



Municipal Affairs and Housing Office of the Minister

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August 9, 2024

To All Nova Scotia Elected Officials and Chief Administrative Officers/Village Clerks:

I am writing to inform you of an update on the municipal and village codes of conduct. In January 2022, the Code of Conduct Working Group was established to develop a set of recommendations on the code of conduct framework, which included content to include in the code, sanctions that may be imposed if a breach occurred, and options for an investigator model. This collaborative working group included representatives from the Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities (NSFM), the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS), the Association of Nova Scotia Villages (ANSV), and the Department of Municipal Affairs and Housing (DMAH).

Following significant consultation with municipalities in September 2022, March 2023, and September 2023 on the code of conduct framework, the Code of Conduct Working Group developed 25 recommendations for me to consider as Minister. I am pleased to advise, after careful consideration, I am accepting all 25 recommendations presented by the Code of Conduct Working Group. The recommendations, along with the anticipated framework are appended to this letter for your reference.

The code of conduct framework will be coming into effect following the October municipal election. The legislative provisions require municipalities and villages to adopt a code of conduct consisting of the model code of conduct as outlined in the regulations. As Minister, I will prescribe that all municipalities and villages must adopt the model code of conduct within 60 days following the October election and provide confirmation of their notice of adoption. Should a municipality or village fail to meet the above requirements, municipal funding will be withheld pursuant to the *Municipal Grants Act*. As one of the first items to discuss on your agendas, I trust this will bring an unequivocal understanding of the conduct to uphold as an elected official in Nova Scotia.

I understand and recognize that code of conduct training is an important component to make the framework successful. The NSFM will be the lead organization on the development of a robust code of conduct training module, and it is expected this module will be available in early 2025. To bridge the gap between when the regulations will be in place to when the robust training module will be ready in early 2025, the Department will provide municipalities and villages resources that can be shared with councils and commissions.

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As we move toward a new standard for elected officials following the election, I would encourage you to share the documents appended in this letter with all candidates running in the upcoming municipal election. Candidates should be notified about the new expectations surrounding the code of conduct.

In closing, I would like to thank the Code of Conduct Working Group members for their hard work and dedication to this initiative over the past two years. This initiative is a wonderful example of collaboration between the Department and our municipal partners.

Sincerely,



Honourable John A. Lohr
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing

Attached

c: Code of Conduct Working Group
Mayor Carolyn Bolivar-Getson, NSFM
Juanita Spencer, CEO NSFM
Kim Ramsay, President AMANS
David Campbell, Executive Director AMANS