



Policy Number:	CO-059
Effective On:	June 9, 2025
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Review Frequency:	Every (4) years
Division Responsible:	Community & Protective Services
Cross-Reference:	GA-007 Public Complaints GA-008 FOIP Directive GA-010 Handling Anonymous, Frivolous, and/or Vexatious Complaints and Inquiries HR-006 Employee Attitude and Conduct HR-019 Respectful Workplace

1. Policy Statement

The City of Wetaskiwin is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, in compliance with the Canadian Labour Code and Alberta Occupational Health and Safety legislation. By fostering an environment that supports safety and wellbeing, the City enables employees to serve a thriving, safe, and sustainable community, delivering essential and valued services. The interactions between City employees and the public contribute to the overall health and safety in City facilities. In this spirit, the “public” are expected to interact with the City employees in a respectful and dignified manner.

This policy outlines the expectations of the public, in alignment with the City of Wetaskiwin’s Code of Conduct and Customer Service Standards contributing to a safe and healthy workplace and community.

City Employees are expected to be respectful, knowledgeable, and helpful, regardless of any challenging behaviour they may encounter. The City is dedicated to offering fair, consistent, and accessible service to all community members. This commitment applies whenever an individual visits a City facility, attends a City program or accesses any service provided by the City. If a member of the public shows inappropriate behaviour according to this policy, employees are encouraged to demonstrate empathy, acknowledge the individual’s situation, and feelings, and try to diffuse any potentially escalating situations.

1.1 Scope

1.2 This policy applies to the public when City of Wetaskiwin employees are in the following places:

- a) City buildings, facilities, sites, offices, and work environments.
- b) Locations visited by employees while travelling on City-related business; including but not limited to conferences, meetings, vendor/supplier or customer sites.

- c) Locations of work-based social gatherings.

1.3 As an employer, the City has a duty to:

- a) Warn and protect employees and contractors when there is an issue, or potential issue of violence, bullying, harassment in City facilities.
- b) Investigate reported incidents of inappropriate behaviours as noted above.
- c) Take necessary action when ‘inappropriate behaviours’ have been reported.
- d) Provide support for employees that have experienced the inappropriate behaviours.

2. Definitions

“Bullying” means a conscious, willful, deliberate, repeated, and hostile activity or behaviour that may be marked by the intent to intimidate, offend, degrade, or humiliate a particular person or group. Bullying may include, but is not limited to verbal, social, physical, and cyber bullying.

“Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)” means the Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Wetaskiwin, or the General Managers(s) or Department(s) designated by the Chief Administrative Officer.

“City” is the corporation of the City of Wetaskiwin.

“Customer” means any individual who interacts with City Representatives, irrespective of the nature or purpose of their interactions and regardless of whether a monetary exchange is involved.

“Designate” means a person chosen to officially do a particular job (e.g. CAO designates a General Manager to carry out CAO duties while away).

“Employee” is any person employed by the City which includes but is not limited to any person employed in the capacity of a full-time, part-time, casual, term, seasonal, summer, contracted position or volunteer of the City of Wetaskiwin.

“Facility” is a building, structure, park, playground, soccer field, tennis court, spray park, pool, and pool, ball diamond, or/and arena, whether indoors or not that is operated by the City, as well as any vehicle or equipment. The exception is the RCMP building.

“Forum Shopping” means the practice of strategically navigating through various City departments or levels within the organizations, in search of a more favourable or desired outcome.

“Inappropriate Behaviour” includes but is not limited to:

- a) **“Non-Compliance”** refers to the deliberate disregard or violation of the established guidelines or rules governing the use of City property or facilities, as outlined at each respective location.
- b) **“Harassment”** is any single incident or repeated incidents of objectional,

inappropriate, or unwelcome conduct, comment bullying, unwelcome joking or display, action, or gesture by a person that the person knows or ought reasonably to know will or would cause offence, humiliation, or intimidation to another person, or adversely affects the other person's mental and/or physical health and safety.

- c) **"Hostile"** is showing strong dislike, behaving unfriendly or aggressive.
- d) **"Threatening"** is having a hostile or deliberately frightening behaviour or manner, showing an intention to cause bodily harm or causing someone to feel vulnerable or at risk.
- e) **"Sexual Harassment"** is unwelcome sexual advances, comments of a sexual nature, requests for sexual favors, and harassment or comments about an individual's gender, all of which contribute a hostile work environment.

"Interaction" means written, verbal, or in-person communication of a customer in the form of inquiries, request, or direct involvement with a City Representative.

"Minor" is someone under the age of majority (18 years of age), which is defined as the age that distinguishes between childhood and adulthood in the eyes of the law.

"Program" is an activity, event, course, or class organized and operated by the City, or through the City's contracted services.

"Lack of cooperation" may include and is not limited to; providing disorganized or incomplete information, refusing to follow City instructions without justification, insisting on a specific outcome despite valid contrary arguments, and engaging in unhelpful behavior such as withholding information, dishonesty, or misquoting others.

"Unreasonable arguments" may include and is not limited to; those lacking logical structure, unsupported by evidence, based on conspiracy theories, rejecting valid counterpoints, disproportionately consuming resources, or containing false, inflammatory, defamatory, or unlawful claims.

"Unreasonable behaviors" may include and are not limited to aggression, verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation, threats of harm or property damage, stalking (in person or online), and emotional manipulation.

"Unreasonable demands" may include and is not limited to attempts to dictate the handling, priority, or outcome of their interaction; engaging in manipulation, intimidation, or harassment; insisting on impossible or inappropriate outcomes; and requesting services beyond what the City can provide.

"Unreasonable persistence" may include and is not limited to refusing to accept reasonable explanations or review outcomes, repeatedly demanding reconsideration without justification, reframing resolved issues to reopen them, making excessive contact despite requests to stop, and seeking different avenues for the same issue.

3. Standards

3.1 The following expectations apply to all customer interactions with City representatives.

- a) *“Reasonable Demands”*
Customer interactions that are attainable, realistic, and proportionate to the resources available to the City of Wetaskiwin.
- b) *“Reasonable Cooperation”*
Customer interactions are presented in a reasonably organized manner, with clear, relevant definitions of concerns and an appropriate level of detail. The City will strive to collaborate and work together towards finding solutions for all relevant interactions.
- d) *“Reasonable Persistence”*
Customers are expected to accept reasonable and logical explanations from City representatives. City representees will make reasonable efforts in resolving every interaction.
- e) *“Reasonable Behaviours”*
Customer interactions are courteous and respectful.
- f) *“Reasonable Arguments”*
Customer interactions that have a cause and effect, where it is possible to resolve the interaction.

4. Process

A breach of the Public Code of Conduct policy may result in the City imposing limitations and restrictions on a customer’s future interactions with City representatives and access to services. The City of Wetaskiwin’s approach to managing members of the public who are demonstrating inappropriate behaviour is to follow a four-stage process. Anonymous complaints as they are difficult, if not impossible, to assess or investigate will not be dealt with through this policy.

When a member of the public passes from one stage to another, they should receive confirmation of their status accompanied by an explanation. It is possible for a member of the public to progress from Stage 1 directly to any other stage, if the City of Wetaskiwin deems it appropriate to protect its staff & the behaviour warrants the immediate restriction of their contact channels.

Employees will complete an Incident Report Form and send it to the Supervisor within 24 hours of the incident’s occurrence. In consultation with the Health & Safety Advisor, the next steps will be determined, and the required action will be implemented.

4.1 Stage 1 “Warning”

Members of the public displaying inappropriate behaviour will be warned politely by the City representative they are dealing with. This initial response is intended to notify the

offender that their actions are inappropriate and give the individual an opportunity to change their offensive behaviour.

4.2 Stage 2 “The Single Point of Contact”

If the inappropriate behaviour continues or is repeated, the City of Wetaskiwin may adopt a “single point of contact” approach. This does not restrict the way the member of the public can deal with City of Wetaskiwin but restricts contact to one City employee. The single point of contact will be a Supervisor, Manager, General Manager or CAO. This appointed contact is responsible for managing future contact with the City of Wetaskiwin. It is important to note that a record of incidents shall be documented on the incident form.

4.3 Stage 3 “Restricted Contact Channels”

If a member of the public, even when dealing with their single point contact, continues to display inappropriate behaviour, their contact channels may then be restricted further. For example: only dealing via email, telephone or in person. These decisions will be made by Senior Management in collaboration with the Manager of the Department. It is important to note that the City’s restriction on an individual’s contact enables City of Wetaskiwin to deal with them efficiently and effectively; however, it may not be permanent. If a member of the public subjected to this procedure alters their behaviour, the decision to restrict contact channels may be reversed

4.4 Stage 4 “Public Ban”

This stage involves restricting the individual from accessing certain or all City facilities, programs or conducting business with the City of Wetaskiwin. A stage 4 – Public Ban will occur under either or both of the following circumstances:

- a) If a member of the public continues to display inappropriate or disruptive behaviour despite the previous stages of intervention.
- b) A public ban will also be implemented for those behaviours that involve obvious displays of any form of violence, sexual harassment to staff or another citizen within a City facility.

When advancing to Stage 4, the individual member of the public will receive formal written notice detailing the reasons for the ban, specific location(s) or facilities affected, the duration of the ban and any other conditions of the restriction.

4.5 The Department Manager is responsible (Enforcement Services may be called in to serve the ban) for issuing and communicating the notice, ensuring transparency and proper documentation of the process.

*Original has been signed & filed with
Records Management*

Tyler Gandam, Mayor

Sue Howard, City Manager