
Complaint and Application Procedures

Authority

These procedures for Code of Conduct complaints and *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* (MCIA) applications about a member of Council or a local board (restricted definition), including an adjudicative board, for the City of Toronto are issued by the Integrity Commissioner in accordance with [§3-4.4](#) of [Chapter 3 of the Toronto Municipal Code, Accountability Officers](#).

Definitions

1. In these procedures,
 - a. the definitions set out in the [City of Toronto Act, 2006, S.O. 2006, c. 11, Sched. A](#), the [Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50](#), and ss. [33](#) and [34](#) of the [Public Inquiries Act, 2009 S.O. 2009, c. 33, Sched. 6](#) apply;
 - b. "applicant" is a person who has made an MCIA application;
 - c. "application form" is a form issued by the Commissioner and made available on the [website](#) of the Office of the Integrity Commissioner for the purpose of making an MCIA application;
 - d. "Code of Conduct" refers to the [Code of Conduct for Members of Council](#), the [Code of Conduct for Members of Local Boards \(Restricted Definition\)](#) or the [Code of Conduct for Members of Adjudicative Boards](#);
 - e. "Code of Conduct complaint" is a request for an inquiry within the meaning of [section 160\(1\)](#) of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* about whether a member of Council or of a local board (restricted definition), including adjudicative boards has contravened the Code of Conduct applicable to the member;
 - f. "Commissioner" is the Integrity Commissioner;
 - g. "complainant" is a person who has made an informal or formal Code of Conduct complaint;
 - h. "complaint form" is a form issued by the Commissioner and made available on the [website](#) of the Office of the Integrity Commissioner for making a Code of Conduct complaint;

- i. "informal complaint" is a request for the Integrity Commissioner to assist to informally resolve a concern about a possible Code of Conduct complaint without an investigation;
- j. "intake review" is the preliminary review of a Code of Conduct complaint and an MCIA application described in these procedures;
- k. "MCIA application" is an application to the Integrity Commissioner for an inquiry, within the meaning of section [160.1\(2\)](#) of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, to be carried out concerning an alleged contravention of section(s) [5](#), [5.1](#) and/or [5.2](#) of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*;
- l. "member" is a person who is a member of Council or of a local board (restricted definition), including adjudicative boards;
- m. "respondent" is a person who is the subject of a Code of Conduct complaint, an MCIA application or an informal complaint.

Procedural Requirements

2. A person who wishes to make either an informal or formal Code of Conduct complaint, or who wishes to make an MCIA application, must follow these procedures.
 - 2.1 City Council or a local board may request an investigation by public motion.
 - 2.2 The first complaint on a matter will be acknowledged, receive intake review and the Commissioner's decision to investigate or dismiss the complaint. Successive duplicate complaints will be told the Office has a complaint on the same subject matter and that they will not receive further correspondence unless they demonstrate that their experience differs in a meaningful way from the other complaints.
3. The Commissioner will apply these procedures with necessary modifications when requests or applications are made by City Council, a local board (restricted definition), or a Toronto accountability officer.
4. No new informal complaints, Code of Conduct complaints or MCIA applications can be received after the nomination day for a regular election year, as described in [section 31](#) of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*.
5. All open inquiries on the nomination day for a regular election, as described in section 31 of the *Municipal Elections Act, 1996*, will be suspended in accordance with the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* and the parties will be so notified and informed

of their rights to seek a resumption of such suspended inquiries by the Commissioner.

6. The Commissioner may attempt to settle any matter at any stage.
7. The Commissioner has discretion to waive compliance with any part of these procedures other than those required by the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, the *Public Inquiries Act, 2009* or Chapter 3 of the Toronto Municipal Code.

Informal Complaints under a Code of Conduct

8. To make an informal complaint, a person must write and request the Commissioner's help to settle the matter and provide the following information:
 - a. their name and contact information;
 - b. the name of the member they are complaining about;
 - c. a description of what has taken place, what conduct they believe is inconsistent with the member's official role, and how they know about this;
 - d. how they would like the matter settled.
9. The Commissioner will review this information to determine whether the subject matter involves the Code of Conduct and is suitable for the Commissioner to attempt to settle or resolve without an inquiry and, if that is the case, will proceed to do so.
10. The Commissioner will assess if it is suitable for the informal complaint to be settled and may decline to assist at any point.
11. The complainant or the respondent can decline to participate in the informal complaint at any time.
12. Making an informal complaint does not limit a complainant from subsequently filing a Code of Conduct complaint, if the informal complaint is not settled.
13. The Commissioner will not report to City Council about any specific informal complaint, except for anonymized information about the subject matters or statistical information in the Commissioner's annual report.

Code of Conduct Complaints and MCI Applications

Filing

14. A person who wishes to make a Code of Conduct complaint must complete a complaint form and send it to the Office of the Integrity Commissioner by [email](#) or mail, or deliver it in person to the Office.

14.1 A complaint form must include the requested contact information and a signed declaration that the information supplied is true, correct and complete. It must be signed by an identifiable individual.

14.2 A Code of Conduct complaint must be filed within three months of the complainant becoming aware of the conduct that gives rise to the alleged contravention, or six months of the conduct.

Despite this time limit, the Commissioner may exercise discretion to maintain the complaint if:

(a) it is the public interest to do so; or

(b) the complainant has a compelling explanation for failing to file the complaint within the time limit.

14.3 The Integrity Commissioner may recommend and facilitate an informal complaint procedure, even if a formal complaint has been filed.

15. Within six weeks of becoming aware of an alleged contravention of the MCI Act, a person who wishes to make an MCI application must complete the application form, with the required statutory declaration, and send it to the Office of the Integrity Commissioner by [email](#) or mail, or deliver it in person to the Office.

16. A person may file both a Code of Conduct complaint and an MCI application about the same subject matter, in which case they must file both a complaint form and an application form.

17. If a person is complaining about the actions of more than one member, a separate complaint form or application must be filed for each member.

Intake Review

18. The Commissioner will review all Code of Conduct complaints and MCI applications to verify that they are properly filed in accordance with these procedures and, as applicable, the requirements of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*.

19. All Code of Conduct complaints and MCI applications that are properly filed will be reviewed by the Commissioner to determine whether the subject matter of the complaint or application is within the jurisdiction of the Commissioner.

19.1 At the Intake Review stage, but before a decision as to whether to undertake an inquiry, the Commissioner may undertake a preliminary review to gather information and assess the merits of the complaint. This stage will not involve questioning the respondent. Any information obtained during the

preliminary stage must be disclosed to the respondent should an inquiry be commenced.

19.2 If the complaint is in relation to a matter already being addressed in another process such as a court, tribunal or similar proceeding, the Integrity Commissioner may use their discretion to refrain from initiating or may suspend any investigation pending the result of the other process.

20. The Commissioner may dismiss a Code of Conduct complaint or an MCIA application without conducting any inquiry if:
 - a. there are insufficient or no grounds for an investigation; or,
 - b. the complaint or application is frivolous, vexatious, or not made in good faith.
21. The Commissioner may dismiss a Code of Conduct complaint without conducting any inquiry if:
 - a. If it was not made within the limitation period set out in section 14.2.
 - b. the Commissioner is of the opinion that the investigation would serve no useful purpose.
22. The Commissioner must, subject to the exception below, dismiss an MCIA application, without conducting any inquiry, when the application is submitted more than six weeks after the applicant became aware of the alleged contravention. The only exception to this time limit is if the applicant knew of the alleged contravention within six weeks of nomination day of a regular election for City Council and submits their application within six weeks after voting day.
23. If a Code of Conduct complaint or an MCIA application is not dismissed, the Commissioner will conduct an inquiry into the matter.
24. The Commissioner will inform the complainant or applicant of the outcome of the intake review.
25. If a Code of Conduct complaint or an MCIA application is dismissed at the intake stage, the Commissioner will not inform the respondent of the Code of Conduct complaint or MCIA application unless the Commissioner determines that it is otherwise appropriate to do so.

Inquiries

Commencing and Conducting an Inquiry

26. In the case of an inquiry about a Code of Conduct complaint, the Commissioner will inform the respondent of the substance of the allegations and provide the

respondent the opportunity to provide a response within a specified time. The Commissioner may provide the response to the complainant for reply.

27. In the case of an inquiry about an MCIA application, the Commissioner will provide the respondent with a copy of the MCIA application filed and provide the respondent the opportunity to provide a response within a specified time. The Commissioner may provide the response to the applicant for reply.
28. If the same person has made a Code of Conduct complaint and an MCIA application about the same subject matter, the Commissioner may conduct a single inquiry into both.
29. If more than one person makes a Code of Conduct complaint or MCIA application about the same subject matter, the Commissioner may combine these into a single inquiry.
30. When conducting inquiries in relation to Code of Conduct complaints and MCIA applications, the Commissioner may use the powers of investigation set out in [Part V](#) of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, including the powers provided in [section 33](#) of the *Public Inquiries Act, 2009*.
31. The Commissioner will seek and share information with and from the complainant, the respondent and witnesses as is necessary to complete the inquiry, in a manner that is procedurally fair, proportionate, and that enables the Commissioner to maintain secrecy with respect to matters in accordance with sub-section [161\(1\)](#) of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*.
32. Should, during the course of an inquiry into an MCIA application, the Commissioner determine that the subject matter may also, or alternatively, give rise to a possible Code of Conduct contravention, the Commissioner may treat the matter as a Code of Conduct complaint, and if so will inform the respondent, provide an opportunity to provide a response, and proceed as if a Code of Conduct complaint had also been made with respect to the subject matter of the MCIA application.
33. If the Commissioner determines when conducting an inquiry about a Code of Conduct complaint or MCIA application that there are reasonable grounds to believe that there has been a contravention of the [Criminal Code of Canada](#) or an offence committed under any other Act, other than the MCIA, the Commissioner will suspend the inquiry and the complainant or applicant will be so advised. The Commissioner must report this matter to the appropriate authority and the suspension of the inquiry to City Council. The Commissioner's investigation will remain suspended until any resulting police investigation and prosecution have concluded.

Concluding an Inquiry

34. During the course of an inquiry into a Code of Conduct complaint or MCIA application, the Commissioner may determine that there are insufficient or no grounds for a further investigation, the complaint or application is frivolous, vexatious, not made in good faith, or that the continued investigation would serve no useful purpose and, in these circumstances, the Commissioner will so notify the parties and make no report about the matter.

34.1 The Commissioner's decision is final and not subject to appeal. In exceptional cases, if a complainant believes that a significant piece of evidence or argument was overlooked, they may request a reconsideration, and the Commissioner will review the matter.

34.2 If a person remains dissatisfied with their experience with the Integrity Commissioner, they may bring their concerns to Ombudsman Ontario. This is not an appeal of the substance of the decision, but a review of procedural fairness.

34.3 Decisions of the Integrity Commissioner may be challenged only by judicial review to the Ontario Divisional Court within 30 days of the decision.

Reports about Code of Conduct Inquiries

35. The Commissioner shall not issue a report finding a violation of the Code of Conduct on the part of any respondent unless the respondent has had notice of the basis for the proposed finding and any recommended penalty or remedial action, and an opportunity either in person or in writing to comment on the proposed findings and any recommended sanction or remedial action.

36. If the Commissioner concludes that a respondent contravened the Code of Conduct, the report will contain a recommendation regarding penalty or remedial action and be filed with City Council or the applicable local board (restricted definition) in accordance with Council or the board's procedures.

37. If the Commissioner concludes that the respondent did not contravene the Code of Conduct, the report will be provided to the complainant and respondent. The Commissioner may file all or any portion of the report with City Council or the board, as applicable, should the Commissioner determine that the report contains useful guidance or interpretation about the meaning of the Code of Conduct for members, or for any other similar reason.

Commissioner's Decision on how to proceed with an MCIA Application

38. At the conclusion of the inquiry or within 180 days from the application date, whichever is earlier, the Commissioner will notify the applicant and respondent

whether the Commissioner intends to apply to a judge of the Superior Court of Justice under [section 8](#) of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* for a determination about whether the respondent has contravened section [5](#), [5.1](#) or [5.2](#) of that Act and publish written reasons for the decision.

39. In making a decision, the Commissioner may consider whether the inquiry established that the conduct at issue was also, or instead, contrary to the Code of Conduct and, accordingly, whether the matter could be adequately addressed by a report to City Council or the applicable local board (restricted definition), including an adjudicative board.

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