

December 21, 2014

Consolidated Policy about Letters of Reference

At its July 25, 26, 27, 2006 meeting City Council passed the following rules and guidelines about the provision of references for individuals seeking employment or appointment with the City and in other capacities. What follows is a consolidation of the approved rules and guidelines.

References for City of Toronto Positions

With respect to references for those applying for employment With the City of Toronto or appointment to a City agency, board or commission, or any other position or office with the City:

- A. a Member of Council shall not provide a reference in support of an applicant for employment with the City of Toronto or appointment to a City agency, board or commission, or any other position or office with the City of Toronto, unless that Member of Council has had an employment or other relevant relationship (such as that of teacher or volunteer group supervisor) with the person requesting the reference;
- B. even where there is such a relevant relationship, a Member of Council shall not provide a reference for any person (a) who is a relative of the Member of Council as defined in the City of Toronto's October 2005, policy regulating the hiring of relatives of other employees or (b) whose only relevant relationship with the Member of Council has been as a member of the public service of the City of Toronto or a City of Toronto agency, board or commission (with the exception of a Member's own staff);
- C. in the case of City of Toronto agencies, boards and commissions (and any other situations in which Members of Council participate as decision-makers in a City of Toronto hiring or appointment process), no participating Member of Council shall act as a reference for a candidate for appointment or hiring, and, where a participating Member of Council would otherwise be eligible to act as a reference, the Member of Council shall declare that fact to the appointing authority; and,
- D. for the purposes of these rules, providing a reference includes both written and verbal references and any other form of intervention on behalf of the person in question. However, it does not extend to sending on (without comment) letters of inquiry about possible positions with the City of Toronto to the relevant hiring authority.

Other requests for references

With respect to reference in any context in their capacity as Members of Council, Council approved the following guidelines:

Unless the circumstances clearly indicate otherwise, Members of Council:

A. should not provide references where the only basis for doing so is to use the influence of your office or to help someone you know merely as a constituent, friend or relative; and

B. should confine the provision of references to situations where you have relevant personal experience with the candidate.

Valerie Jepson
Integrity Commissioner

This Consolidation was prepared by the Integrity Commissioner strictly for ease of reference. In the case of any discrepancy between this consolidation and the original Council decision, the Council decision takes precedence.