
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CEC-04-2024 Respectful Conduct Policy

For Consideration by Council in Committee on November 19, 2024



OBJECTIVE:

To establish a Respectful Conduct Policy for Haldimand County that can be applied to all County facilities and services, as well as introduce Corporate Service Restriction and Trespass Procedures to support the application of this policy in a clear and transparent manner.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CEC-04-2024 Respectful Conduct Policy be received;
2. AND THAT the Respectful Conduct Policy, as presented as Attachment 1 to Report CEC-04-2024, be approved;
3. AND THAT the Service Restriction and Trespass Procedures, as presented as Attachment 2 to Report CEC-04-2024, be approved;
4. AND THAT the Senior Management Team be given the authority to revise and update the Service Restriction and Trespass Procedures as necessary.

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Respectfully submitted: Megan Jamieson, CHRL, General Manager, Corporate & Social Services

Approved: Cathy Case, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Haldimand County is committed to the provision of a positive customer experience, which includes ensuring a respectful, safe, and harassment-free environment for the public, employees, volunteers, and members of Council, Boards, and Committees of Council on or within all municipally-owned and/or operated facilities and public spaces. It is municipal best practice to maintain a policy that defines acceptable public conduct within municipally-owned facilities and provides notice of what constitutes unacceptable conduct and consequences that may result for those engaging in unacceptable conduct.

After review of the existing Policy 2014-02, Public Conduct on Haldimand County Property, staff identified that the current policy focuses on recreation facilities and does not easily apply to other facilities and services. To ensure clear expectations for respectful conduct in all municipal interactions, staff recommend that an overarching Respectful Conduct Policy be established. The overarching Respectful Conduct Policy would set general corporate principles and expectations around respectable conduct for all interactions regardless of the communication channel (in person, telephone, or digital) within all properties owned and operated by Haldimand County.

The expectations outlined in the draft policy, provided as Attachment 1 to this report, complement the expectations set out for staff, Council, suppliers and recreation/culture/halls/parks facility users regarding appropriate and respectful conduct as outlined under separate policies.

Additionally, staff recommend the development of Service Restriction and Trespass Procedures (Attachment 2) to guide staff on imposing restrictions to access properties owned and operated by the County in a consistent and transparent manner.

BACKGROUND:

In 2003, Haldimand County introduced Policy 2003-08 For Sake of Sport to ensure a respectful and supportive climate was provided at municipal recreational facilities for the public to enjoy sport and learn about competition, teamwork, sportsmanship and fair play. In 2013, staff evaluated the effectiveness of the For Sake of Sport Policy and as a result, staff recommended to Council that Policy 2003-08 be used as a foundation document for an expanded public conduct and was replaced with Policy 2014-02 Public Conduct on Haldimand County Property to address conduct on all County properties, rather than just at recreational facilities.

In September 2023, Council adopted the Customer Service Strategy developed by the Customer Experience & Communications Division. Within the strategy, the customer service vision states: “Haldimand County strives to foster a customer-focused service culture that supports staff and provides the necessary resources and tools in order to ensure the provision of a positive customer experience that is consistent, accessible, responsive, and easy for all”.

As ongoing work related to the Strategy, the Division reviewed the existing public conduct policy to ensure staff were best positioned to provide a positive customer experience for all. Staff identified that the focus of the existing Policy 2014-02 Public Conduct on Haldimand County Property continued to primarily be focused on ensuring measures are in place to ensure the safety of persons attending community and recreation facilities owned by Haldimand County, leaving a gap in formally documenting the County’s expectations related to respectful conduct for all customer interactions while delivering County services regardless of location.

ANALYSIS:

Municipal best practice is to define what constitutes unacceptable conduct and potential consequences of that behaviour in a broader respectful conduct policy. To address the identified deficiencies with Policy 2014-02 Public Conduct on Haldimand County Property, as well as to ensure that customer service standards can be met, staff recommend the implementation of an overarching policy that serves to provide notice of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and consequences that may result for the person who is engaging in unacceptable behaviour regardless of where the interactions are occurring.

The proposed Respectful Conduct Policy (Attachment 1) would be applicable for all customer interactions with the County, including in person, telephone and digital communication channels within all properties owned and/or operated by Haldimand County, and during all services provided.

The draft Policy is included as Attachment 1 to this report, and includes:

- a broad definition of unacceptable conduct, unacceptable behaviour, frivolous and/or vexatious actions that includes select examples;
- defined responsibilities of staff and assigning the administration of the incident review to management team of the division related to the incident under investigation;
- a list of potential service restrictions applicable; and
- an appeal process.

Staff also have developed procedures to provide staff guidelines on consistently applying the Policy attached as Attachment 2 that includes:

- guidelines for addressing unacceptable behaviour section into three main categories:
 - in person incident - Haldimand County staff,
 - telephone or digital communication incident - Haldimand County staff, and
 - incident - Community Volunteer or Haldimand County Contract Holder.
- guidelines for staff administering and issuing Notice(s) of Service Restrictions and/or Trespass Notices.

Existing Policy 2014-02 – Public Conduct on Haldimand County Property:

As noted, the Respectful Conduct Policy is not intended to replace the existing Policy 2014-02 Public Conduct on Haldimand County Property, but is instead meant to complement it by setting out the overarching expectations of respectful interactions and behaviours in all settings, including recreation facilities, cultural spaces, halls, and parks properties owned and/or operated by Haldimand County. Policy 2014-02 is still undergoing an internal review. Should any significant changes be required to the policy, it will be brought to Council for its review and approval.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Costs, if any, related to the communication and implementation of this policy will be brought forward through the applicable budget process.

The draft policy, included at Attachment 1, has been reviewed by the County’s legal representative, with relevant comments included within.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

The Respectful Conduct Policy applies to all persons attending any facility/property owned and/or operated by the County and/or interacting with other members of the general public, County staff, volunteers, contract holders, or members of Council, Boards, and Committees of Council in any manner using forms of communication. The policy provides direction to members of the public about expectations for their behaviour when visiting County-owned properties and/or accessing programs and services at properties owned and/or operated by the County. Additionally, the policy defines for members of the public who engage in unacceptable conduct what restrictions may be imposed and how they can appeal those restrictions if applicable.

The Service Restriction and Trespass Procedures (Attachment 2) provide clear guidance to both staff and the public around addressing and reporting incidents, issuing written restriction or trespass notices, and enforcing the Respectful Conduct Policy proposed.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: Yes

REFERENCES:

1. [Customer Service Strategy](#)
2. [2014-02 Public Conduct on Haldimand County Property](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft Respectful Conduct Policy.
2. Draft Corporate Service Restriction and Trespass Procedures.