

# REGIONAL DISTRICT OF NANAIMO

## P O L I C Y

SUBJECT: <i>Code of Conduct</i>	POLICY NO: A1-37
	CROSS REF.: A1-03
EFFECTIVE DATE: <b>January 25, 2022</b>	APPROVED BY: Board
REVISION DATE: <b>June 14, 2022</b>	PAGE: 1 OF 5

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) Board of Directors is committed to shared expectations for conduct and behaviour for how members of the Board should conduct themselves while carrying out their responsibilities and in their work as a collective decision-making body for their community.

### **PURPOSE**

It is each Elected Official's individual responsibility to uphold both the letter and the spirit of this Code of Conduct in their dealings with other Elected Officials, staff, and the public. Elected Officials must conduct themselves in accordance with the law. This Code of Conduct is intended to be developed, interpreted and applied by Elected Officials in a manner that is consistent with all applicable Federal and Provincial Laws, as well as the bylaws and policies of the Regional District of Nanaimo, the common law and any other legal obligations that apply to Elected Officials individually or as a collective Board.

Provincial legislation will soon require local governments in British Columbia to address code of conduct expectations for elected officials in each four-year term of office. This policy is designed to ensure compliance with this new legislative requirement.

### **PROCEDURE**

Following an election, each member of the RDN Board of Directors and Alternate Directors will be provided with the Code of Conduct Policy and a signature endorsing the policy will be requested as part of the orientation process.

### **SCOPE**

This Code of Conduct applies to the members of the Regional District of Nanaimo Board of Directors and Alternate Directors.

### **FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT**

1. **Integrity** – means being honest and demonstrating strong ethical principles. Conduct under this principle upholds the public interest, is truthful and honourable.

2. **Respect** – means having due regard for others’ perspectives, wishes and rights; it also means displaying deference to the offices of local government, and the role of local government in community decision making. Conduct under this principle is demonstrated when an Elected Official fosters an environment of trust by demonstrating due regard for the perspectives, wishes and rights of others and an understanding of the role of the local government.
3. **Accountability** – means an obligation and willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions. Conduct under this principle is demonstrated when Elected Officials, individually and collectively, accept responsibility for their actions and decisions.
4. **Leadership and Collaboration** – means an ability to lead, listen to, and positively influence others; it also means coming together to create or meet a common goal through collective efforts. Conduct under this principle is demonstrated when an Elected Official encourages individuals to work together in pursuit of collective objectives by leading, listening to, and positively influencing others.

## **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

**Integrity:** Integrity is demonstrated by the following conduct:

Elected Officials will:

1. Be truthful, honest, and open in all dealings, including those with other Elected Officials, staff and the public.
2. Ensure that their actions are consistent with the shared principles and values collectively agreed to by the board.
3. Follow through on their commitments, correct errors in a timely and transparent manner, and engage in positive communication with the community.
4. Direct their minds to the merits of the decisions before them, ensuring that they act on the basis of relevant information and principles and in consideration of the consequences of those decisions.
5. Behave in a manner that promotes public confidence in all of their dealings.

**Respect:** Respect is demonstrated through the following conduct:

Elected Officials will:

1. Treat every person with dignity, understanding, and respect.
2. Show consideration for every person’s values, beliefs, and contributions to discussions.
3. Demonstrate awareness of their own conduct, and consider how their words or actions may be perceived as offensive or demeaning.
4. Not engage in behaviour that is indecent, insulting or abusive. This behaviour includes unwanted physical contact, or other aggressive actions that may cause any person harm or make a person feel threatened.

**Accountability:** Accountability is demonstrated through the following conduct:

Elected Officials will:

1. Be responsible for the decisions that they make and be accountable for their own actions and honour the intentions of the Board.
2. Listen to and consider the opinions and needs of the community in all decision-making, and allow for appropriate opportunities for discourse and feedback.
3. Carry out their duties in an open and transparent manner so that the public can understand the process and rationale used to reach decisions and the reasons for taking certain actions.

**Leadership and Collaboration:** Leadership and collaboration is demonstrated through the following conduct:

Elected Officials will:

1. Behave in a manner that builds public trust and confidence in the local government.
2. Consider the issues before them and make decisions as a collective body. As such, Elected Officials will actively participate in debate about the merits of a decision, but once a decision has been made, all Elected Officials will recognize the democratic majority, ideally acknowledging its rationale, when articulating their opinions on a decision.
3. Recognize that debate is an essential part of the democratic process and encourage constructive discourse while empowering other Elected Officials and staff to provide their perspectives on relevant issues.
4. As leaders of their communities, calmly face challenges, and provide considered direction on issues they face as part of their roles and responsibilities while empowering their colleagues and staff to do the same.
5. Recognize, respect and value the distinct roles and responsibilities others play in providing good governance and commit to fostering a positive working relationship with and among other Elected Officials, staff, and the public.
6. Recognize the importance of the role of the chair of meetings, and treat that person with respect at all times.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION PRESENTED IN CLOSED MEETINGS**

All information presented to the Board in Closed meetings will be kept strictly confidential.

Any release of Closed information, including release to any person in our Member Municipalities, must be authorized by a Rise and Report motion passed by the Board detailing the terms of the release as per the Regional District of Nanaimo Board Procedure Bylaw.

## **COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES**

As a general principle, the Board adopts the one employee model where the Board's point of contact with staff is the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

The Board recognizes the importance of ensuring that communications are directed to the CAO or shared with the CAO as necessary to facilitate orderly conduct of the business of the Board.

## Social Media Use

The Regional District of Nanaimo's goals in using social media are to inform residents and the public of services, projects and initiatives and can enable engaging and effective communication to a broader audience in a timely way.

RDN Board members:

1. Are encouraged to share social media posts from the RDN to help broaden the reach of the information and help keep the public informed.
2. Will use their social media profiles as a secondary information source once matters have been officially released by the RDN.
3. Ensure that social media profiles do not serve as official information on behalf of the RDN.
4. Include an "in my opinion" disclaimer when making follow up or personal posts to the RDN's social media postings and when creating original posts pertaining to RDN-related business.
5. Will ensure that their social media content does not indicate a conclusive view on a matter coming before the RDN Board.
6. Will not engage in back-and-forth communications amongst themselves on social media to avoid the possibility of that being construed as a Board meeting.
7. Have a duty of confidentiality to the RDN and to uphold the RDN's reputation. RDN Board members will not post any of the following on their social media:
  - a) Information discussed in closed session, unless the information has been released from closed session by a resolution of the RDN Board.
  - b) Information that would not be presented in a public forum.
  - c) Personal or confidential information regarding any RDN employees, elected officials and/or advisory committee members.
  - d) Negative statements disparaging or calling into question the professional capabilities of staff.
  - e) Confidential business information belonging to the RDN, including non-public financial or operational information.

By signing below, I hereby endorse the Code of Conduct policy for the Regional District of Nanaimo Board for the four-year term beginning October \_\_\_\_\_ (insert first year of the applicable four-year term) to October \_\_\_\_\_ (insert fourth year of the applicable four-year term):

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate Director, Area A

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate Director, Area B

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate Director, Area C

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate Director, Area E

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate Director, Area F

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate Director, Area G

\_\_\_\_\_  
Alternate Director, Area H