0 Reference to other Policy and Legislation**

*Local Authorities Election Act*  
*Municipal Government Act*  
Election Bylaw  
Council Code of Conduct Bylaw  
Traffic Safety Bylaw (Election Signs)  
Land Use Bylaw (Election Signs)  
Fees and Charges Bylaw  
Budget Principles and Guidelines Policy  
Code of Conduct & Ethics – Administrative Policy

### **2.0 Persons Affected**

Members of Council  
Municipal Employees and Election Workers  
Election Candidates

### **3.0 Review/Revision History and Author**

New Policy – Legislative Services / Office of the CAO

#### **ORIGINAL SIGNED**

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Simon Boersma  
Mayor

#### **ORIGINAL SIGNED**

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Michelle Hay  
Interim Chief Administrative Officer