AGENDA

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD
BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, November 17, 2026, 3:30 p.m.
Oxford County Administration Building - Room 222

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
3. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF
4. ADOPTION OF BOARD MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

   4.1 October 20, 2026
5. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS AND CONSIDERATION THEREOF
6. CONSIDERATION OF CORRESPONDENCE
7. REPORTS

   7.1 2026-41 Key Agenda Items and Policy Review

   RECOMMENDATION

   1. That the Library Board receives verbal Report 2026-41 Key Agenda Items and Policy Framework Update for information and discussion.

   7.2 2026-42 Librarian Report

   RECOMMENDATION

   1. That the Library Board receives Report 2026-42, Librarian Report, for information and discussion.

   7.3 2026-43 2026 Q3 Business and Budget Plan Update

   RECOMMENDATION

   1. That the Board receives Report 2026-43 entitled "Library Business Plan and Budget Update" for information.

   7.4 2026-44 Oxford County Policy Review: Communications and Personnel Policies

   RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Library Board formally re-adopts all Oxford County policies as listed in Report 2026-44 “County Policy Review: Communications and Personnel Policies” as
governing the operations of Oxford County Library services and staff.

7.5 2026-45 Library Board Evaluation

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Library Board receives Report 2026-45 to initiate the 2026 Board evaluation process and set the Board Evaluation Form submission due date of no later than _____, 2026.

7.6 2026-46 2027 Library Board Draft Meeting Schedule and Library Closures

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Library Board adopts the draft schedule for 2027 Library Board meetings and Library Closures as set out in Report 2026-46.

7.7 2026-47 CEO/Chief Librarian Performance Evaluation (verbal report)

RECOMMENDATION

1. That the Library Board receives Report 2026-47 CEO/Chief Librarian Performance Evaluation for information and discussion.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

10. NEW BUSINESS / ENQUIRIES / COMMENTS

11. CLOSED SESSION

12. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS ARISING FROM CLOSED SESSION

13. ADJOURNMENT

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 20, 2026

Members Present:	Chair, Laura Langford Vice Chair, Councillor Brian Petrie Megan Blair Councillor David Mayberry Alan Dale Cynthia Lacroix
Staff Present:	L.M. Williams, CEO / Chief Librarian A. Smith, Director of Human Services and Corporate Services J. Court, Manager of Budget and Performance Finances K. Schroder., Financial Analyst J. Lavelle, Manager of Long-Term Financial Planning K. De Weerd, Administrative Assistant
Absent:	Katherine Grieve

1. CALL TO ORDER

Oxford County Library meets in regular session on this the twenty day of October 2026 in Room 222, Oxford County Administration Building, Woodstock at 3:30 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

RESOLUTION 1

Moved By: Cynthia Lacroix
Seconded By: David Mayberry

Resolved that the agenda be approved as amended:

Changing the order of business by moving 7.1 2026-35 Key Agenda Items and Policy Framework and 7.2 2026-36 Librarian Report to follow 7.3 2026-37 2027 Business and Budget Plan.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

3. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

NIL

4. ADOPTION OF BOARD MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

RESOLUTION 2

Moved By: Cynthia Lacroix
Seconded By: David Mayberry

Resolved that the Library Board minutes of September 15, 2026, be adopted.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

5. DELEGATIONS. PRESENTATIONS AND CONSIDERATION THEREOF

NIL

6. CONSIDERATION OF CORRESPONDENCE

7. REPORTS

7.1. 2026-37 2027 Business and Budget Plan

RESOLUTION 5

Moved By: Cynthia Lacroix
Seconded By: David Mayberry

Resolved that the Library Board receives Report 2026-37 entitled 2027 Library Business Plan and Budget and recommends that the County Council approve the 2027 Oxford County Library Business Plan and Budget provide a levy of $6,719,686, subject to possible minor adjustments to interdepartmental charges.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

David Mayberry excused himself from the meeting at 4:56 p.m.

7.2. 2026-35 Key Agenda Items and Policy Review Framework (verbal report)

RESOLUTION 3

Moved By: Alan Dale
Seconded By: Brian Petrie

Resolved that the Library Board receives verbal Report 2026-35, Key Agenda Items and Policy Review Update for information and discussion.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

7.3. 2026-36 Librarian Report

RESOLUTION 4

Moved By: Brian Petrie
Seconded By: Cynthia Lacroix

Resolved that the Library Board receives Report 2026-36, Library Report, for information and discussion.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

7.4. 2026-38 Leadership Development and Succession Planning Update

RESOLUTION 6

Moved By: Cynthia Lacroix
Seconded By: Brian Petrie

Resolved that the Library Board receives Report 2026-38, Leadership Development and Succession Planning, for information and discussion.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

7.5. 2026-39 Operational Policy Review: Children's and Teen Services Policy as set out in Attachment 1 to Report 2026-39.

RESOLUTION 7

Moved By: Cynthia Lacroix
Seconded By: Alan Dale

Resolved that the Library Board changes the title of the policy to Children's and Young Adult Services Policy and approves amendments to the policy as set out in Attachment 1 to Report 2026-39.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

7.6. 2026-40 Library Board Legacy Document

RESOLUTION 8

Moved By: Cynthia Lacroix
Seconded By: Alan Dale

Resolved that the Library Board approves the 2023-2026 Library Board Legacy Document as set out in Attachment 1 to Report 2026-40.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

NIL

9. NOTICE OF MOTIONS

NIL

10. NEW BUSINESS/ ENQUIRIES/ COMMENTS

10.1 CEO/Chief Librarian Performance Evaluation Committee

A committee was struck with members Megan Blair and Laura Langford.

10.2 Ox on the Run vehicle update for information

11. CLOSED SESSION

12. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS ARISING FROM CLOSED SESSION

13. ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION 9

Moved By: Cynthia Lacroix
Seconded By: Brian Petrie

Resolved that the Board meeting of October 20, 2026, be adjourned at 5:57 p.m. until the next meeting scheduled for November 17, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. at the Oxford County Administrative Building.

DISPOSITION: Motion Carried at 5:57 p.m.

_____

Laura Langford, CHAIR

_____

Lisa Marie Williams, SECRETARY

Oxford County Library Board - Key Agenda Items 2026

Agenda items	Jan	Feb	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Sep	Oct	Nov	Notes
2025 Board Evaluation		X								Yearly Agenda Item
2025 Year End Statistics					X					Yearly Agenda Item
Librarian's Report and Monthly Statistics	X	X	X	X	X			X	X	Regular Agenda Item
Quarterly Metrics		Q4 (24)			Q1			Q2/Q3		Regular Agenda Item
2026 Business Plan and Budget Update				Q1			Q2		Q3	Regular Agenda Item
2025 Financial Audit					X					Yearly Agenda Item
2027 Business Plan							X			2027 Planning
2027 Budget								X		2027 Planning
CEO/Chief Librarian Performance Goals									X	Yearly Agenda Item
2027 Board Meeting Dates and Library Closures									X	Yearly Agenda Item
2022-2026 Library Board Legacy Document								X		4 Year Document

Oxford County Library Board - Policy Review 2026

Operational Policy	Jan	Feb	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Sep	Oct	Nov	Notes
Children and Teen Services Policy								X		Moved at request of staff
Membership and Circulation Policy		X								
Collection Development Policy										Moved to 2027 at request of staff
Community Information Policy				X						

Internet and Technology Policy			X							
Local History Policy					X					
Privacy and Access to Personal Information Policy										Moved to 2027 for collaboration with Clerks Office
Information and Readers' Advisory Policy						X				Moved at request of staff
Diversity and Inclusion Policy										Moved to 2027 for review by LEIDS
Indigenous Awareness and Reconciliation Statement										Date TBD - will align with County Update
Governance Policies	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Notes**
Oxford County Library Board Terms of Reference							X			Moved at request of Clerks Office
Board Duties and Responsibilities			X							
Succession Planning		X								
County Policies	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Notes**
County General Policy Manual - Section 8 - Communications and Technology									X	
County General Policy Manual - Section 5 - Personnel									X	

Report 2026-42
HUMAN RESOURCES & CORPORATE SERVICES
Board Date: November 17, 2026

REPORT TO LIBRARY BOARD

Librarian Report

To: **Oxford County Library Board**

From: **CEO / Chief Librarian**

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That the Library Board receives Report 2026-42, Librarian Report, for information and discussion.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- This report highlights the monthly usage statistics, as well as further information regarding library service.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's operating budget.

Communications

Library staff regularly use e-blasts, social media, in branch signage, and other sources for the promotion of library services and programs. Some programs are given further consideration, utilizing social media boosts, print ads, and news releases with the assistance of Strategic Communications and Engagement.

Library statistics gathered for this document are utilized to present the yearly Community Report Card statistics.

2024-2028 LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Library Board approved the 2024-2028 Library Strategic Plan on February 20, 2024. The Plan outlines three key goals to advance the Library's vision to "Connect, discover, share, become." These goals are: *(1) Sustain service excellence, (2) Grow engagement and member relationships, and (3) Innovate access to service*.

The recommendation in this report supports the following strategic goals.
Strategic Goals and Strategies

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
		
Strategy 1.1 – Develop and implement a long-term facilities plan to meet changing demands and create enjoyable and dynamic spaces for our communities. Strategy 1.2 – Develop and implement a referral framework to ensure that customers with diverse needs are referred to program and service supports provided by the most appropriate community organizations. Strategy 1.3 – Develop and implement a strategic approach to attract, retain and develop employees and volunteers to enhance and sustain OCL service excellence.	Strategy 2.1 – Create and implement a Communications Strategy to build OCL's brand awareness and service offerings in the community. Strategy 2.2 – Develop and implement a Patron Management and Growth Plan to increase usership and community engagement with library programs, services and spaces. Strategy 2.3 – Plan and implement the expansion of non-traditional services to include more digital resources, access to technology and unique collections.	Strategy 3.1 – Plan, design, and implant a Programs and Services Accessibility Strategy to make OCL inclusive and accessible to all residents. Strategy 3.2 – Expand the availability of self-service options and introduce more technology to increase access. Strategy 3.3 – Expand the Ox on the Run program to increase library access in communities without branches and to meet residents where they are to drive engagement.

See: Oxford County Library 2024-2028 Strategic Plan

DISCUSSION

CEO / Chief Librarian

- October 22 – SWOX Municipal Building Design Meeting
- October 27 – OPLG Auditor Training
- October 27 – How the Canadian Book Industry is Approaching AI (BookNet Canada Webinar)

- October 29 – Meeting w/ Norfolk Public Library CEO – Re: SharePoint for Library Board
- October 5 – SWOX Municipal Building Design Meeting
- October 9 – OPLG Audit of Public Library
- October 10 – Toronto Public Library Innovation Symposium 2026 – Advancing Responsible AI Innovation
- October 12 – Beyond the Dos and Don'ts of MOUs: A Pannel Discussion (OLS Webinar)

Monthly Statistics

Attendance

While attendance was down slightly (less than 500 visits) for the month of October, the recorded number would not include those that attended outdoor programming such as Ingersoll's "Truck or Treat" event that hosted 500 attendees on October 31.

Branches of note in October include:

- Brownsville – 20%
- Burgessville – 37%
- Embro – 17%
- Innerkip – 22%

% Total Change	October	Year to Date
Total Branch Attendance	-2%	11.6%

Computer Use

While overall usage points slightly negative, many library branches are sing increased use of public computers and Wi-Fi.

Branches of note in October include:

- Burgessville – Computer use increased by 10 users (1,000%)
- Embro – Computer use increased by 3 users (150%) / Wi-Fi usage increased by 3375%
- Innerkip – Computer use increased by 3 users (23%)
- Otterville – Computer use increased by 6 users (12%)
- Plattsville – Wi-Fi usage increased by 26%
- Princeton – Computer use increased by 4 users (67%)
- Tavistock – Computer use increased 18 users (300%) / Wi-Fi usage increased by 80%
- Thamesford – Computer use increased by 27 users (135%) / Wi-Fi usage increased by 39%

% Total Change	October	Year to Date
Total Computer Use	-3%	-15%
Total Wireless Use	-2%	-19%
Total Use Overall	-2.5%	-17%

Physical Circulation

Physical circulation continues the downward trend in 2026, showing that patrons are using library visits for much more than borrowing material. October saw declines in circulation in all but three branches (Princeton 7%; Tavistock 8%; Thamesford 3%)

% Total Change	October	Year to Date
Total Physical Circulation	-7%	-3%

Digital Circulation

Digital Circulation continues to be guided by digital audiobook usage with that area climbing 16% in October.

% Total Change	October	Year to Date
Total Digital Circulation	2%	1%

Community Outreach

Ox on the Run

The Ox on the Run team said goodbye to the Ambulance in late October after extensive repair needs made the vehicle in operable. Staff have moved to a County-owned van until the new bookmobile arrives in early 2027. All stops will be moved indoors for the rest of the year and Ox on the Run will not be participating in any Santa Clause parades as a result.

The team also recently added two new non-public monthly stops to their route – Zorra YMCA Daycare in Thamesford and the Innerkip Seniors Apartments.

Bundles of Joy

The Bundles of Joy program is currently experiencing an extensive waitlist and anticipate they will move through the list in the first few months of the new year.

Aging Well Roadshow

Outreach staff also attended the Woodstock Aging Well Roadshow on November 17th at South Gate Centre, speaking with a number of participants about library services. This event concluded the Aging Well series in 2026, with more events planned for the new year.

Collections and Technology

Oxford Reads Gala 2026

Oxford County Library and Woodstock Public Library co-hosted the 9th annual Oxford Reads Gala featuring author Claire Cameron on Friday, October 30th to 127 registered participants. Warden Marcus Ryan hosted the event and conversation with the author of *How to Survive a Bear Attack*.

Digital Resource Changes for 2027

As part of the Library's ongoing review of digital resources, Tumble Books and World Book Online will be discontinued in 2027. Usage for both resources has remained low over several years, resulting high cost/use compared to other digital offerings.

Staff continue to plan for 2027 by evaluating potential new resources that explore and support emerging technology, learning and career development needs within the community.

Branches and Programming

Halloween Spooktacular Events

Embro Branch hosted Trick-or-Treat along with a Slime making event on October 31st with 30 children and families in attendance.

Ingersoll Branch hosted 500+ attendees at their annual "Truck or Treat" event. The event featured the library delivery van, Ingersoll Fire, and other County and Town vehicles for a fun Halloween event for all ages. Thanks as well should be noted to Ingersoll Kiwanis Club for their ongoing support for this event.

Tavistock Branch partnered with Oxford EarlyON to host a Halloween Story Stroll and Playgroup for children pre-school age children. The 36 costumed participants strolled through "The Monster Mac & Cheese Party" by Todd Parr and engaged in several seasonal activities.

Tillsonburg Branch participated in the Tillsonburg BIA's yearly "Downtown Spooky Town" event on October 24th with 950+ children and families visiting the branch to trick-or-treat and participate in the branch's spooky scavenger hunt.

[Santa and Mrs. Clause at the Plattsville Branch]

Village & Regional Branch Updates

Embro Branch continued to build community connections. The branch hosted Forest Hills PS intermediate class in October for a Book Tasting event. Staff also attended the Embro Community Connections meeting and met with individuals from fifteen other community groups.



Harrington Branch hosted an adult card making program with seven patrons attending to create ugly sweater Christmas cards and gift tags. The branch also continued to host the local Coyote Nature School with a discussion on how trees communicate through root systems and fungi.

[Children's legs and feet displayed along with branches and leaves as they re-create trees and root systems]

Innerkip Branch hosted a class visit from Innerkip Central School Kindergarten with 37 children, staff and parents attending.

Plattsville Branch partnered with the Blandford-Blenheim Fire department for Fire Safety Day. Staff promoted library services at the event, speaking with 76 individuals and providing 21 Craft & Connect kits to families. The branch also hosted Jed Lau on October 22nd for a sampling of German Cuisine.

Princeton Branch welcomed several new homeschooling families to the branch this fall and are considering ways to add more storytimes and programming to support the growing number of families visiting the branch.

Tavistock Branch concluded this year's Open House events with 5 municipal candidates in attendance, including both candidates for Mayor of East-Zorra Tavistock. The branch also hosted Jed Lau on October 8th for a demonstration of Mexican cooking with 19 individuals in attendance. On October 15th the branch hosted A Beginners Guide to Solo Hiking to twelve patrons as part of the Oxford Reads events. The Branch Services Librarian shared their knowledge of hiking, while linking to library collections such as hiking backpacks and poles from the Cook Things to Borrow Collection.

Tillsonburg Branch Updates

Sixty-two children and families attended The branch's Family Craft Night on October 8th, crafting pumpkin turkeys ahead of the Thanksgiving weekend.

Staff continued the ever-popular Local History Speaker Series with "Uncle Billie Went to War" featuring Dr. Jason Pankratz's presentation featuring letters Uncle Billie sent home from World War I.

To view our Program Calendar, go to:
https://engagedpatrons.org/EventsCalendar.cfm?SiteID=2048

Staff Updates

From Tradition to Trust: Working with Low German Mennonite Families Conference

Three staff members attended the above conference on November 6th in Aylmer. The conference brought together those working with Low German communities, including service providers, educators, health professionals and others within the Elgin, Oxford and Norfolk counties and beyond, to learn with each other and Mennonite individuals to improve services for Low German Mennonite communities.

Little Branches, Rural Roots Conference

This year OCL sent one staff member to Pembrook Public Library for this annual conference. Highlights from the event included a session Digitization for cultural heritage collections and providing English support for newcomer families.

Oxford Learns – Crucial Conversations for Mastering Dialog

Two staff members attended this County offered training session focused on

CONCLUSIONS

Library Staff continue to work toward continued service excellence through community outreach; collections and technologies; and branch services and programs.

SIGNATURES

Departmental approval:

Original signed by

Lisa Marie Williams
CEO/Chief Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 Monthly Statistics
Attachment 2 Ox on the Run Schedule

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Visitor Attendance 2026

BRANCH	HOURS / WEEK	YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD	TOTAL
BROWNSVILLE	13	2025	179	191	195	176	166	268	236	212	287	244	226	169	2,154	2,549
	13	2026	161	198	292	328	230	304	274	314	292	294			2687	2,687
	% Change		-10%	4%	50%	86%	39%	13%	16%	48%	2%	20%			25%	5%
BURGESSVILLE	16	2025	365	319	355	261	371	343	428	423	314	395	357	332	3,574	4,263
	16	2026	371	338	390	378	424	432	463	423	396	540			4155	4,155
	% Change		2%	6%	10%	45%	14%	26%	8%	0%	26%	37%			16%	-3%
EMBRO	13	2025	132	138	167	199	155	142	393	201	169	180	232	91	1,876	2,199
	13	2026	170	174	206	178	137	158	217	188	148	210			1786	1,786
	% Change		29%	26%	23%	-11%	-12%	11%	-45%	-6%	-12%	17%			-5%	-19%
HARRINGTON	13	2025	147	121	112	179	194	149	177	172	123	155	175	60	1,529	1,764
	13	2026	113	165	139	148	180	170	238	179	143	149			1,624	1,624
	% Change		-23%	36%	24%	-17%	-7%	14%	34%	4%	16%	-4%			6%	-8%
INGERSOLL	51.5	2025	4,135	3,954	5,648	4,663	4,434	5,035	6,535	5,944	5,811	5,255	4,171	3,138	51,414	58,723
	51.5	2026	4,051	4,168	6,144	4,588	4,434	5,247	6,175	6,418	4,873	5,178			51,276	51,276
	% Change		-2%	5%	9%	-2%	0%	4%	-6%	8%	-16%	-1%			0%	-13%
INNERKIP	16	2025	403	432	440	543	427	388	564	448	397	417	331	211	4,459	5,001
	16	2026	356	433	403	547	484	446	566	411	429	510			4,585	4,585
	% Change		-12%	0%	-8%	1%	13%	15%	0%	-8%	8%	22%			3%	-8%
MOUNT ELGIN	13	2025	103	142	104	95	201	137	164	223	125	131	145	98	1,425	1,668
	13	2026	125	109	142	172	153	167	184	178	143	135			1,508	1,508
	% Change		21%	-23%	37%	81%	-24%	22%	12%	-20%	14%	3%			6%	-10%
NORWICH	35	2025	1,629	1,606	1,676	1,807	1,698	1,580	1,911	1,765	1,697	1,898	1,569	1,250	17,267	20,086
	35	2026	1,517	1,580	1,968	1,776	1,778	1,580	1,984	1,801	1,697	1,864			17,545	17,545
	% Change		-7%	-2%	17%	-2%	5%	0%	4%	2%	0%	-2%			2%	-13%
OTTERVILLE	16	2025	337	323	376	355	393	253	481	418	320	368	329	280	3,624	4,233
	16	2026	294	298	375	434	283	341	432	474	333	302			3,566	3,566

	% Change		-13%	-8%	0%	22%	-28%	35%	-10%	13%	4%	-18%			-2%	-16%
OX on the RUN		**2025**	119	72	265	52	777	470	1,432	617	1,984	848	120	65	5,788	6,821
		2026	166	239	281	164	362	546	483	972	1,323	302			4,838	4,838
	% Change		39%	232%	6%	215%	-53%	16%	-66%	58%	-33%	-64%			-16%	-29%
PLATTSVILLE	**25**	**2025**	806	944	958	1,145	1,034	769	1,102	838	780	1,027	891	683	9,403	10,977
	25	**2026**	868	860	979	1,100	1,004	941	961	702	631	871			8,917	8,917
	% Change		8%	-9%	2%	-4%	-3%	22%	-13%	-16%	-19%	-15%			-5%	-19%
PRINCETON*	**16**	**2025**	296	350	471	359	332	325	400	322	398	461	297	267	3,714	4,278
	16	**2026**	317	311	463	373	329	390	433	436	318	445			3,815	3,815
	% Change		7%	-11%	-2%	4%	-1%	20%	8%	35%	-20%	-3%			3%	-11%
TAVISTOCK	**35**	**2025**	679	680	918	791	846	710	1,042	901	758	961	768	659	8,286	9713
	35	**2026**	687	799	1,013	889	887	1,018	1,342	1,101	796	864			9,396	9396
	% Change		1%	18%	10%	12%	5%	43%	29%	22%	5%	-10%			13%	-3%
THAMESFORD	**35**	**2025**	756	714	842	844	877	634	1,094	1,032	725	821	755	572	8,339	9,666
	35	**2026**	649	727	857	824	926	762	1,235	1,015	787	813			8,595	8,595
	% Change		-14%	2%	2%	-2%	6%	20%	13%	-2%	9%	-1%			3%	-11%
TILLSONBURG	**54**	**2025**	5,951	5,592	6,927	6,970	6,189	5,900	8,275	7,353	4,617	7,292	5,844	4,268	65,066	75,178
	54	**2026**	5,158	5,246	6,659	6,504	5,576	6,338	7,361	6,653	5,446	6,951			61,892	61,892
	% Change		-13%	-6%	-4%	-7%	-10%	7%	-11%	-10%	18%	-5%			-5%	-18%
TOTAL	***351.5**	**2025**	16,037	15,506	19,189	18,387	17,317	16,633	22,802	20,252	16,521	19,605	16,090	12,078	162,644	210,417
	352	**2026**	15,003	15,406	20,030	18,239	16,825	18,294	21,865	20,293	16,432	19,126			181,513	181,513
TOTAL Change 2025 to 2026			**-6%**	**-1%**	**4%**	**-1%**	**-3%**	**10%**	**-4%**	**0%**	**-1%**	**-2%**			**11.6%**	**-13.7%**

*Princeton Branch statistics may be affected by road construction April to December 2025

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Computer Use 2026

BRANCH		YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD	TOTAL
BROWNSVILLE	Computers	2025	46	44	55	40	27	36	36	49	46	25	27	18	404	449
		2026	28	19	44	47	38	50	77	7	45	53			408	408
	% Change		-39%	-57%	-20%	18%	41%	39%	114%	-86%	-2%	112%			1%	-9%
	Wireless	2025	17	8	9	33	15	21	43	30	36	35	12	12	247	271
		2026	13	19	18	28	33	24	17	30	20	33			235	235
	% Change		-24%	138%	100%	-15%	120%	14%	-60%	0%	-44%	-6%			-5%	-13%
	Totals 2025		63	52	64	73	42	57	79	79	82	60	39	30	651	720
	Totals 2026		41	38	62	75	71	74	94	37	65	86			643	643
	% Change		**-35%**	**-27%**	**-3%**	**3%**	**69%**	**30%**	**19%**	**-53%**	**-21%**	**43%**			**-1%**	**-11%**
BURGESSVILLE	Computers	2025	2	3	2	4	4	2	7	16	9	1	9	0	50	59
		2026	7	4	3	9	1	17	17	12	5	11			86	86
	% Change		100%	33%	50%	125%	-75%	750%	143%	-25%	-44%	1000%			72%	46%
	Wireless	2025	31	27	26	40	31	13	18	22	19	30	26	25	257	308
		2026	9	8	8	17	34	13	19	20	28	31			187	187
	% Change		-71%	-70%	-69%	-58%	10%	0%	6%	-9%	47%	3%			-27%	-39%
	Totals 2025		33	30	28	44	35	15	25	38	28	31	35	25	307	367
	Totals 2025		16	12	11	26	35	30	36	32	33	42			273	273
	% Change		**-52%**	**-60%**	**-61%**	**-41%**	**0%**	**100%**	**44%**	**-16%**	**18%**	**35%**			**-11%**	-26%
EMBRO	Computers	2025	5	2	5	3	8	5	8	5	4	2	2	1	47	50
		2026	4	4	2	2	6	3	6	3	5	5			40	40
	% Change		500%	100%	-60%	-33%	-25%	-40%	-25%	-40%	25%	150%			-15%	-20%
	Wireless	2025	46	46	92	104	60	47	41	49	49	4	54	55	538	647
		2026	55	66	133	30	36	45	149	47	143	139			843	843
	% Change		20%	43%	45%	-71%	-40%	-4%	263%	-4%	192%	3375%			57%	30%
	Totals 2025		51	48	97	107	68	52	49	54	53	6	56	56	585	697
	Totals 2026		59	70	135	32	42	48	155	50	148	144			883	883
	% Change		**16%**	**46%**	**39%**	**-70%**	**-38%**	**-8%**	**216%**	**-7%**	**179%**	**2300%**			**51%**	27%
HARRINGTON	Computers	2025	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	5	6
		2026	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	0			4	4
	% Change		-100%	-100%	0%	0%	0%	100%	0%	200%	100%	-300%			-20%	-33%
	Wireless	2025	11	12	15	17	16	20	15	17	6	11	14	14	140	168
		2026	11	14	17	14	17	11	15	9	33	9			150	150
	% Change		0%	17%	13%	-18%	6%	-45%	0%	-47%	450%	-18%			7%	-11%
	Totals 2025		12	13	15	17	16	20	15	17	6	14	14	15	145	174
	Totals 2026		11	14	17	14	17	12	15	11	34	9			154	154
	% Change		**-8%**	**8%**	**13%**	**-18%**	**6%**	**-40%**	**0%**	**-35%**	**467%**	**-36%**			**6%**	-11%

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Computer Use 2026

BRANCH		YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD	TOTAL
INGERSOLL	Computers	2025	242	232	325	264	276	296	375	344	272	283	243	169	2,909	3,321
		2026	308	257	348	272	271	302	275	360	273	280			2,946	2,946
	% Change		27%	11%	7%	3%	-2%	2%	-27%	5%	0%	-1%			1%	-11%
	Wireless	2025	213	144	229	232	331	269	289	243	195	276	242	245	2,421	2,908
		2026	189	188	255	247	368	346	385	306	314	268			2,866	2,866
	% Change		-11%	31%	11%	6%	11%	29%	3%	26%	61%	-3%			18%	-1%
	Totals 2025		455	376	554	496	607	565	664	587	467	559	485	414	5,330	6,229
	Totals 2026		497	445	603	519	639	648	660	666	587	548			5,812	5,812
	% Change		**9%**	**18%**	**9%**	**5%**	**5%**	**15%**	**-1%**	**13%**	**26%**	**-2%**			**9%**	**-7%**
INNERKIP	Computers	2025	7	4	4	11	5	6	18	26	13	13	5	4	107	116
		2026	4	8	13	9	8	14	25	18	26	16			141	141
	% Change		-43%	100%	225%	-18%	60%	133%	39%	-31%	100%	23%			32%	22%
	Wireless	2025	18	36	22	14	18	21	28	15	39	26	24	24	237	285
		2026	23	8	25	55	40	40	45	43	39	25			343	343
	% Change		28%	-78%	14%	293%	122%	90%	61%	187%	0%	-4%			45%	20%
	Totals 2025		25	40	26	25	23	27	46	41	52	39	29	28	344	401
	Totals 2026		27	16	38	64	48	54	70	61	65	41			484	484
	% Change		**8%**	**-60%**	**46%**	**156%**	**109%**	**100%**	**52%**	**49%**	**25%**	**5%**			**41%**	21%
MOUNT ELGIN	Computers	2025	3	4	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	1	1	11	13
		2026	0	0	0	3	1	0	0	2	0	1			7	7
	% Change		-100%	-100%	0%	200%	100%	-100%	0%	200%	0%	-50%			-100%	-46%
	Wireless*	2025	10	56	44	20	61	30	26	48	59	68	42	45	422	509
		2026	11	32	65	44	24	15	25	24	29	48			317	317
	% Change		10%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%			-25%	-38%
	Totals 2025		13	60	44	21	61	31	26	48	59	70	43	46	433	522
	Totals 2026		11	32	65	47	25	15	25	26	29	49			324	324
	% Change		**-15%**	**-47%**	**100%**	**124%**	**100%**	**-52%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**	**100%**			**-25%**	-38%
NORWICH	Computers	2025	80	67	89	101	74	69	84	136	131	143	112	74	974	1,160
		2026	87	84	128	79	78	92	120	62	74	120			924	924
	% Change		9%	25%	44%	-22%	5%	33%	43%	-54%	-44%	-16%			-5%	-20%
	Wireless	2025	215	189	234	253	286	244	228	237	238	279	249	243	2,403	2,895
		2026	211	204	253	215	260	270	260	253	285	225			2,436	2,436
	% Change		-2%	8%	8%	-15%	-9%	11%	14%	7%	20%	-19%			1%	-16%
	Totals 2025		295	256	323	354	360	313	312	373	369	422	361	317	3,377	4,055
	Totals 2026		298	288	381	294	338	362	380	315	359	345			3,360	3,360
	% Change		**1%**	**13%**	**18%**	**-17%**	**-6%**	**16%**	**22%**	**-16%**	**-3%**	**-18%**			**-1%**	-17%

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Computer Use 2026

BRANCH		YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD	TOTAL
OTTERVILLE	Computers	2025	66	56	50	45	38	24	50	56	42	50	35	27	477	539
		2026	30	38	34	46	45	74	108	60	51	56			542	542
	% Change		-55%	-32%	-32%	2%	18%	208%	116%	7%	21%	12%			14%	1%
	Wireless	2025	29	16	33	30	42	69	0	0	0	54	27	27	273	327
		2026	35	26	29	43	36	29	29	25	29	28			309	309
	% Change		21%	63%	-12%	43%	-14%	-58%	0%	0%	0%	-48%			13%	-6%
	Totals 2025		95	72	83	75	80	93	50	56	42	104	62	54	750	866
	Totals 2026		65	64	63	89	81	103	137	85	80	84			851	851
	% Change		**-32%**	**-11%**	**-24%**	**19%**	**1%**	**11%**	**174%**	**52%**	**90%**	**-19%**			**13%**	-2%
PLATTSVILLE	Computers	2025	53	56	65	79	58	43	34	47	19	64	44	26	518	588
		2026	50	57	40	53	32	25	36	21	23	13			350	350
	% Change		-6%	2%	-38%	-33%	-45%	-42%	6%	-55%	21%	-80%			-32%	-40%
	Wireless	2025	75	52	73	95	61	47	35	30	44	66	58	56	578	692
		2026	28	23	48	47	37	34	32	27	92	83			451	451
	% Change		-63%	-56%	-34%	-51%	-39%	-28%	-9%	-10%	109%	26%			-22%	-35%
	Totals 2025		128	108	138	174	119	90	69	77	63	130	102	82	1,096	1,280
	Totals 2026		78	80	88	100	69	59	68	48	115	96			801	801
	% Change		**-39%**	**-26%**	**-36%**	**-43%**	**-42%**	**-34%**	**-1%**	**-38%**	**83%**	**-26%**			**-27%**	-37%
PRINCETON***	Computers	2025	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	15	3	9	27
		2026	3	14	24	8	6	6	8	6	6	10			91	91
	% Change		0%	1400%	2400%	800%	600%	600%	800%	600%	600%	67%			911%	237%
	Wireless	2025	20	25	34	25	47	40	32	25	37	43	33	34	328	395
		2026	34	19	32	35	32	34	47	53	77	42			405	405
	% Change		70%	-24%	-6%	40%	-32%	-15%	47%	112%	108%	-2%			23%	3%
	Totals 2025		23	25	34	25	47	40	32	25	37	49	48	37	337	422
	Totals 2026		37	33	56	43	38	40	55	59	83	52			496	496
	% Change		**61%**	**32%**	**65%**	**72%**	**-19%**	**0%**	**72%**	**136%**	**124%**	**6%**			**47%**	18%
TAVISTOCK	Computer	2025	7	8	7	3	2	5	8	11	2	6	3	1	59	63
		2026	4	0	23	20	41	24	36	9	32	24			213	213
	% Change		-43%	100%	100%	100%	100%	380%	350%	-18%	1500%	300%			261%	238%
	Wireless	2025	44	43	50	50	42	37	34	11	22	25	36	35	358	429
		2026	22	17	29	28	30	33	49	32	40	45			325	325
	% Change		-50%	-60%	-42%	-44%	-29%	-11%	44%	191%	82%	80%			-9%	-24%
	Totals 2025		51	51	57	53	44	42	42	22	24	31	39	36	417	492
	Totals 2026		26	17	52	48	71	57	85	41	72	69			538	538
	% Change		**-49%**	**-67%**	**-9%**	**-9%**	**61%**	**36%**	**102%**	**86%**	**200%**	**123%**			**29%**	9%

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Computer Use 2026

BRANCH		YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD	TOTAL
THAMESFORD	Computers	2025	27	51	26	27	25	14	20	17	22	20	24	13	249	286
		2026	10	12	40	38	40	41	42	34	27	47			331	331
	% Change		-63%	-76%	54%	41%	60%	193%	110%	100%	23%	135%			33%	16%
	Wireless	2025	48	33	46	55	32	36	49	43	37	31	41	40	410	491
		2026	38	31	35	29	54	51	49	40	45	43			415	415
	% Change		-21%	-6%	-24%	-47%	69%	42%	0%	-7%	22%	39%			1%	-15%
	Totals 2025		75	84	72	82	57	50	69	60	59	51	65	53	659	777
	Totals 2026		48	43	75	67	94	92	91	74	72	90			746	746
	% Change		**-36%**	**-49%**	**4%**	**-18%**	**65%**	**84%**	**32%**	**23%**	**22%**	**76%**			**13%**	-4%
TILLSONBURG	Computers	2025	378	379	432	421	407	424	437	299	299	390	328	250	3,866	4,444
		2026	240	309	301	385	321	324	364	360	347	378			3,329	3,329
	% Change		-37%	-18%	-30%	-9%	-21%	-24%	-17%	20%	16%	-3%			-14%	-25%
	Wireless	2025	617	526	584	678	654	674	630	674	565	640	624	625	6,242	7,491
		2026	387	409	446	485	589	528	662	616	576	534			5,232	5,232
	% Change		-37%	-22%	-24%	-28%	-10%	-22%	5%	-9%	2%	-17%	-100%	-100%	-16%	-30%
	Totals 2025		995	905	1,016	1,099	1,061	1,098	1,067	973	864	1,030	952	875	10,108	11,935
	Totals 2026		627	718	747	870	910	852	1,026	976	923	912			8,561	8,561
	% Change		**-37%**	**-21%**	**-26%**	**-21%**	**-14%**	**-22%**	**-4%**	**0%**	**7%**	**-11%**			**-15%**	-28%
TOTAL COMPUTERS		2025	**920**	**907**	**1060**	**999**	**924**	**925**	**1077**	**1006**	**859**	**1008**	**848**	**588**	**9685**	**11121**
		2026	**775**	**806**	**1000**	**971**	**888**	**973**	**1114**	**956**	**915**	**1014**			**9412**	**9412**
	% Change		-16%	-11%	-6%	-3%	-4%	5%	3%	-5%	7%	1%			-3%	-15%
TOTAL WIRELESS		2025	**1394**	**1213**	**1491**	**1646**	**1696**	**1568**	**1468**	**1444**	**1346**	**1588**	**1482**	**1480**	**14854**	**17816**
		2026	**1066**	**1064**	**1393**	**1317**	**1590**	**1473**	**1783**	**1525**	**1750**	**1553**			**14514**	**14514**
	% Change		-24%	-12%	-7%	-20%	-6%	-6%	21%	6%	30%	-2%			-2%	-19%
TOTAL USAGE		2025	**2,314**	**2,120**	**2,551**	**2,645**	**2,620**	**2,493**	**2,545**	**2,450**	**2,205**	**2,596**	**2,330**	**2,068**	**24,539**	**28,937**
		2026	**1,841**	**1,870**	**2,393**	**2,288**	**2,478**	**2,446**	**2,897**	**2,481**	**2,665**	**2,567**			**23,926**	**23,926**
% Change 2025 to 2026			**-20.4%**	**-11.8%**	**-6.2%**	**-13.5%**	**-5.4%**	**-1.9%**	**13.8%**	**1.3%**	**20.9%**	**-1.1%**			**-2.5%**	**-17%**

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Physical Circulation 2026

BRANCH	YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD	TOTAL
BROWNSVILLE	2025	197	289	207	226	249	227	239	187	253	347	272	190	2,421	2,883
	2026	210	231	203	246	307	259	266	204	281	271			2,478	2,478
	% CHANGE	7%	-20%	-2%	9%	23%	14%	11%	9%	11%	-22%			2%	-14%
BURGESSVILLE	2025	2,365	2,364	2,740	2,151	2,328	2,298	2,995	2,640	2,111	2,500	2,153	2,062	24,492	28,707
	2026	2,189	1,875	2,388	2,016	1,829	2,044	2,470	2,514	2,108	2,298			21,731	21,731
	% CHANGE	-7%	-21%	-13%	-6%	-21%	-11%	-18%	-5%	0%	-8%			-11%	-24%
EMBRO	2025	594	438	558	530	486	557	527	573	477	573	730	523	5,313	6,566
	2026	602	542	650	580	755	671	701	784	575	570			6,430	6,430
	% CHANGE	1%	24%	16%	9%	55%	20%	33%	37%	21%	-1%			21%	-2%
HARRINGTON	2025	478	408	312	445	475	437	568	766	922	766	570	348	5,577	6,495
	2026	617	656	452	581	471	592	792	650	644	617			6,072	6,072
	% CHANGE	29%	61%	45%	31%	-1%	35%	39%	-15%	-30%	-19%			9%	-7%
INGERSOLL	2025	9,321	9,466	10,080	9,225	9,319	9,595	12,505	12,321	10,515	10,167	9,457	7,683	102,514	119,654
	2026	9,043	9,098	9,995	9,304	8,854	10,084	11,676	11,792	10,181	9,627			99,654	99,654
	% CHANGE	-3%	-4%	-1%	1%	-5%	5%	-7%	-4%	-3%	-5%			-3%	-17%
INNERKIP	2025	1,173	1,300	1,076	1,127	1,205	1,213	1,442	1,232	1,113	1,095	1,029	764	11,976	13,769
	2026	1,093	917	854	843	915	978	1,163	1,003	848	1,009			9,623	9,623
	% CHANGE	-7%	-29%	-21%	-25%	-24%	-19%	-19%	-19%	-24%	-8%			-20%	-30%
MOUNT ELGIN	2025	573	525	412	333	492	643	765	713	552	641	609	471	5,649	6,729
	2026	626	428	627	442	366	449	564	590	525	474			5,091	5,091
	% CHANGE	9%	-18%	52%	33%	-26%	-30%	-26%	-17%	-5%	-26%			-10%	-24%
NORWICH	2025	3,921	4,006	3,689	3,649	3,550	4,315	5,586	5,475	4,416	4,674	3,804	3,152	43,281	50,237
	2026	3,871	3,698	4,115	3,723	3,992	3,884	4,760	4,672	3,498	3,718			39,931	39,931
	% CHANGE	-1%	-8%	12%	2%	12%	-10%	-15%	-15%	-21%	-20%			-8%	-21%
OTTERVILLE	2025	1,055	1,108	1,445	1,303	1,448	1,140	1,410	1,387	1,228	1,284	1,054	1,025	12,808	14,887
	2026	1,113	1,096	1,228	1,212	953	968	1,332	1,232	1,054	1,091			11,279	11,279
	% CHANGE	5%	-1%	-15%	-7%	-34%	-15%	-6%	-11%	-14%	-15%			-12%	-24%

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Physical Circulation 2026

BRANCH	YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD	TOTAL
OX on the RUN	2025	66	72	64	68	98	387	647	589	530	440	360	354	2,961	3,307
	2026	301	386	417	367	412	635	718	746	390	437			4,809	4,809
% CHANGE		356%	436%	552%	440%	320%	64%	11%	27%	-26%	-1%			62%	45%
PLATTSVILLE	2025	1,652	1,746	2,210	2,071	1,946	1,875	2,388	2,494	2,162	2,221	1,816	1,465	20,765	24,046
	2026	1,791	1,121	1,879	1,849	1,850	1,871	1,810	1,786	1,575	1,705			17,237	17,237
% CHANGE		8%	-36%	-15%	-11%	-5%	0%	-24%	-28%	-27%	-23%			-17%	-28%
PRINCETON*	2025	1,274	1,157	1,441	999	868	1,165	1,071	1,320	1,025	899	1,091	771	11,219	13,081
	2026	1,048	911	996	928	821	886	1,022	1,071	829	966			9,478	9,478
% CHANGE		-18%	-21%	-31%	-7%	-5%	-24%	-5%	-19%	-19%	7%			-16%	-28%
TAVISTOCK	2025	2,149	2,052	2,479	2,325	2,099	1,986	2,555	2,319	1,719	1,870	1,565	1,387	21,553	24,505
	2026	1,715	1,685	4,148	2,113	2,140	2,111	2,993	3,002	2,218	2,019			24,144	24,144
% CHANGE		-20%	-18%	67%	-9%	2%	6%	17%	29%	29%	8%			12%	-1%
THAMESFORD	2025	1,559	1,430	1,626	1,844	1,799	1,473	2,327	2,357	1,770	1,881	1,621	1,280	18,066	20,967
	2026	1,541	1,557	1,781	1,730	1,640	1,716	2,544	2,357	1,762	1,941			18,569	18,569
% CHANGE		-1%	9%	10%	-6%	-9%	16%	9%	0%	0%	3%			3%	-11%
TILLSONBURG	2025	5,767	6,150	6,133	5,328	5,371	5,284	6,843	6,501	5,466	5,724	5,297	4,795	58,567	68,659
	2026	5,379	4,890	5,250	5,570	5,454	5,484	6,145	6,087	5,329	5,373			54,961	54,961
% CHANGE		-7%	-20%	-14%	5%	2%	4%	-10%	-6%	-3%	-6%			-6%	-20%
TOTAL	2025	32,144	32,511	34,472	31,624	31,733	32,595	41,868	40,874	34,259	35,082	31,428	26,270	347,162	404,492
	2026	31,440	29,477	35,400	31,871	31,171	33,267	39,674	39,236	32,207	32,553			336,296	336,296
% CHANGE		-2%	-9%	3%	1%	-2%	2%	-5%	-4%	-6%	-7%			-3%	-17%

* Princton Branch statistics may be affected by road construction April to December 2025

Oxford County Library
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Digital Circulation 2026

	YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YTD	TOTALS
Digital TV & Movies	**2025**	853	910	955	853	830	802	805	833	746	867	722	746	**8,454**	**9,922**
	2026	756	604	613	555	652	622	603	713	513	711			**6,342**	**6,342**
	% Change	**-11%**	**-34%**	**-36%**	**-35%**	**-21%**	**-22%**	**-25%**	**-14%**	**-31%**	**-18%**			**-25%**	**-36%**
Digital Magazines / Newspapers	**2025**	5,747	5,246	5,095	4,301	4,168	4,605	4,129	3,920	4,354	4,329	4,088	4,124	**45,894**	**54,106**
	2026	4,567	4,273	4,519	4,706	4,307	4,050	4,271	4,376	3,958	4,436			**43,463**	**43,463**
	% Change	**-21%**	**-19%**	**-11%**	**9%**	**3%**	**-12%**	**3%**	**12%**	**-9%**	**2%**			**-5%**	**-20%**
Tumble Books	**2025**	52	119	72	37	29	39	45	111	69	18	26	31	**591**	**648**
	2026	43	51	32	57	30	58	17	94	55	102			**539**	**539**
	% Change	**-17%**	**-57%**	**-56%**	**54%**	**3%**	**49%**	**-62%**	**-15%**	**-20%**	**467%**			**-9%**	**-17%**
Digital Music	**2025**	1,310	1,519	1,266	1,158	1,261	859	669	1,067	1,433	1,076	1,585	1,335	**11,618**	**14,538**
	2026	1,337	2,037	1,269	1,588	775	900	776	676	577	762			**10,697**	**10,697**
	% Change	**2%**	**34%**	**0%**	**37%**	**-39%**	**5%**	**16%**	**-37%**	**-60%**	**-29%**			**-8%**	**-26%**
Digital Audiobooks	**2025**	4,986	4,475	4,851	4,666	5,088	5,083	5,205	5,397	5,224	5,222	5,287	5,128	**50,197**	**60,612**
	2026	5,607	5,401	5,777	5,600	5,889	5,751	5,928	5,944	5,888	6,067			**57,852**	**57,852**
	% Change	**12%**	**21%**	**19%**	**20%**	**16%**	**13%**	**14%**	**10%**	**13%**	**16%**			**15%**	**-5%**
Digital ebooks	**2025**	7,402	6,641	7,280	6,537	6,536	6,971	6,971	7,036	6,435	6,552	6,359	6,707	**68,361**	**81,427**
	2026	7,217	6,299	6,978	6,582	6,683	6,689	7,183	7,064	6,310	6,436			**67,441**	**67,441**
	% Change	**-2%**	**-5%**	**-4%**	**1%**	**2%**	**-4%**	**3%**	**0%**	**-2%**	**-2%**			**-1%**	**-17%**
TOTAL Digital Circulation	**2025**	20,350	18,910	19,519	17,552	17,912	18,359	17,824	18,364	18,261	18,064	18,067	18,071	**185,115**	**221,253**
	2026	19,527	18,665	19,188	19,088	18,336	18,070	18,778	18,867	17,301	18,514	-	-	**186,334**	**186,334**
	% Change	**-4%**	**-1%**	**-2%**	**9%**	**2%**	**-2%**	**5%**	**3%**	**-5%**	**2%**			**1%**	**-16%**

Definitions:

Digital Movies include the following: Hoopla Movies, Hoopla TV, Hoopla Binge Passes, Kanopy

Digital Magazines and Newspapers include the following: Overdrive Magazines, Press Reader

Digital Music includes the following: Freegal, Hoopla Music

Digital Audiobooks includes the following: Hoopla Audiobooks, Overdrive Audiobooks

Digtal eBooks includes the following: Freading, Hoopla Comics, Hoopla eBooks, Overdrive eBooks

OX ON THE RUN NOVEMBER 2026

OX on the RUN
Mobile Library Unit

Oxford County Library
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SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 The Maples Home for Seniors visit* Innerkip Seniors Appartments*	4 Foldens Community Hall 4:30-6:00	5 Drumbo Township Office 10:00-11:30am	6	7
8	9	10 Tillsonburg Little School visit*	11 Beachville Legion 4:30-6:00pm	12 Hickson EZT Administrative Building 10:00-11:30am	13 Dereham Centre Hall 10:00-11:30am	14
15	16	17 Zorra YMCA Child Care* Aspira Harvest Crossing visit*	18 Foldens Community Hall 4:30-6:00	19 Drumbo Township Office 10:00-11:30am	20 Kintore Chalmers United Church 10:00-11:30am	21
22	23	24 Wonder Years Child Care Visit*	25 Beachville Legion 4:30-6:00pm	26	27 Dereham Centre Hall 10:00-11:30am Adult Crafternoon Dereham Centre Hall 1:00-2:30pm	28
29	30					

Bundles of Joy Deliveries

Bundles of Joy Deliveries

Please note that stops are subject to change, and may be cancelled due to inclement weather. Please check our social media pages for updates.

*indicates a stop is not for public attendance.

OX ON THE RUN DECEMBER 2026

OX on the RUN
Mobile Library Unit

Oxford County Library
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SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
Please note that stops are subject to change, and may be cancelled due to inclement weather. Please check our social media pages for updates. *indicates a stop is not for public attendance.		1 The Maples Home for Seniors visit* Innerkip Seniors Appartments*	2 Foldens Community Hall 4:30-6:00	3 Drumbo Township Office 10:00-11:30am	4 Kintore Chalmers United Church 10:00-11:30am	5
6	7	8 Tillsonburg Little School visit*	9 Beachville Legion 4:30-6:00pm	10 Hickson EZT Administrative Building 10:00-11:30am	11 Dereham Centre Hall 10:00-11:30am	12
13 	14	15 Zorra YMCA Child Care* Aspira Harvest Crossing visit*	16 Foldens Community Hall 4:30-6:00	17 Drumbo Township Office 10:00-11:30am	18 Kintore Chalmers United Church 10:00-11:30am	19
20	21	22 Wonder Years Child Care Visit*	23 Beachville Legion 4:30-6:00pm	24	25 	26
27	28	29	30	31 		

Bundles of Joy Deliveries

Bundles of Joy Deliveries

Report 2026-43
HUMAN RESOURCES &
CORPORATE SERVICES
Board Date: November 17, 2026

REPORT TO LIBRARY BOARD

2026 Q3 Library Business Plan and Budget Update

To: **Oxford County Library Board**

From: **CEO / Chief Librarian**

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That the Library Board receives Report 2026-43 entitled "2026 Q3 Library Business Plan and Budget Update" for information.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Delivery of the 2026 goals and objectives is progressing as planned
- 2026 forecasted year end Library surplus of $190,890

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Staff will continue to monitor budget variances over the final quarter and take appropriate action as required to avoid a negative balance at year end. This will be the final 2026 financial update for the Board until the new year.

Financial Impact

The 2026 year-end forecast as of September 30, 2026 projects a surplus of $190,890. Additional detailed information regarding the forecasted variances can be found on Attachment 2 to this report.

The projected surplus is predominantly comprised of staff vacancies, increased user fees, and facilities maintenance savings.

Communications

This report is intended to update the Board on the Library's progress in meeting the goals and objectives set out for 2026 with Q3 budget forecasted year-end results.

2024-2028 LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Library Board approved the 2024-2028 Library Strategic Plan on February 20, 2024. The Plan outlines three key goals to advance the Library's vision to "Connect, discover, share, become." These goals are: *(1) Sustain service excellence, (2) Grow engagement and member relationships, and (3) Innovate access to service*.

The recommendation in this report supports the following strategic goals.

Strategic Goals and Strategies

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
		
Strategy 1.1 – Develop and implement a long-term facilities plan to meet changing demands and create enjoyable and dynamic spaces for our communities. Strategy 1.3 – Develop and implement a strategic approach to attract, retain and develop employees and volunteers to enhance and sustain OCL service excellence.		Strategy 3.1 – Plan, design, and implement a Programs and Services Accessibility Strategy to make OCL inclusive and accessible to all residents. Strategy 3.3 – Expand the Ox on the Run program to increase library access in communities without branches and to meet residents where they are to drive engagement.

See: Oxford County Library 2024-2028 Strategic Plan

DISCUSSION

Background

In accordance with the reporting provisions contained within the Long-Term Financial Sustainability Plan, staff have prepared progress updates for each of the approved goals and objectives within the business plan, accompanied by budget variance reports as of September 30, 2026.

Comments

The 2026 Business Plan is progressing as planned. Details regarding each of the goals are provided in Attachment 1.

Staff review the financial activity on a monthly basis for potential areas of concern and to ensure spending will remain within the budget provisions approved by the Board. To date, the financial activity for the third quarter is projecting a year end surplus. The year-to-date expenses and forecast figures as of the end of Q3 2026 are presented in Attachment 2.

2026 Forecast Budget Variance

The 2026 year-end library budget forecast is projecting a surplus of $190,890 as of the date of this report. According to the County's Reserve Policy 6.20, a Library year end operating surplus is to be allocated to the Library General Reserve to be used for unbudgeted extraordinary operating expenses or new capital assets to provide sufficient flexibility and protection for unforeseen events in the Library system as a tax stabilization measure. Alternatively, if the Library budget is in a deficit position at the end of the fiscal year, the variance will be funded by the Library General Reserve.

The projected surplus has resulted from more than anticipated investment income and donations, administrative staff vacancies, and fleet savings, partially offset by increased facilities costs due to rental fees related to one of our branches that were higher than anticipated and additional facilities administrative costs.

Table 1 – 2026 Forecast Year-End Budget Variance

Revenue/Expense	Explanation	Amount
General revenues	Additional user fees and charges	$20,732
Salaries and benefits	Combined overall staff vacancies	138,395
Insurance	Updates to the general insurance allocation based on current budget and claims history	7,224
Facilities	Lower repairs and maintenance activities	19,696
Fleet	Repairs, maintenance and travel-related savings	3,565
Other	Miscellaneous savings and deficits	1,278
Forecast Year-End Variance		**$190,890**

CONCLUSIONS

The 2026 third quarter report forecasts a budget surplus, therefore staff will monitor expenses over the final quarter of the year to strive to deliver the 2026 Business Plan and budget accordingly.

Report author

Original Signed By

Carolyn King, CPA, CA
Director, Financial Services

Departmental approval:

Original Signed By

Lisa Marie Williams
CEO/Chief Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – 2026 Q3 Library Business Plan and Budget Update
Attachment 2 – 2026 Q3 Library Variance Report

Oxford County
Growing stronger together

Library
June 2026 Council Update

Services:
Collections
Programming
References & Information
Public Space Access
Technology & Coaching

Goals and Objectives

Description	2026	2027	2028	Status Update
Branch Library Accessibility Audit With assistance from the Oxford County Accessibility Committee, the Library will complete accessibility audits of the following branches: Ingersoll Branch, Norwich Branch, Thamesford Branch, Tillsonburg Branch. The audits will focus on Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) compliance, while also reviewing ways to improve accessibility beyond AODA for library specific items such as shelving, furniture design and space layout.	●	●		Library staff are coordinating the audit of the Norwich Branch with the Oxford County Accessibility Committee. This audit took place in October 2026, with a report to the Library Board anticipated in November 2026. Further audits of the three remaining library branches will take place in 2027 following the appointment of the new Library Board and Accessibility Committee.
Library Board Orientation Planning The Library CEO and Administrative team will prepare a robust orientation plan for the incoming 2027 Library Board. The plan will include on-site training for Board members, an online document portal, introduction to key staff members, and ongoing virtual training to support further learning.	●			The Library's Administrative Team is finalizing the new 2027 Library Board Orientation Plan that will utilize SharePoint for onboarding materials, ongoing training for the new board, and tours of library locations and vehicles.

LIBRARY
September Variance Reporting
For the Period Ending September 30, 2026

	YTD ACTUAL	FORECAST	REVISED BUDGET*	FORECAST VARIANCE $	FORECAST VARIANCE %
CAPITAL					
LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION					
60000 LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION	179,138	337,017	337,017	-	-
92605 R - LIBRARIES - CAPITAL	(177,434)	(331,017)	(331,017)	-	-
TOTAL LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION	1,704	6,000	6,000	-	-
BRANCH LIBRARIES					
61011 TAVISTOCK LIBRARY	10,183	10,200	15,000	4,800	32.0%
61013 TILLSONBURG LIBRARY	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL BRANCH LIBRARIES	10,183	10,200	15,000	4,800	32.0%
SPECIAL PROGRAMS					
62006 MOBILE OUTREACH	-	-	300,000	300,000	100.0%
92600 R - LIBRARIES	-	-	(300,000)	(300,000)	100.0%
TOTAL SPECIAL PROGRAMS	-	-	-	-	-
OCL ING					
80000 CAPITAL	5,597	134,098	129,888	(4,210)	(3.2%)
92605 R - LIBRARIES - CAPITAL	-	(134,098)	(129,888)	4,210	(3.2%)
TOTAL OCL ING	5,597	-	-	-	-
NORWICH LIBRARY					
80000 CAPITAL	11,740	11,800	12,000	200	1.7%
92605 R - LIBRARIES - CAPITAL	(11,740)	(11,800)	(12,000)	(200)	1.7%
TOTAL NORWICH LIBRARY	-	-	-	-	-
TILLSONBURG LIBRARY					
80000 CAPITAL	22,723	23,000	25,000	2,000	8.0%
92605 R - LIBRARIES - CAPITAL	(22,723)	(23,000)	(25,000)	(2,000)	8.0%
TOTAL TILLSONBURG LIBRARY	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL CAPITAL	**17,484**	**16,200**	**21,000**	**4,800**	**22.9%**
OCL					
LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION					
60000 LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION					
REVENUES					
GENERAL REVENUES					
3325 REV - SERVICE RECOVERY FEES	(29,079)	(37,615)	(20,000)	17,615	(88.1%)
3332 REV - INTEREST	(2,476)	(3,200)	(3,500)	(300)	8.6%
3334 REV - DONATIONS	(116)	-	-	-	-
TOTAL GENERAL REVENUES	(31,671)	(40,815)	(23,500)	17,315	(73.7%)
GRANTS AND GOVERNMENT TRANSFERS					
3200 REV - PROVINCIAL GOVT	-	(135,675)	(135,675)	-	-
3203 REV - PROV-PAY EQUITY	-	(3,229)	(3,229)	-	-
TOTAL GRANTS AND GOVERNMENT TRANSFERS	-	(138,904)	(138,904)	-	-
TOTAL REVENUES	**(31,671)**	**(179,719)**	**(162,404)**	**17,315**	**(10.7%)**
EXPENSES					
SALARIES AND BENEFITS					
SALARIES	593,279	788,370	820,084	31,714	3.9%
HONORARIUM	3,286	5,500	5,500	-	-
BENEFITS	190,680	250,227	267,501	17,274	6.5%
TOTAL SALARIES AND BENEFITS	787,245	1,044,097	1,093,085	48,988	4.5%

LIBRARY
September Variance Reporting
For the Period Ending September 30, 2026

	YTD ACTUAL	FORECAST	REVISED BUDGET*	FORECAST VARIANCE $	FORECAST VARIANCE %
OPERATING EXPENSES					
5000 MEETING COSTS	-	-	200	200	100.0%
5002 CREDIT CARD COSTS	638	694	150	(544)	(362.7%)
5012 COMPUTER SOFTWARE & SUPPORT	37,639	42,524	44,700	2,176	4.9%
5015 ADVERTISING/MARKETING/PROMO	8,188	21,000	21,000	-	-
5018 TELECOMMUNICATIONS	1,929	2,584	2,700	116	4.3%
5020 MEMBERSHIP/DUES/SUBSCRIPTIONS	11,633	12,508	13,145	637	4.8%
5021 TRAINING/SEMINARS/CONFERENCE	9,327	18,600	18,600	-	-
5023 POSTAGE	2,857	9,095	9,100	5	0.1%
5025 TRAVEL-EXPENSES, MILEAGE	8,572	15,000	15,000	-	-
5026 TOOLS/EQUIPMENT PURCHASE	2,121	5,250	5,250	-	-
5029 R & M - EQUIPMENT	14,315	16,424	16,000	(424)	(2.7%)
5045 OFFICE SUPPLIES/EXPENSES	2,818	5,000	5,000	-	-
5303 INSURANCE	23,311	23,311	16,130	(7,181)	(44.5%)
6019 SUPPLIES/PROGRAM EXPENSES	5,191	11,250	11,250	-	-
6020 BOOKS - HARD COPY	15,712	16,000	16,000	-	-
6023 CULTURAL PROGRAMS	28,469	45,500	45,500	-	-
6024 GUIDES & TOOLS	15,933	17,967	20,515	2,548	12.4%
6028 BOOKS - ELECTRONIC	149,232	265,828	271,500	5,672	2.1%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	337,885	528,535	531,740	3,205	0.6%
CONTRACTED SERVICES					
5050 GARBAGE DISPOSAL	87	200	200	-	-
5308 PURCHASED SERVICES	178	1,201	1,000	(201)	(20.1%)
TOTAL CONTRACTED SERVICES	265	1,401	1,200	(201)	(16.8%)
FLEET AND FACILITY CHARGES	**57,821**	**78,870**	**79,005**	**135**	**0.2%**
INTERDEPARTMENTAL CHARGES	**742,464**	**945,149**	**945,149**	**-**	**-**
TOTAL EXPENSES	**1,925,680**	**2,598,052**	**2,650,179**	**52,127**	**2.0%**
	1,894,009	**2,418,333**	**2,487,775**	**69,442**	**2.8%**
63000 FUNDRAISING	(15)	-	-	-	-
91600 DC - LIBRARY	(130,610)	(136,008)	(136,008)	-	-
92130 R - CORPORATE GENERAL	-	(9,576)	(9,576)	-	-
92141 R - GROWTH - LIBRARY	32,696	15,032	15,032	-	-
92600 R - LIBRARIES					
PROGRAM SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)					
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) - OPERATING					
9101 RESERVE CONTRIBUTION-SURPLUS	-	190,890	-	(190,890)	-
TOTAL SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) - OPERATING	-	190,890	-	(190,890)	-
	-	**190,890**	**-**	**(190,890)**	**-**
92605 R - LIBRARIES - CAPITAL	186,750	249,000	249,000	-	-
TOTAL LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION	1,982,830	2,727,671	2,606,223	(121,448)	(4.7%)
BRANCH LIBRARIES					
61000 BROWNSVILLE LIBRARY	30,145	40,365	45,422	5,057	11.1%
61001 BURGESSVILLE LIBRARY	64,366	90,669	92,813	2,144	2.3%
61002 EMBRO LIBRARY	33,158	50,022	48,008	(2,014)	(4.2%)
61003 HARRINGTON LIBRARY	34,207	51,030	44,494	(6,536)	(14.7%)
61004 INGERSOLL LIBRARY	583,838	813,374	798,340	(15,034)	(1.9%)

LIBRARY
September Variance Reporting
For the Period Ending September 30, 2026

	YTD ACTUAL	FORECAST	REVISED BUDGET*	FORECAST VARIANCE $	FORECAST VARIANCE %
61005 INNERKIP LIBRARY	72,189	100,157	115,942	15,785	13.6%
61006 MT-ELGIN LIBRARY	37,779	54,827	54,838	11	0.0%
61007 NORWICH LIBRARY	228,163	309,021	299,028	(9,993)	(3.3%)
61008 OTTERVILLE LIBRARY	58,746	84,068	92,981	8,913	9.6%
61009 PLATTSVILLE LIBRARY	118,716	152,709	154,055	1,346	0.9%
61010 PRINCETON LIBRARY	58,732	78,574	83,928	5,354	6.4%
61011 TAVISTOCK LIBRARY	225,304	303,760	305,308	1,548	0.5%
61012 THAMESFORD LIBRARY	207,118	278,828	279,082	254	0.1%
61013 TILLSONBURG LIBRARY	567,781	764,954	856,209	91,255	10.7%
92605 R - LIBRARIES - CAPITAL	132,000	176,000	176,000	-	-
TOTAL BRANCH LIBRARIES	2,452,242	3,348,358	3,446,448	98,090	2.8%
SPECIAL PROGRAMS					
62006 MOBILE OUTREACH	144,107	205,129	223,687	18,558	8.3%
TOTAL SPECIAL PROGRAMS	144,107	205,129	223,687	18,558	8.3%
TOTAL OCL	**4,579,179**	**6,281,158**	**6,276,358**	**(4,800)**	**(0.1%)**
TOTAL LIBRARY	**4,596,663**	**6,297,358**	**6,297,358**	**-**	**-**

Report 2026-44
HUMAN RESOURCES &
CORPORATE SERVICES
Board Date: November 17, 2026

REPORT TO LIBRARY BOARD

Oxford County Policy Review: Communications and Personnel Policies

To: **Oxford County Library Board**

From: **CEO / Chief Librarian**

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That the Library Board formally re-adopts all Oxford County policies as listed in Report 2026-44 "County Policy Review: Communications and Personnel Policies" as governing the operations of Oxford County Library services and staff.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Formal adoption of County policies fulfills requirements of the *Public Libraries Act,* R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, the *Employment Standards Act*, S.O. 2000, c. 41 and ensures compliance with the *Ontario Public Libraries Guidelines*.
- The Library Board reviews and re-adopts sections of Oxford County's General Policy Manual on an annual basis.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact beyond what has been approved in the current year's operating budget.

Communications

Library Leadership will formally review all re-adopted policies with staff at the November 2026 Staff Development Day, highlighting where these policies can be found on the County Intranet.

2024-2028 LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Library Board approved the 2024-2028 Library Strategic Plan on February 20, 2024. The Plan outlines three key goals to advance the Library's vision to "Connect, discover, share, become." These goals are: *(1) Sustain service excellence, (2) Grow engagement and member relationships, and (3) Innovate access to service*.

The recommendation in this report supports the following strategic goals.
Strategic Goals and Strategies

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
		
Strategy 1.3 – Develop and implement a strategic approach to attract, retain and develop employees and volunteers to enhance and sustain OCL service excellence.		

See: Oxford County Library 2024-2028 Strategic Plan

DISCUSSION

Background

A County Library, as part of the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P. 44, s.7 (7), is understood to be a "corporation" under the management and control of a board. As such, the Library Board must meet all requirements of an employer under the *Employment Standards Act*, S.O. 2000, c. 41.

The Library Board first formally adopted all Oxford County policies in 2015. The Library Board reviews and formally updates sections of the County General Policy Manual on an annual basis as part of the Policy Review Framework.

Comments

The Oxford County General Policy manual includes policies under the following section headings:

- Organizational
- Personnel

- Finance
- Health and Safety
- Communications
- General
- And Oxford County Administrative Building (OCAB)
-

This report focuses on the Personnel and Communications sections of the manual. Policies included as part of this review have been included as Attachment 1, Communications Policies, and Attachment 2, Personnel Policies, of this report.

Communications Policies

Policy Number	Policy Name
8.02	Anit-Spam Policy
8.03	Digital Signature Policy
8.04	Technology Use Policy
8.05	Web, Intranet and Social Media Management Policy
8.07	Remote Access to Network Resources Policy
8.08	Purchase and Disposal of IT Policy
8.09	Access and Privacy Policy
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Personnel Policies

Policy Number	Policy Name
5.03	Recruitment Policy
5.04	Criminal Background and Vulnerable Sector Check
5.05	Tuition Reimbursement
5.06	Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace
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5.11	Nepotism Policy
5.18	Alcohol and Drug Impairment in the Workplace
5.22	Leaves of Absence
5.29	Acting Pay Non-Union Management
5.30	Overtime – Non-Union Employees
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5.40	Flexible Work Arrangements Policy
5.41	Exit Interview
5.42	Job Evaluation and Salary Administration
5.43	Volunteer and Student Placements
5.44	Workplace – Temporary Accommodation
5.45	Workplace – Permanent Accommodation
5.46	Student Hires
5.48	Disconnect from Work

CONCLUSIONS

The adoption of applicable Oxford County policies, as included in this report, allows the Library Board to fulfill its governance role under the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44.

SIGNATURES

Departmental approval:

Original signed by

Lisa Marie Williams
CEO/Chief Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 Oxford County Communications Policies, November 2026
Attachment 2 Oxford County Personnel Policies, November 2026

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Anti-Spam Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to comply with Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation ("CASL") which comes into force on July 1, 2014. The purpose of this law is to help regulate commercial conduct by prohibiting certain commercial activities that are performed through electronic means. It primarily impacts private businesses in Canada, but also pertains to certain messages sent by individuals, non-profit organizations and other types of organizations.

DEFINITIONS

"Commercial Activity" means any particular transaction, act or conduct that is of a commercial character, whether or not the person who carries it out does so with the expectation of profit.

"Electronic messages" include e-mails, instant messages, text messages, direct messages on social networking sites and other types of messages involving text or images. It does not include interactive two-way voice communications between individuals, facsimile transmissions or voice mail.

"Commercial Electronic Message" or "CEM" is an electronic message that, having regard to content, hyperlinks or contact information contained in the message, leads one to reasonably conclude that one of the purposes of the message is to encourage participation in a commercial activity, including:

- offers to buy, sell or lease products, goods or services, or any interest in land;
- offers to provide a business, investment or gaming opportunity, or advertisement or promotion of such offers;
- promoting a person who does or intends to do anything referred to above; and
- an electronic message that contains a request for consent to send a CEM.

"Express Consent" means that an individual actively gives permission to send him/her a CEM. Express consent is not time limited unless the recipient withdraws his/her consent.

"Implied Consent" means that consent is not expressly granted by an individual, but it is inferred from the individual's actions and the circumstances of a particular situation. Implied consent is valid for a period of two years from the event that first initiated the relationship.

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PROCEDURE

1.0 Legislative Authority

1.1 Section 6 of CASL prohibits sending a CEM unless:

a) The person to whom the message is sent has consented, whether the consent is express or implied;
b) The message identifies the sender and the entity that the sender represents;
c) The message enables the recipient to readily contact the sender; and
d) The message contains an unsubscribe mechanism.

2.0 Procedure

2.1 All County employees who send CEM's must do so in accordance with CASL and this Policy.

2.2 All electronic messages not excluded from CASL will:

a) Require consent from the recipient in accordance with the "Consent" section below;
b) Identify the sender and the sender's e-mail address; and
c) Include a functional and simple unsubscribe/opt-out option. The unsubscribe mechanism must be at no cost and must be processed without delay (within 10 days).

2.3 All consents must be tracked and recorded by the staff person, or designate, responsible for disseminating the CEM. The record will include:

- Whether consent was express or implied;
- Method of consent; and
- Date received.

2.4 Express consent requires a clear request statement, followed by a positive indication of consent from the individual.

3.0 Consent

3.1 Consent cannot be by default. It must be specifically chosen by the recipient.

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3.2 A request for consent cannot be bundled as one of several conditions within a contract. It must stand alone.

3.3 If implied consent is to be relied upon, the onus is on the sender to provide proof of consent.

3.4 No consent is required if the CEM is:

a) Providing a quote or estimate in response to a request;
b) Facilitating, completing or confirming an ongoing transaction;
c) Responding to a customer-initiated inquiry, request or complaint;
d) Providing product recall information or safety or security information about a product, good or service that is used by the recipient;
e) Providing factual information on ongoing subscriptions, memberships, accounts or loans;
f) Providing information directly related to an employment relationship or related benefit plan;
g) Delivering upgrades or updates to products, goods or services;
h) Within an organization or between organizations that have an existing business relationship; or
i) Arising from a legal obligation, court order or judgment, or to provide notice of an existing or pending legal obligation, court order or judgment, or to enforce a right under a law of Canada, or of a Province, territory or municipality.

3.5 Consent is implied if:

a) There is an existing business relationship or existing non-business relationship;
b) The recipient has conspicuously published their e-mail address and the CEM is relevant to that person's business, role or function; or
c) The recipient has given or exchanged business cards with the sender and the CEM is relevant to the person's business, role or function and there has been no request not to send e-mail.

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Digital Signature Policy

POLICY

This Digital Signature Policy provides a process to follow that effectively mitigates the risks related to electronic authentications, while simultaneously supporting the evolution of electronic business processes. It outlines the responsibilities of staff in relation to the electronic authentication process and will allow for the reduction and, in some cases, the elimination of paper-based signatures.

This policy will ensure legal and financial integrity of electronic transactions are preserved through the design and implementation of appropriate internal control mechanisms, including electronic authentications and authorizations. These internal controls will safeguard electronic transactions against unauthorized access, authority or disclosure, destruction, removal, modification, repudiation, misuse, incompleteness and/or inaccuracy.

DEFINITION

Accreditation Authority An entity with the authority to permit a Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) entity to operate within a particular domain and acceptance by that entity of the associated residual risk.

Audit Trail Refers to the elements and evidence involved in tracking a complete process including electronic authentication or authorization. Elements and evidence include delegation of authority matrices, user profiles and any data and files required to reconstruct the sequence of events and transactions processed.

Certificate Within the context of this Policy, a Certificate is a public key certificate issued by the County of Oxford to a person that allows that person to utilize an electronic or digital signature.

Certification Authority An entity entrusted by an Accreditation Authority to issue and manage public key certificates. Within the context of this policy, the Certification Authority is the County of Oxford.

Digital Signature Any legally recognized electronic means that indicates that a person adopts the contents of an electronic document. It consists of one or more letters, characters, numbers or other symbols in digital form incorporated in, attached to or associated with an electronic document. The intent of a digital signature is the same as a hand-written signature; to ensure the validity and legal effect of contracts entered into electronically. For the purposes of this policy, digital signatures will be the result of a cryptographic operation. The digital signature software technology will guarantee data integrity and non-repudiation of transactions. The technology will ensure that the digital signature cannot be copied, altered or corrupted. Certificates remain the sole property of the Certification Authority.

Electronic Authentication Is the process by which an individual or device is verified as a unique and legitimate user. Includes the use of passwords, identifiers, biometrics, shared secrets, usage patterns, etc.

PKI Also known as “Public Key Infrastructure”, PKI is the combination of technologies and processes that allows for the creation of a level of trust, not only in the encryption applied to protect the data or communication, but also in the data or communication itself. A PKI uses keys and certificates that, in combination, prove the authenticity of data or communications, thereby enabling trust between unknown parties.

Security Access Access to the digital signature application will be subject to two stage authentication, including SMS or phone call and a unique password. The password and the computer device used for this purpose must not be shared and shall be held in confidence and secured from unauthorized access.

Subscriber A person who has been issued a Certificate to affix a digital signature to documents.

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PROCEDURE

1.0 **Legislative Authority**

Federal

1.1 Pursuant to Section 31.8 of the *Canada Evidence Act*, "secure electronic signature" is defined as "a secure electronic signature as defined in subsection 31(1) of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act*."

1.2 Subsection 31(1) and Section 48 of the *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* ("PIPEDA") defines "secure electronic signature" as a digital signature that has the following characteristics:

- is unique to the person signing the document;
- the technology or process used to incorporate, attach or associate the digital signature to an electronic document is under the sole control of the person signing the document;
- the technology or process can be used to identify the person using the technology or process; and
- the digital signature can be linked with an electronic document in such a way that it can be used to determine whether the electronic document has been changed since the digital signature was incorporated in, attached to or associated with the electronic document.

1.3 Pursuant to Section 31.2 of the *Canada Evidence Act*, the best evidence rule in respect of an electronic document is satisfied "on proof of the integrity of the electronic documents system by or in which the electronic document was recorded or stored".

Provincial

1.4 Pursuant to Section 11 of the *Electronic Commerce Act, 2000* ("ECA"), a legal requirement that a document be signed is satisfied by an electronic signature provided that:

- the electronic signature is reliable for the purpose of identifying the person;
- the association of the electronic signature with the relevant electronic documents is reliable; and

- the electronic signature meets the prescribed requirements, if any, as to method and the prescribed information technology standards, if any.

As of the date of this Policy, no prescribed standards have been created under the ECA.

1.5 Pursuant to Section 15 of the ECA, if a municipality has the power to create, collect, receive, store, transfer, distribute, publish or otherwise deal with information and documents, it has the power to do so electronically.

1.6 Pursuant to Section 18 of the ECA, a payment to or by a municipality may be made in electronic form in any manner specified by the public body.

2.0 Scope

2.1 Certificates under this policy may be issued to County of Oxford employees only for the purposes of fulfilling their delegated and/or authorized duties.

2.2 Subject to any legislative or regulatory requirements applicable to a particular program, and subject to a risk assessment of an application, certificates issued under this policy may be used for the following types of transactions:

- information publication;
- forms submission;
- correspondence;
- internal workflows; and
- electronic commerce.

2.3 A digital signature must be able to stand up to legal scrutiny. In law, if a signature on a contract or other document is challenged, the signature must meet certain tests before a court will uphold it. In order to satisfy the “secure electronic signature” test in PIPEDA, the County of Oxford has implemented certain procedures:

- each Digital Signature that is issued will be unique to the person creating the signature;
- the PKI technology or process used to create the Digital Signature and to incorporate it in, attach it to or associate it with an electronic document will

be password protected and will be under the sole control of the individual signing the document; and

- if an electronic document is changed after a Digital Signature is incorporated in, attached to or associated with a document, the signature will be rendered invalid.

2.4 If a document has been signed with a secure Digital Signature pursuant to this policy, then that document shall be considered the official record and the original paper record shall be destroyed. This procedure is recommended by the Canadian General Standards Board (CGSB) in both CGSB 72.11 (with respect to electronic images of paper documents) and CGSB 72.34 (with respect to documents that are born electronic) in terms of using the record as documentary evidence.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 The County of Oxford's Information Technology Team is responsible for the following:

- Management of the applicant registration process, including the creation, renewal and revocation of Digital Signature certificates;
- Providing assurances that key information technology controls are in place and working effectively to support the ongoing integrity of electronic transactions and related authentications and authorizations;
- Managing the repository/server holding authentication and authorization information as well as public key certificates and revocation lists in accordance with applicable privacy legislation and/or contracts with cloud based services providing the same; and
- Informing, or causing departments to inform, Subscribers and relying parties of any changes concerning their rights, privileges and obligations with respect to certificates issued.

3.2 The County of Oxford's Director of Corporate Services or his/her designate is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring the integrity of electronic transactions through the establishment of corporate policies and procedures, including the design and maintenance of effective internal control mechanisms regarding electronic authentications

and authorizations;
- Verifying or authenticating the identity of a Subscriber;
- Initiating the process to cause the Information Technology Team to issue a certificate, but not actually signing or issuing certificates; and
- Performing an annual audit of a random sample of documents to ensure data integrity and authenticity.

3.3 The County of Oxford Subscriber is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that all information submitted to the Information Technology Team is complete and accurate;
- Protecting their password and SMS or computer/phone device by taking all reasonable measures to prevent loss, disclosure, modification or unauthorized use;
- Not leaving their workstation unattended when the cryptography is in an unlocked state;
- Immediately notifying the Information Technology Team in the event of a compromise or suspected compromise of their password or computer/phone device; and
- Immediately notifying the Information Technology Team if there is a change in the Subscriber's information.

4.0 Authentication

4.1 Electronic authentication is the process by which an individual is verified as a legitimate user. The identity of a Subscriber shall be verified prior to issuing a digital signature certificate as set out below:

- Employees will furnish first and last name, organizational position or role and department, as well as employee I.D. number. The personnel file for the employee will contain sufficient backup information to verify the identity of the employee, including date of birth, S.I.N., etc. Identification documents retained in the personnel file may be used for tracing and investigation purposes should a subsequent allegation of identity fraud be made.

4.2 An application for a certificate does not oblige the Information Technology Team to issue a certificate. The Information Technology Team may exercise discretion and may refuse to issue a certificate in its sole discretion.

4.3 Authentication information, such as personal identifiers and passwords, shall be properly safeguarded and managed pursuant to the privacy protection provisions of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* ("MFIPPA").

4.4 Once the digital certificate is approved, the private digital signature password shall be entirely within the control of the certificate holder. This is a necessity if the digital signature is to have the property of non-repudiation.

4.5 The publication of a certificate in a repository constitutes the Information Technology Team's certification, and constitutes notice to a Subscriber who may access the certificate in the repository, that the information stated in the certificate has been verified in accordance with this policy.

4.6 The use of a Digital Signature by a Subscriber constitutes acceptance of all obligations associated with its use under this policy.

5.0 Control Mechanisms

5.1 Records retention and disposition shall be managed in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements and in accordance with the County's records management policies, procedures and by-laws so that the sequence of events and the transactions processed can be reconstructed for audit purposes.

5.2 The Information Technology Team shall ensure that it has the capacity to record in audit logs all events relating to the security of the certification system including, but not limited to, routers, firewalls, directories and servers hosting certification software. All logs must contain the date and time of the event as well as the identity of the entity which caused the event.

5.3 The Certification Authority shall ensure that key generation is performed by personnel in trusted roles with a minimum of dual control. The Information Technology Team will also institute procedures to ensure that personnel in PKI roles are accountable for actions they perform and ensure evidence is available to link any action to the person performing such action.

5.4 The Information Technology Team shall not collect personal information for any purposes other than the issuance and management of certificates and shall not collect any more information than is necessary for that purpose. Personal information collected under this policy shall only be used and disclosed in accordance with the MFIPPA.

6.0 Revocation

6.1 The Information Technology Team shall revoke a certificate in the following circumstances:

- When any information in the certificate changes;
- Upon the suspected or known compromise of the private key or the media holding the private key;
- Upon the death or termination of employment of a Subscriber;
- Upon the termination of a designated role; and
- Upon a properly authenticated request by the Subscriber or the Subscriber's designated representative to revoke the certificate.

6.2 The Information Technology Team, in its discretion, may revoke a certificate in the following circumstances:

- When a Subscriber fails to comply with this policy or any applicable law; or
- Where the Certification Authority believes in its sole discretion that it is appropriate.

6.3 The Information Technology Team may notify a Subscriber of a revocation of a certificate assigned to them.

6.4 Any action taken as a result of a request for the revocation of a certificate must be initiated as soon as possible upon becoming aware of the request.

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APPENDIX A

Application Guidelines

This Appendix aims to clarify the interpretation and implementation practices for using electronic and digital signatures. Its goal is to provide cost-effective and sensible solutions that enhance the user experience and reduce the time required to conduct day-to-day business activity where digital or electronic signatures can be applied in place of paper-based approaches.

The following table summarizes application of digital and electronic signatures as reference relative to their dependency on specified assurance levels:

- Minimal acceptable type of electronic signature
- Levels of authentication
- Time stamp requirements
- Supporting information recommended
- System information integrity requirements
- Transaction record retention periods

Assurance Level	Description
1	Is data in electronic form which is attached to or logically associated with other data in electronic form and which is used by the signatory to sign. *Example – Adobe or other applications such as Word or Excel converted to pdf*
2	Is an advanced electronic signature that is created by a qualified electronic signature creation device, and which is based on a qualified certificate for electronic signatures. *Examples of applications – KRONOS, eScribe, Paramount*
3	Is the result of the transformation of a message by means of a cryptosystem using keys such that a person having the initial message can determine: 1. whether the transformation was created using the key that corresponds to the signer's key, and 2. whether the message has been altered since the transformation was made.

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	Corporate solution authorized for use in accordance with the Digital Signature Policy.

Assurance Level 1

Applies to documents that are not legally binding, the following are examples only and should not be considered an exhaustive list:

- Letters
- Records destruction forms
- Memos
- Planning applications
- Moving permits
- Water exemption permits

Assurance Level 2

Digital or electronic signatures are not required where automated workflows document authorization. The following are examples only and should not be considered an exhaustive list:

- Amanda - TBD
- Paramount – purchase orders
- Kronos – onboarding, offer letters, performance appraisals
- eScribe – Council reports and minutes
- Laserfiche Workflows – Customer Feedback Forms

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Assurance Level 3

Applies to documents that are legally binding and requires two authorized signatures. The following are examples only and should not be considered an exhaustive list and can only be used when authorized by virtue of Council by-law or resolution:

- Contracts
- Agreements
- Notices of intent
- Collective agreements
- By-laws

The list of applications for electronic and digital signatures referenced in this guideline should not be considered exhaustive. When in doubt, users will contact the Legislative Services Coordinator for the appropriate application.

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REFERENCE POLICY:	8.6	REVISED:	May 19, 2011

Technology Use

POLICY

The County of Oxford provides employees with access to a computer/workstation and/or peripherals, (such as copier/printers, scanners etc.) in order to assist them in performing their work. Some employees are provided personal digital assistants (PDAs) which are connected to County computers and networks. County computers are attached to Local Area Networks (LAN), Wide Area Networks (WAN) and Internet and electronic mail (e-mail) to facilitate the collection and dissemination of information relevant to County Business. Employees are provided access to telephone service, some provided through the same LAN using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), and some connected to the traditional private networks.

The following provides guidelines for the appropriate use of these technology resources.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Definitions

1.1 **"User"** shall include County employees, contract personnel, contractors, and consultants with authorized access to and use of County technology resources.

1.2 **"Technology Resources"** shall include, but are not limited to:

- 1.2.1 Desktop, notebook, and portable computing devices and related peripherals
- 1.2.2 Digital screens, Smart Boards, teleconferencing equipment and related peripheral equipment
- 1.2.3 Internet service and e-mail systems
- 1.2.4 Electronic data transmission equipment, devices and networks (LAN & WAN) including servers, switches, routers, firewalls, and Wireless routers and other wireless network equipment, etc.
- 1.2.5 Business systems and County managed software
- 1.2.6 All types of telephone systems including VoIP system, portable telephones, faxes, cell phones & PDAs and telephone services purchased from outside vendors
- 1.2.7 Radio and other audio/voice communication equipment, devices and networks
- 1.2.8 Consumable goods used in the operation of these resources
- 1.2.9 Data, information and other work products (such as computer programs, databases, spreadsheets, etc.) created/maintained in using these resources, including data copies made on diskettes, backup tapes, or other removable storages devices.

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1.3 **"Removable Storage Media"** shall mean any and all devices and accompanying media that fit the following device classifications:

- 1.3.1 Portable USB-based memory sticks also known as flash drives or thumb drives;
- 1.3.2 Memory cards in Secure Digital (SD), Compact Flash, or related flash-based supplemental media;
- 1.3.3 USB card readers that allow connectivity to a PC;
- 1.3.4 Portable MP3 and MPEG and media playing devices such as iPods;
- 1.3.5 PDAs, cell phones and smart phones with internal flash or hard drive memory;
- 1.3.6 Digital cameras with internal or external memory;
- 1.3.7 Removable memory-based media such as rewritable DVDs, CDs and floppy disks;
- 1.3.8 Any hardware providing connectivity to USB devices through means of wireless (WiFI, WiMAX, irDA, Bluetooth, etc.) or wired network access.

1.4 **"PDA"** shall mean personal digital assistant. The County has established the BlackBerry as the standard PDA unless there is justification and a business case for an alternate device.

1.5 **"Internet"** shall mean the global interconnection of data networks or bulletin board systems that commonly use the Internet Protocol.

1.6 **"WAN"** shall mean Wide Area Network used to electronically connect various sites where the County has computers and peripherals, and includes the infrastructure which provides the connections to these sites, which is commonly referred to as the County of Oxford Integrated Network (COIN).

1.7 **"LAN"** shall mean Local Area Network used to electronically inter-connect computers and peripheral devices within a site where County has staff using computers.

1.8 **"VoIP"** shall mean Voice over Internet Protocol, a method by which voice data uses the same network as that used for computer data.

1.9 **"Long Distance"** shall mean any telephone call for which additional charges apply.

1.10 **"Sensitive Information"** shall mean personal, confidential or protected information whose release is unauthorized, i.e. information which is reasonably likely to be excepted or excluded from access under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

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1.11 **"Inappropriate Material" or "Offensive Material"** shall include, but is not limited to pornography, 'adult sites', any material that promotes hateful or seditious activity, promotes illegal activity, or material which contravenes the Ontario Human Rights Code. Including material which is e-mailed to the user, downloaded by the user from Internet sites, and/or material which is created by the user.

2.0 Ownership

2.1 All technology resources acquired by and managed by the County and the data information and work product created, (such as programs, databases, spreadsheets, etc.) received/downloaded from external sources and/or modified in the use of such resources, belong to the County of Oxford.

2.2 The network systems (LAN & WAN) and any electronic transaction, and/or any data files stored on network systems are the property of the County of Oxford.

2.3 The e-mail system and any electronic transaction and/or any e-mail messages stored on the e-mail system are the property of the County of Oxford.

3.0 Conditions of Use

3.1 Network, telephone including VoIP, e-mail and Internet use is provided to users to facilitate and enhance communications with the public, vendors, contractors and other sources of information relevant to County business, and to provide communication among staff.

3.2 Minimal personal use of County technology, including Internet and e-mail is permitted, provided the user is on their own time and provided such use does not adversely affect a user's performance of work duties, with the understanding that all other provisions of this policy are adhered to.

3.3 The County VoIP telephone system is capable of monitoring telephone use from every telephone extension and PDA. The County reserves the right to collect costs incurred by users for personal long-distance telephone calls and personal use of data plans.

3.4 No County information should be posted on the Internet and/or distributed using e-mail which would not be distributed on County letterhead or logo, and no information should be copied or saved which is not related to County business, except within 3.2.

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3.5 It is a breach of this policy to purposely access or download any web site hosting sensitive, inappropriate material or offensive material as defined in 1.10 and 1.11. It is also unacceptable to access non-business services, chat rooms, newsgroups and messaging services (eg: MSN Messenger, etc.), unless such use is related to County business. It is also unacceptable to access/receive streaming audio/video files, dating services, escort services, Internet gaming, gambling and other types of personal referral services or for any purposes unrelated to County business.

3.6 E-mail and Internet usage must be able to survive public scrutiny and/or disclosure. Users must avoid accessing sites or distributing messages containing personal, sensitive or inappropriate information as defined in 1.10 or 1.11, or which might bring the County into disrepute. E-mail users must understand the originator/sender of an e-mail has little control over how the information is subsequently retained, accessed, used, altered or disclosed by the recipient, whether inadvertently, accidentally or purposefully. If it is absolutely necessary to communicate personal or sensitive information via e-mail, then the user should warn the recipient that disclosure is prohibited without the originator's express authorization.

3.7 No user shall use e-mail to knowingly send or receive copyright protected material, games, inappropriate or offensive materials in any format. Where such material is received it should be deleted from the system(s) immediately.

3.8 E-mail shall not be sent from another users PC unless the sender has logged on and is sending the e-mail under his or her own identity. Users must not send e-mails that are identified as coming from another user.

3.9 User logons and passwords help maintain individual accountability therefore these are not to be shared and must be kept confidential. Passwords should be changed regularly.

3.10 Users must log off or lock their computers when away from their workstations.

3.11 Files or data created by other users may not be copied, deleted or modified without the originator's consent.

3.12 Users, other than authorized Information System (IS) staff are not permitted to alter/tamper with computers, equipment or software without the express permission of IS staff.

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3.13 Users are not permitted to download or install programs or software from the Internet or any other source and install them on County owned equipment, including shareware, games or screen savers. Any business related software requiring Internet downloads, patches, updates, or revisions, should be conducted by authorized IS staff. No unlicensed software will be installed on County owned computers.

4.0 Conditions for Access

4.1 No user should have any expectation of privacy as to his or her technology resource use, including personal use. The County of Oxford reserves the right to monitor, access, assess, record and audit the use of any and all technology resources at its sole discretion.

4.2 The County reserves the right to remove, delete, or confiscate any data, information and other work products found to be in violation of this policy. This includes all internet and e-mail use, telephone and voice messages, as well as files stored on shared and user directories and local disk drives or removable storage devices.

5.0 General Guidelines

5.1 IS staff provides technical support and instruction to all County users. All technology problems or issues must be reported to the support helpdesk by calling extension 3161 and/or by e-mailing support@oxfordcounty.ca.

5.2 IS staff is responsible for the purchase of all Technology Resources (as defined in 1.2). No County technology resources will be purchased except through IS staff. See also Policy 8.8 Purchase and Disposal of Information Technology.

5.3 To protect the integrity and security of County technology resources, no personal computers, computer devices or removable storage media not provided by the County may be connected to or attached to any County computers, networks or access to any County technology resources. See also Policy 8.6 Electronic File, E-mail and Data Storage and Security Policy.

5.4 No County owned or licensed software may be installed on any users' personal computer or any computer resource not owned by the County unless authorized by a Director or Corporate Manager and the IS Manager.

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5.5 IS group will manage purchase and support of all PDA and cell phone devices.

5.5.1 Billing for all PDA and cell phone charges will come through the IS group to ensure consistency of service plans and maximum discounts, sharing of data plans and pooling of cell phone usage. Costs will be billed back to the user's department through inter-department billing. Personal use costs incurred will be collected from the user.

5.5.2 Authorization for purchase of new cell phones or PDAs must come in writing (or e-mail) from the CAO and Directors or Corporate Managers and must be supported with a business case.

5.6 Users are responsible for immediately reporting to the IS group any lost or stolen computer equipment, laptop computers, removable storage devices such as memory sticks or PDAs, which may contain sensitive County information.

5.7 The County IS group manages and maintains the corporate e-mail systems.

5.7.1 County e-mail users are required to manage their e-mail messages with the same diligence as they manage paper documents and/or electronic files in accordance with the "*Electronic File, E-mail and Data Storage and Security Policy*". General policy Manual Policy # 8.6.

5.7.2 County e-mail users e-mail boxes are limited in size to 250 mega bytes (Mb).

5.7.2.1 Users with mail boxes approaching the size limitation will be warned by the e-mail system that their mailbox is approaching the limit and to reduce the mailbox size.

5.7.2.2 Users with mail boxes larger than 250Mb will loose the ability to send e-mail messages until their e-mail box size is reduced below the limit.

5.7.3 The County e-mail system will automatically delete any message in a user's Inbox after 120 days.

5.7.3.1 Users may move messages to sub-folders where date restrictions will not apply, but sub-folders do contribute to the mail box size that is subject to the 250Mb limitation.

5.7.3.2 Users should delete transitory e-mails and move e-mails that are official records to *Laserfiche*, the document management system, in accordance with the provisions of the "*Electronic File, E-mail and Data Storage and Security Policy*". General Policy Manual Policy # 8.6.

5.7.4 The County e-mail system will automatically empty users' Deleted Items

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folders.

5.7.5 E-mail attachments for outgoing messages are limited to 10Mb. E-mail attachments for incoming messages are limited to 20Mb.

5.7.5.1 Users wishing to send or receive e-mail attachments larger than the limitation must use the *Large File Transfer* web site. www.oxfordcounty.ca/email

5.8 All e-mails created or received by users in connection with official government business are subject to the provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Backup tapes of e-mail will be done regularly for disaster recovery purposes, but will not be used for record retrieval purposes under the Act as per IPC (Information and Privacy Commissioner) Practices No. 24.

5.9 Single topic e-mail messages should be created whenever possible to facilitate filing, retrieval and forwarding.

5.10 Managers and Supervisors must make staff aware of this Technology Use policy and provide necessary training to use technology efficiently and effectively. All technology users must become proficient in the use of the technology resources provided to fulfil work requirements and to use those technology resources in an acceptable manner as defined in this policy.

5.11 Any use of County technology resources that breaches this policy will be treated as misconduct and will be reviewed. This may result in disciplinary steps being taken up to and including dismissal from employment, seeking restitution, commencement of civil action, criminal prosecution or any combination thereof.

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Web, Intranet and Social Media Management Policy

POLICY

The County of Oxford hosts a number of Web sites which provide information and services for the convenience of County and Municipal Councils, County and Municipal staff, citizens of Oxford County and/or any other users of the World Wide Web.

The Internet also provides a variety of web-based social and personal networking tools that the County may find useful and appropriate to disseminate or share information with staff and the public.

In addition to its external facing web tools, the County of Oxford hosts a number of internal web sites (IntraNet(s)) and applications to provide information and services for County staff.

Together, these tools comprise an important means of communicating and interacting County information with its various publics. Because of their efficiency, expediency, reach, and cost and environmental advantages, their use is expected to continue to grow and evolve. This policy provides guidelines for the appropriate creation, management, and use of these applications, web sites and the content provided on them.

PROCEDURE

1. **Definitions**
   1.1. **"User"** shall include County employees, contract personnel, contractors, and consultants with authorized access to and use of County technology resources.

   1.2. **"Appropriate Authorization"** County CAO, Directors and Corporate Managers (or their designates) shall authorize users of the County content management system within their respective departments.

   1.3. "**Content**" shall include, but is not limited to, all information included on County web pages, all documents posted on or linked to County web pages. "Content" shall also include postings on County approved social networking sites such as Facebook, My Space, Blogs and Twitter.

   1.4. **"Sensitive content"** shall mean personal, confidential or protected information, the release of which is unauthorized, i.e. information which is likely to be excluded from access under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

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1.5. **"Inappropriate content" or "Offensive content"** shall include, but is not limited to pornography, 'adult material', any material that promotes hateful or seditious activity, promotes illegal activity, or material which contravenes the Ontario Human Rights Code or content which may reflect poorly on the County image.

1.6. **"Social Media"** encompasses tools that allow people to share information and interact in an online environment. This includes, but is not limited to, content posted on blogs, social networking sites, photo and video sharing sites, user review sites, content aggregators, and crowdsourcing sites. For an explanation of different social media tools and functions, visit Wikipedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media (see "Examples").

1.7. **"Corporate communications"** refers to either a communications coordinator or a designated multidepartmental team (such as the social media team) charged with upholding consistent communications practice across the corporation under direction and approval from the CAO.

2. Ownership

2.1. Web sites hosted by the County of Oxford are the property of Oxford County.

2.2. Content of web sites hosted by the County of Oxford is the property of Oxford County.

2.3. Content posted on Social Media sites authorized by the County is the property of Oxford County.

2.4. The County reserves the right to remove or block access to any content found on sites hosted by the County, which is considered to be "sensitive", "inappropriate", and/or "offensive".

2.5. The County provides web hosting service for a number of non-profit organizations operating within Oxford County. The County will not be accepting new web sites for non-profit organizations beginning in October 2009. The County will continue hosting existing non-profit sites for the time being. The County will continue to provide web hosting and support for County and municipally funded or supported organizations and projects.

3. Conditions of Use

3.1. The County Information Systems (IS) Group provides a web content management utility (CMU) to assist County staff to update and maintain web content. The content

management tool may be updated or changed as new features and functions become available.

3.2. CAO, Directors and Corporate Managers (or designates) must approve employees who have access to the County web content management utility within their respective departments, and must authorize posts to corporate Social Media sites.

3.3. The County has designated the CAO as the official spokesperson for official County announcements. All official announcements, media releases and similar official County announcements must be authorized by the CAO and issued through corporate communications. All official announcements or media releases must be authorized by the CAO before being posted on-line.

3.4. County IS group is responsible for registering and maintaining domains for County approved web sites including the annual registration cost. CAO, Directors and Corporate Managers must approve the purchase of new domains for County web sites. Departments must provide justification and a business case for creating new domain sites other than the official County domains.

3.4.1. www.oxfordcounty.ca is the official domain for the County web site and County e-mail addresses.

3.4.2. www.ocl.net is the official domain for Oxford County Library web site and Oxford County Library staff e-mail addresses.

3.4.3. www.tourismoxford.ca is the official domain for Tourism Oxford web site.

3.5. The County IS group is responsible for creating and establishing naming conventions for all corporate Social Media sites. All sites must be clearly identifiable as official County of Oxford tools.

3.6. The County IS group is responsible for maintaining web servers and connectivity to web servers. The IS Group is responsible for programming and maintenance of support systems, including design concepts, databases, the content management utility, and other 'back-end' systems.

3.6.1. All official County web sites, applications and databases will be hosted and maintained on County servers unless otherwise approved by the IS Manager.

3.6.2. CAO, Directors or Corporate Managers must approve new applications, databases and web sites including justification and business case for each.

3.7. Certain County departments have web content and web applications that contain personally identifiable information, financial information or other sensitive corporate data requiring special security measures. County IS staff will assist departments to

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identify this type of content in consultation with the Legislative Services Coordinator and provide appropriate security certificates to assure the privacy of the information is maintained. Cost of security certificates will be the responsibility of the department requiring the certificate.

3.8. Each County department is responsible for providing and maintaining the content posted on County web sites and Social Media posts.

3.9. County CAO, Directors or Corporate Managers (or designates) must approve all content respective of their department prior to posting including Social Media posts.

3.10. In order to ensure that all posted content is effective, precise and consistent with the County's official position as endorsed by senior leadership, all social media posts to corporate social media sites must be vetted through corporate communications unless a process is otherwise approved by the CAO.

3.11. Posting content which is "sensitive", "inappropriate", and/or "offensive", is prohibited on County web sites, and/or web sites hosted by the County including Social Media posts.

3.12. Content will adhere to basic formatting and style standards as provided through the content management utility, including standard 'look-and-feel', colours, and use of County logos.

3.13. Time sensitive content, such as notices, job postings and tenders will have an expiry date allowing the content to be automatically deleted as required.

3.14. All content on County web sites should be reviewed regularly to make sure content remains current and appropriate.

3.15. Content should be written, organized and presented from an audience point of view in order to be easily understood by the reader. Web pages will be designed and written to ensure ease of access and use.

3.16. Social media guidelines and best practices, attached to this policy as Appendix "B" must be followed for all use of social media by County users.

3 General

4.1 County IS group will endeavour to make County web sites accessible to viewers that

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are hearing and visually impaired. Images will be provided with meta data tags suitable for text reading software, and will, to the extent possible, follow the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) guidelines for web content accessibility.

4.2 The County of Oxford recognizes the value and potential of providing electronic information and services on the Internet. County staff is encouraged to provide information and services which are consistent with the mission of the County, as defined in the annual departmental Business Plans.

4.3 Information placed on County web site(s) plays an important role in developing and maintaining the reputation and image of the County. Content of all electronic pages and social media posts must reflect the mission of the County, as provided in annual Business Plans. Content must comply with all copyright, libel and County standards and ethics guidelines/policies.

4.4 County of Oxford employees are bound to the official spokesperson tenet of this policy for all social media interactions, extending not only to content shared on official County-authorized and administered social media sites but also to content shared on their own personal sites or third-party sites administered by others. This stipulates that:

4.4.1 County of Oxford users must identify themselves as such when participating in an online exchange about a County of Oxford program or service;

4.4.2 County of Oxford users are not authorized to speak on behalf of the County in any matter in an online exchange but must state that the opinion expressed is their own and not necessarily reflective of the County, unless they are a senior manager authorized by the CAO or a director/corporate manager to serve as a County spokesperson;

4.5 County staff must not access personal social media sites during County work time. The Technology Use Policy allows for "minimal personal use.... provided the user is on their own time and provided such use does not adversely affect a user's performance of work duties." (8.04 Technology Use)

4.6 The County Intranet and related sites are provided by the County as a mechanism for sharing work related information with employees. Content on the County Intranet will include, but is not limited to the list in Appendix 'A' which forms part of this policy.

4.7 Personal information, activities or announcements are only permitted in the Bulletin Board section of the Intranet and must conform to other guidelines in this policy. No personal information or announcements will be posted on the public Internet site.

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4.8 Any use of County technology resources that breaches this policy will be treated as misconduct and will be reviewed. This may result in disciplinary steps being taken up to and including dismissal from employment, seeking restitution, commencement of civil action, criminal prosecution or any combination thereof.

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Appendix 'A'

The following are considered appropriate content for the County Intranet:

- a Calendar of Corporate events
- County Policies and/or similar related information;
- forms used by County employees, such as vacation request, expense claim forms;
- training material, including corporate wide and department specific training materials;
- internal Job Postings
- Health & Safety information and announcements;
- press releases and/or news releases as authorized by Council or senior staff;
- corporate announcements of County approved social events
- personal announcements are permitted in the approved Bulletin Board sections, as long as the content does not violate the "Sensitivity" or "Inappropriate" guidelines as defined in section 1.4 and 1.5 of the policy. Personal announcements may include, but are not limited to:
    - parties, sports and other social events involving County staff
    - wedding or baby announcements
    - lost and found items
    - retirements
    - items available for sale
    - items persons are looking to purchase

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County of Oxford – Web, Intranet and Social Media Management Policy

Appendix B-1

Guidelines for Professional and Personal Use of Social Media

As a municipal government, the County of Oxford is accountable to the public and other municipalities for all its activities. This includes the way we use resources, the information we release to the public through different channels, and the conduct of our employees, all of which are factors in the use of social media.

The County's social media practice relies on the same principles at work in other policies and protocols:

- We use the County's technological resources appropriately to complete our work;
- We respect the confidentiality of our customers, fellow employees, and projects or information;
- We follow the same principles and approval process that we do when releasing public information through other channels.

Through social media, people now have a means of instantly communicating about their jobs outside of work to hundreds of people or more, people they may know well or not at all. This can create risks for both employees and employers if work-related information that is shared is not accurate or appropriate. Remember, personal social media posts may surface when people are searching online for information about an organization, issue or product. Even when you use privacy features, you may have little control over how your information or posts are shared by others.

The following guidelines are intended to foster a responsible and transparent social media culture, while helping to avoid confusion and/or wrongdoing on the part of County of Oxford employees who engage in social media as part of their professional or personal activities.

Professional use guidelines

1. **Make sure you are authorized to post before you do so.** The County of Oxford has official social media tools in place and a process for their use. If you have news to post, send an e-mail to communications@oxfordcounty.ca. Generally, people who are authorized to serve as a corporate media spokesperson are authorized to approve a social media post.

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2. **Follow the same practices and protocols that guide your work now**, including departmental practices, government policy and legislation, and professional standards and ethics.

Personal use guidelines

1. **Recognize that your role as a local government employee lends status.** Even if you only have partial information about something County-related, and are not intending to comment in an official capacity, people may interpret your post that way if they know you are a County of Oxford employee.

2. **Be clear about professional and personal boundaries**. If you identify yourself as a County of Oxford employee in your personal social media use, you must explain that your opinions are your own and not the County of Oxford's. Only directors or their delegates are authorized to post on non-County social media sites on behalf of the County.

3. **Respect people.** The County of Oxford does not tolerate discrimination (including age, sex, race, color, creed, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, citizenship, disability, or marital status or any other legally recognized protected basis under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms). As a public sector employee, you are expected to uphold the principles of the Charter.

4. **Respect information that is private and/or confidential**. This applies to information about yourself and others, including customers and fellow employees. Never share anything that is protected under the privacy or confidentiality policies of the County of Oxford.

5. **Respect ownership**. Copyright laws extend to social media. Protect yourself by appropriately crediting or seeking permission when sharing information, ideas, images, and the work of others. Remember, the work you are paid to complete as an employee is not your own but the property of the County of Oxford.

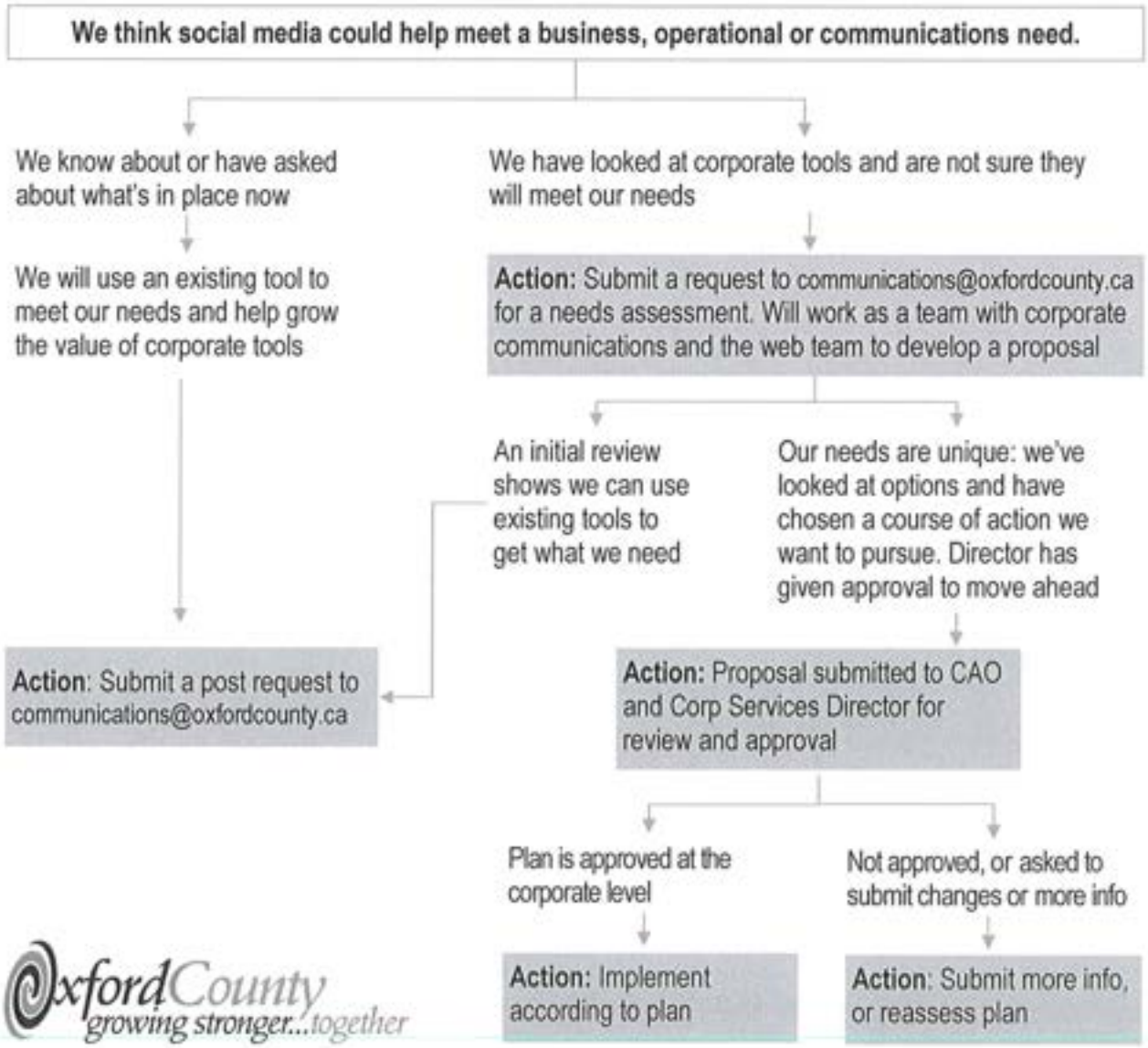
6. **Be transparent**. Social media lends itself to discussions on issues and hot topics; if you venture into discussions in which your personal opinion is shaped by your professional role, be fair and transparent to others in the discussion by stating your professional involvement. Again, be clear when sharing your own opinion versus that of the County.

With more and more people relying on social media for news and information, employees are encouraged to learn more about the many tools available. If you have questions, please ask your manager or supervisor, or e-mail communications@oxfordcounty.ca for general information.

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8.5. SOCIAL MEDIA PLANNING PROCESS

Appendix B-2



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Electronic File, E-mail and Data Storage and Security Policy

POLICY

The County of Oxford provides users with access to computers and peripherals including electronic file storage space in order to assist them in performing their work. Information files stored on County electronic storage systems may include documents, spreadsheets, databases, application programs created by staff or purchased by the County, auto-cad files, e-mail messages, voice messages or any number of other similar files. Some of these files may be classified as "Intellectual Property". All information files of any type stored on County electronic storage media are the property of the County.

While not all electronic files, e-mail communications or other forms of data are official records, all such files and e-mail communications are subject to disclosure and can be used as evidence in the event of litigation. Unmanaged and unclassified files, e-mails and data residing on the County's servers or backup tapes, therefore, present a serious potential risk to the County in terms of the time and money involved in identifying and disclosing all relevant information on e-discovery. Unmanaged and unclassified files, e-mails and data also make it challenging to adequately respond to access requests from the public under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*. Furthermore, unmanaged and unclassified files, e-mails and data pose a threat to the County's ability to document and reconstruct business and decision-making processes.

The County has an obligation under legislation to safeguard private, personally identifiable information, and other sensitive data from a variety of threats. These threats could include, but are not limited to, loss, theft, copyright infringement, spyware or malware, and unauthorized use or disclosure. Users must take steps to minimize or eliminate any potential compromises to sensitive data or records.

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the management of electronic files, e-mail and other data at the County, ensuring economy and efficiency in the storage, retrieval, retention, preservation and final disposition of these data with a goal of reducing storage costs as well as minimizing the potential risk and cost associated with e-discovery.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

- Section 254 (1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* requires the municipality to "retain and preserve the records of the municipality and its local boards in a secure and accessible manner".

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- Section 5 of R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 823 to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990 (MFIPPA)* provides that personal information be retained "for the shorter of one year after use or the period set out in a by-law".
- Section 3 (1) of R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 823 further provides that a municipality "shall ensure that reasonable measures to prevent unauthorized access to the records in his or her institution are defined, documented and put in place".
- Section 12 (1) of the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, S.O. 2004 (PHIPA)* requires that a health information custodian take reasonable steps to ensure that personal health information in its custody or control "is protected against theft, loss and unauthorized use or disclosure".
- Section 13 (1) of the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004, S.O. 2004 (PHIPA)* further requires that a health information custodian ensure that the records of personal health information in its custody or control "are retained, transferred and disposed of in a secure manner".

DEFINITIONS

"**User**" shall include County employees, contract personnel, contractors, and consultants with authorized access to and use of County technology resources.

"**County**" shall mean the County of Oxford.

"**Disclosure**" shall mean the legal process that permits parties involved in a legal proceeding to obtain records and information relevant to the proceeding that are in the possession of another party.

"**E-Discovery**" shall mean the identification, preservation, retrieval, exchange and production of documents from electronic sources in electronic form for the purposes of litigation.

"**E-mail**" shall mean a text communication which is created, transmitted and stored in an electronic format.

"**Electronic File**" shall mean any information contained in a named file stored on County computer technology system including servers, desktop computer, laptop computer, PDA or other electronic storage device or removable storage device. The information in these files could be Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, records in a DATAbase, drawings in AutoCAD, or any other electronically stored information.

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"Intellectual Property" shall mean any product of someone's intellect that has commercial value, especially copyrighted material, patents, and trademarks.

"Laserfiche" shall mean the electronic document management system adopted by the County. It is a centralized electronic document repository designed to be fully indexed and searchable, secure and untamperable, with access restricted to authorized personnel only.

"Personal Information" or **"PI"** shall mean recorded information about an identifiable individual, including:

- information relating to the race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or marital or family status of the individual,
- information relating to the education or the medical, psychiatric, psychological, criminal or employment history of the individual or information relating to financial transactions in which the individual has been involved,
- any identifying number, symbol or other particular assigned to the individual,
- the address, telephone number, fingerprints or blood type of the individual,
- the personal opinions or views of the individual except if they relate to another individual,
- correspondence sent to an institution by the individual that is implicitly or explicitly of a private or confidential nature, and replies to that correspondence that would reveal the contents of the original correspondence,
- the views or opinions of another individual about the individual, and
- the individual's name if it appears with other personal information relating to the individual or where the disclosure of the name would reveal other personal information about the individual.

"Personal Health Information" or **"PHI"** shall mean identifying information about an individual in oral or recorded form, if the information,

- relates to the physical or mental health of the individual, including family medical history,
- relates to the provision of health care to the individual, including the identification of a person as a health care provider to the individual,
- is a plan of service for the individual within the meaning of the *Long-Term Care Act, 1994*,
- relates to payments or eligibility for coverage for health care with respect to the individual,
- relates to the donation of any body part or bodily substance of the individual,
- is an individual's health card number, or
- identifies an individual's substitute decision-maker.

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"**Removable Storage Media**" shall mean any and all devices and accompanying media that fit the following device classifications:

- Portable USB-based memory sticks also known as flash drives or thumb drives;
- Memory Cards in Secure Digital (SD), Compact Flash, or related flash-based supplemental media;
- USB card readers that allow connectivity to a PC;
- Portable MP3 and MPEG and media playing devices such as iPods;
- PDAs, cell phones and smart phones with internal flash or hard drive memory;
- Digital cameras with internal or external memory;
- Removable memory-based media such as rewritable DVDs, CDs and floppy disks;
- Any hardware providing connectivity to USB devices through means of wireless (WiFi, WiMAX, irDA, Bluetooth, etc.) or wired network access.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Scope

1.1 The Electronic File, E-mail and Data Storage and Security Policy is intended to:

a) Provide guidelines for users to follow regarding proper use of electronic files, e-mail and other data storage on County technology systems, including the protection of PI, PHI and other confidential or sensitive information, from theft, loss or unauthorized use or disclosure;

b) Reduce costs associated with storage of unmanaged files, e-mail and other electronic data;

c) Improve system performance by reducing volume of archived files, e-mail and other electronic data;

d) Minimize the risk and cost associated with disclosure of unmanaged files, e-mail and other electronic data in the event of litigation;

e) Facilitate an adequate response to access requests from the public under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004;*

f) Retain and preserve electronic files, e-mail and other data records in a centralized electronic document repository designed to be fully indexed and searchable, secure and untamperable, with access restricted to authorized personnel only;

g) Increase staff productivity by simplifying the search and retrieval process of indexed files, e-mail and other data records and to facilitate the sharing of vital electronic information; and

h) Provide for the efficient and prompt disposal of "transitory" files, e-mail and other electronic data when no longer needed for short-term reference.

2.0 Principles

2.1 All records, regardless of physical form or characteristics, are the property of the County and subject to its control. This includes electronic files, e-mail and other electronic data.

2.2 Such control shall be exercised over the storage, retrieval, retention, preservation and final disposition of these records contingent on existing legislation, Records Retention By-law No. 4957-2008 and Records Management Policy No. 6.18.

2.3 Records are not distinguished by medium or format. It is the content that determines what is and what is not an official record.

3.0 Retention

3.1 Electronic files, e-mail messages and other electronic data fall into two categories:

a) "Official Records", as defined by County of Oxford By-law No. 4957-2008, generated or received in connection with the transaction of County business, and preserved for a period of time as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of the County; and

b) "Transitory Records", as defined by County of Oxford By-law No. 4957-2008, which are records of limited or no documentary value and/or are unrelated to County business. Transitory records include temporary e-mail communications of a non-vital nature as well as copies of records kept

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solely for convenience or reference purposes and may be discarded routinely. Unclassified e-mails are considered to be transitory records.

3.2 Employees have the same responsibilities for electronic files, e-mail messages and other electronic data as for any other document and must apply the same decision-making process to determine whether these data qualify as "official records" or "transitory records".

3.3 Electronic files, e-mails or other electronic data which are determined to be "official records" shall be saved in the Laserfiche electronic document repository or other electronic folder or printed in paper format and classified, retained and disposed of pursuant to Records Retention By-law No. 4957-2008. Electronic files, e-mails and other data falling into this category are subject to the provisions of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004,* and are subject to the same legal obligations, policies, rules, directives and legislation/regulations as are paper documents.

3.4 Electronic files, e-mails and other data which are determined to be "transitory records" shall be deleted by the user when no longer needed for short-term reference. Electronic files, e-mails and data falling into this category are not subject to the provisions of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*, but are subject to the rules of e-discovery in the event of litigation and may be used as evidence for law enforcement purposes. It is imperative that electronic files, e-mails and other electronic data be purged periodically to reduce the size of electronic data storage required.

4.0 General Guidelines

4.1 Copies of electronic files, e-mail messages and other data on users' desktop or laptop computers, copies on removable storage media such as disks or memory sticks, or copies on PDAs or similar technology devices will be considered "transitory records" as defined in the records management policy. These files must be deleted by the user when no longer needed as per 3.4 above.

4.2 Users' personal files such as personal e-mails, pictures, music files, etc. are not permitted on County servers or network storage devices. Limited, temporary storage of personal files is permitted on users' desktop or laptop computers for convenience, but these files are not backed up and must be purged by the user on a regular basis. Files containing personal, non work-related information found on County network storage devices will be removed.

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4.3 Departmental working files and other relevant transitory files should be saved by users in departmental "shared" directories, where all users within the department can access these files and data. Copies of these shared files should not be stored in the users' data directories in order to limit the number of copies of the same file. Storage space in departmental shared directories will be sufficient for all departmental working needs.

4.4 Users' data directories on the County network storage devices will be limited to one gigabyte (1Gb) of storage per user. This will provide ample working space for users' transitory files, but will require management by the user in order not to run out of storage space.

4.5 Users must identify e-mails defined as "official records" and deposit those messages into the Laserfiche document management system. This will ensure these records are retained for a specified period as defined in the records retention by-law. E-mails that are transitory must be purged regularly.

4.6 E-mail file attachments will be limited in size to ten megabytes (10 mb) per attachment. Users wishing to send or receive attachments larger than 10 mb must use the County 'large file transfer' web site. This site supports both incoming and outgoing file transfers. Instructions for using the large file transfer site can be obtained from the Support group or Web Team.

4.7 Backup tapes of electronic files, e-mails and other data will be done regularly for disaster recovery purposes, but will not be used for record retrieval purposes under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004* as per IPC (Information and Privacy Commissioner) Practices No. 24.

4.8 It is not the responsibility of the Information Systems group to restore e-mail messages through the use of backup tapes that were not properly retained by staff pursuant to this policy.

5.0 Safeguarding Private and Confidential Information

5.1 The County has an obligation under legislation to protect PI, PHI and other confidential or sensitive information that is collected by users during the performance of their work. Confidential information may include financial, legal or property information that is protected by license or other agreements. The Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario provides guidelines in the event a privacy breach occurs.

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5.2 To the extent possible, and without hindering the provision of health care or other services, the removal of identifiable PI and/or PHI from County property is prohibited.

5.3 Users requiring access to PI, PHI or other confidential or sensitive information while working remotely must consider alternatives to copying the information onto laptops, tablets or other removable storage media. The County will provide Virtual Private Network (VPN) access to County systems if there is justification, that allows users to access files as if they are in the office while leaving the sensitive data on secure County servers and storage. VPN access must be approved by the CAO, Directors or Corporate Managers.

5.4 As per IPC order HO-007, PHI not stored on secure servers must be either de-identified or strongly encrypted. Therefore, PHI being copied and transported onto laptops, tablets or any removable storage media for use while working outside of the office must be either de-identified or strongly encrypted. These types of files must NOT be copied onto home computers or any device not issued by the County.

5.5 Users requiring regular use of PI, PHI or other confidential or sensitive information while working remotely must take precautions when working away from the office, including:

5.5.1 When transporting computer equipment or removable storage media, keep them locked in a secure briefcase and/or lock them in the truck of a car out of public view;

5.5.2 Take only the minimum amount of information that is absolutely required for your immediate use;

5.5.3 Copy completed or updated information to secure network storage as soon as possible after returning to the office and remove sensitive information no longer required from laptop or removable storage media;

5.5.4 Never leave paper or electronic files unattended in a public environment and ensure they are not in open view while in use;

5.5.5 When using a mobile storage device, such as a USB key or memory stick, staff must ensure that it is County issued and placed on a lanyard; and

5.5.6 Whenever possible, and at the earliest opportunity, PI and PHI should be de-identified or cleansed in such a manner as to ensure the anonymity of individuals if the information were accessed by unauthorized persons.

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5.6 Any loss of PI, PHI or other confidential or sensitive information must be reported to the Information Systems group as soon as possible, as it may be possible to restrict access or send a 'kill' signal for certain devices.

5.7 Any loss of PI, PHI or other confidential or sensitive information must be reported to the Legislative Services Coordinator who will determine if there are legislative requirements to deal with in terms of containment and/or notifications.

5.8 Any uses of County technology resources that breach this policy will be treated as misconduct and will be reviewed. This may result in disciplinary steps being taken up to and including dismissal from employment, seeking restitution, commencement of civil action, criminal prosecution or any combination thereof.

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REFERENCE POLICY:		REVISED:	July 27, 2009

Remote Access To Network Resources
Dialup and Virtual Private Network

POLICY

1.0 Provides direction with respect to providing remote access to Oxford County networks via the County of Oxford Integrated Network (COIN). This access is provided as a business tool, and can be used by authorized personnel to gain access to work related data while away from their regular place of work. It is to be used in accordance with the established guidelines and policies for Internet use, e-mail use and computer use.

2.0 Provides procedures for provision of remote access.

PROCEDURE

1.0 County of Oxford provides the ability for staff to connect to County networks in order to gain access to required data from remote locations. This access is available to Councillors, Directors, Corporate Managers, IS support staff and other staff members designated by Directors or Corporate Managers.

2.0 Users as defined in section 1.0 above, shall be set up with remote access that is similar to the network access rights provided on County or municipally owned equipment they have when they are in their normal workplace or office.

3.0 Those interested in gaining remote access to the network will make their request to their Director or Corporate Manager who upon approval will forward the request to the IS Manager.

3.1 All requests will be submitted via e-mail to support@ocl.net with employee requests being forwarded by their Director or Corporate manager.

3.2 Remote access client software will be installed only on County or Municipally owned laptop computers.

3.3 The IS group shall keep accurate records of those employees and other individuals who have been given remote network access.

3.4 The IS group will ensure all individuals provided network access are instructed on the proper use of remote access and procedures to follow if the user believes there may be a breach of security of any type.

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3.5 The IS group shall report in writing to the IS manager immediately any suspected breach of security.

3.6 The IS group will annually review remote access accounts for the purpose of ensuring all expired accounts have been disabled or removed.

3.7 The IS group will notify the IS Manager by e-mail each time a new remote access account is created or removed.

4.0 COIN partners or other Area Municipalities requesting VPN remote access to the network shall be granted access immediately provided such access is to resources owned or operated by the partner or the respective Area Municipality. If access is required to a County owned or operated resource the Partner or Area Municipality must have proper authorization as specified in section 3.0.

5.0 COIN partners or other Municipalities requesting VPN remote access will be required to sign a waver to hold harmless the County of any loss or damage that may result from a breach of security resulting from the remote access.

6.0 Vendors requiring remote access to County owned resources must provide proper authorization from the department in question. Vendor sessions to County owned resources will be monitored by IS Staff.

7.0 If due to routine analysis or complaint, any discovered misuse of remote access shall result in suspension of remote access privileges and or disciplinary action being taken at the discretion of the IS Manager.

8.0 All remote access must meet the network security provisions established by the County.

9.0 The County reserves the right to monitor traffic volumes and point of origin and destination of any remote session.

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Purchase and Disposal of Information Technology (IT) Hardware, Software & Services

POLICY

1.0 Provides direction with respect to the purchase and disposal of all IT related hardware, including computers, laptops, peripherals, copiers, printers, phone systems including cell phones and PDAs, faxes and accessories.

2.0 Provides direction with respect to the purchase and disposal of all IT related software and software licenses, including operating systems, office automation products, special use software and all applications, including custom applications.

3.0 Provides direction with respect to the purchase of all IT related services, including computer and network support services, custom programming, consulting and other related technology services.

DEFINITIONS

"**User**" shall include County employees, contract personnel, contractors, and consultants with authorized access to and use of County technology resources.

"**County**" shall mean the County of Oxford.

"**PDA**" shall mean personal digital assistant. The County has established Blackberries as the standard PDA unless there is justification and a business case for an alternate device.

"Technology Resources" shall include, but are not limited to:

- Desktop, notebook, and portable computing devices and related peripherals
- Internet service and e-mail systems
- Electronic data transmission equipment, devices and networks (LAN & WAN) including servers, switches, routers, firewalls, and Wireless routers and other wireless network equipment, etc.
- Business systems and County managed software
- All types of telephone systems including VoIP system, portable telephones, faxes, cell phones and PDAs such as Blackberries and

telephone service purchased from an outside vendor such as Bell Canada
- Radio and other audio/voice communication including recording equipment, devices and networks
- Consumable goods used in the operation of these resources
- Data, information and other work products (such as computer programs, databases, spreadsheets, etc.) created/maintained in using these resources, including data copies made on diskettes, backup tapes, or other removable storage devices.

"**Removable Storage Media**" shall mean any and all devices and accompanying media that fit the following device classifications:

- Portable USB-based memory sticks also known as flash drives or thumb drives;
- Memory Cards in Secure Digital (SD), Compact Flash, or related flash-based supplemental media;
- USB card readers that allow connectivity to a Computer;
- Portable MP3 and MPEG and media playing devices such as iPods;
- PDAs, cell phones and smart phones with internal flash or hard drive memory;
- Digital cameras with internal or external memory;
- Removable memory-based media such as rewritable DVDs, CDs and floppy disks;
- Any hardware providing connectivity to USB devices through means of wireless (WiFi, WiMAX, irDA, Bluetooth, etc.) or wired network access.

PROCEDURE

1.0 The purchase of all technology resources including hardware, software and services will be made through Information Systems (IS) staff.

2.0 The purchase of any removable storage media to be connected to any County technology resources will be made through IS staff.

3.0 In order to protect County technology resources from threat of virus or other security concerns, and to protect County data from loss or corruption, no personal technology resources or removable storage media owned by users may

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be connected to any County technology resources without the express written permission of the County IS group.

4.0 IS staff will issue Request for Quotations (RFQ) annually to select 'Vendors of Choice' for the supply of computer hardware, such as desktop computers. Once selected, hardware purchases will be made from the vendor(s) of choice, except for specialized items that the vendor(s) of choice cannot provide.

5.0 IS staff has established standards for laptop computers and server room components in order to provide continuity of products and services and the ability to provide in-house warranty service and spare parts. IS staff provides three alternatives for laptops including a light weight tablet, a rugged notebook for field and vehicle use and a standard desktop replacement laptop. Choice of model is dependent upon user requirements and application needs. Alternative models to the standards will be considered where the standard model does not meet the application or users' needs and where a business case supports an alternate.

6.0 IS staff will issue Requests for Proposals (RFPs) or RFQs for special technology projects, as required in compliance with the County Purchasing policy.

7.0 IS staff is responsible for keeping an up-to-date inventory of computer hardware and software licenses. Each new desktop computer or laptop computer will be provided with a standard set of software tools, including an operating system and MS Office suite. New desktop computer(s) or laptop computer(s) being purchased to replace out-of-date hardware will have software licenses transferred from the old computer(s) to the new computer. IS staff will remove the out-of-date equipment for later disposal.

8.0 The IS group is responsible for the cost of maintaining software licenses for authorized software used on County computers. IS staff is responsible for installing all software to be used on County desktop computers, laptop computers and network servers. County staff, other than IS staff, is not permitted to install software on County owned computers. All software purchases will be made through IS staff. Cost of standard build software (Operating system, MS Office Suite, e-mail Exchange, Anti-virus and anti SPAM, etc.) is included in the IS budget. Costs for all other software purchases and software license maintenance is the responsibility of the department using that software, for example: Great Plains is budgeted by the Finance division, InfoHR by HR, AutoCAD by Public Works, etc. IS staff is responsible for sourcing, acquiring, installing and maintaining any specialized software requested by a County

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department, such as Adobe Professional, etc.. Cost of these licenses will be charged back to the requesting department.

9.0 Out of date computer equipment, or hardware no longer required by a department will be removed by IS staff, and software and data removed, so that licenses may be re-deployed and no data will be lost. Serviceable equipment may be re-deployed where it is needed, or usable parts may be stripped from systems as spare parts. Out-of-date hardware, no longer required by the county will be disposed of by IS Staff.

10.0 Some out-of-date hardware such as telephone equipment, network equipment such as servers, firewalls, routers and switches and other higher value computer workstations will be offered for sale or trade in to recover residual value.

11.0 Some other out-of-date computer equipment, for which the County has no further need, will be disposed of by IS staff by offering it first to lower tier municipalities and then to County employees through a web-based auction. IS staff will assemble the equipment in a designated location. Municipalities, County councillors and County staff will be notified of the auction and be provided an opportunity to examine the equipment in advance. All equipment will be provided "AS IS", with no warranty or return. Every attempt will be made to identify whether the equipment is in working order and will be marked accordingly.

12.0 Proceeds from the sale of out-of-date equipment and from the computer auction will be reserved for future IT purchases.

13.0 Any redundant equipment not disposed of through the County employee auction will be offered to interested non-profit organizations or provided to other computer recycling organizations. Every attempt will be made to follow the Ontario Electronic Stewardship Waste Electrical & Electronic Equipment (WEEE) disposal program.

14.0 Any use of County technology resources that breaches this policy will be treated as misconduct and will be reviewed. This may result in disciplinary steps being taken up to and including dismissal from employment, seeking restitution, commencement of civil action, criminal prosecution or any combination thereof.

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NUMBER:	8.9	SIGNATURE:	Original signed by Peter Crockett, CAO
PAGE:	1 of 17	DATE:	September 23, 2009
REFERENCE POLICY:	5.38, 8.6, 8.13, Privacy Breach Protocol	REVISED:	November 2019

Access and Privacy Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines regarding public access to information under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990 (MFIPPA)*. This piece of legislation attempts to reconcile two contrasting, but not incompatible objectives; access and privacy.

First, the *MFIPPA* establishes a default right for individuals to access government records unless the record falls under one of the limited and specific exemptions in the Act. The legislation is based upon the fundamental principle that an informed citizenry is essential to the democratic process. With this in mind, the County of Oxford would like to formally establish and foster a culture of openness with respect to their public records including a practice known as Routine Disclosure/Active Dissemination (RD/AD).

The second objective of the Act is to protect the privacy of individuals with respect to personal information about themselves collected and maintained by the municipality and to provide individuals with a right of access to that information.

This policy should be referenced in conjunction with any up-to-date versions of the legislation and regulations regarding access and privacy.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Legislative Authority

1.1 Section 253 (1) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* provides that “subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, any person may, at all reasonable times, inspect any of the records under the control of the Clerk”.

1.2 Section 4 (1) of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the “Act”) provides that “every person has a right of access to a record or a part of a record in the custody or under the control of an institution unless,

(a) the record or the part of the record falls within one of the exemptions under sections 6 to 15 of the Act; or

(b) the Head is of the opinion on reasonable grounds that the request for access is frivolous or vexatious."

1.3 Section 36 (1) of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* provides that "every individual has a right of access to,

(a) any personal information about the individual contained in a personal information bank in the custody or under the control of an institution; and

(b) any other personal information about the individual in the custody or under the control of an institution with respect to which the individual is able to provide sufficiently specific information to render it reasonably retrievable by the institution."

2.0 For the purpose of this Policy

2.1 "Act" shall mean the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.*

2.2 "County" shall mean the County of Oxford.

2.3 "Employee" shall mean any statutory officer, officer, employee, volunteer or member of Council for the County of Oxford.

2.4 "Department" shall mean a sector of the organization that deals with particular functions and responsibilities of County operations.

2.5 "Head" shall mean the Warden who has been designated as head for the purposes of the Act. However, in the interests of expediency, Council has deemed it desirable to delegate the powers and duties vested in the head to the Director of Corporate Services or his/her designate to ensure the consistent and efficient administration of the Act.

2.6 "Record" shall mean any recorded information, however recorded, whether in printed form, on film, by electronic means or otherwise, including correspondence, memoranda, a book, plans, maps, drawings, a diagram, graphic works, photographs, film, microfilm, microfiche, sound recordings, videotapes, e-mail, an instant/text message, machine readable materials, and any other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics, generated or

received by the County in connection with the transaction of public business, and preserved for any period of time by the County as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations or other activities of this municipal government.

2.7 "Personal Information" shall mean recorded information about an identifiable individual, including:

- information relating to the race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or marital or family status of the individual;
- information relating to the education or the medical, psychiatric, psychological, criminal or employment history of the individual or information relating to financial transactions in which the individual has been involved;
- any identifying number, symbol or other particular assigned to the individual;
- the address, telephone number, fingerprints or blood type of the individual;
- the personal opinions or views of the individual except if they relate to another individual;
- correspondence sent to an institution by the individual that is implicitly or explicitly of a private or confidential nature, and replies to that correspondence that would reveal the contents of the original correspondence;
- the views or opinions of another individual about the individual; and
- the individual's name if it appears with other personal information relating to the individual or where the disclosure of the name would reveal other personal information about the individual.

Personal information does not include the name, title, business contact information or designation of an individual acting in their professional or business capacity. General staff information such as job descriptions, job duties, salary ranges and benefits do not qualify for protection as personal information.

2.8 "Routine Disclosure" shall mean the routine or automatic release of certain types of administrative and operational records in response to requests made informally.

2.9 "Active Dissemination" shall mean the periodic release of general records in the

absence of a request.

3.0 Non-Application of Act

3.1 The Act does *not* apply:

(a) to records that are donated/transferred to the County archives by or on behalf of a person or organization other than the County;

(b) to records that would otherwise be available by law to a party to litigation;

(c) when a court or tribunal compels a witness to testify or compels the production of a document;

(d) to records relating to a prosecution if all proceedings have not been completed;

(e) to records collected, prepared, maintained or used by or on behalf of an institution in relation to any of the following:

- proceedings or anticipated proceedings before a court, tribunal or other entity relating to labour relations or to the employment of a person by the County;
- negotiations or anticipated negotiations relating to labour relations or to the employment of a person by the County; or
- meetings, consultations, discussions or communications about labour relations or employment-related matters in which the County has an interest.

This class of records may include grievances, disciplinary measures, job competition decisions, bumping or Worker's Compensation.

3.2 Neither the access rights nor the privacy protection provisions in the Act apply to the records described in paragraph 3.1.

3.3 Requests for information or correction received related to Personal Health Information are subject to the *Personal Health and Information Protection Act* ("PHIPA") and should be dealt with in accordance with PHIPA and the County's

PHIPA Privacy Policy 8.13. Personal Health Information means identifying information about an individual in oral or recorded form, if the information;

(a) relates to the physical or mental health of the individual, including information that consists of the health history of the individual's family;

(b) relates to the providing of health care to the individual, including the identification of a person as a provider of health care to the individual is a plan of service within the meaning of the Home Care and Community Services Act, 1994 for the individual;

(c) relates to payments or eligibility for health care, or eligibility for coverage for health care, in respect of the individual;

(d) relates to the donation by the individual of any body part or bodily substance of the individual or is derived from the testing or examination of any such body part or bodily substance;

(e) is the individual's health number; or

(f) identifies an individual's substitute decision-maker.

4.0 Exemptions under the Act

4.1 A Head may refuse to disclose a record on any of the following discretionary grounds:

- Contains a draft by-law;
- Reveals the substance of deliberations of a meeting legally held in closed session (this exemption no longer applies once the subject matter of the deliberations has been considered in a meeting open to the public);
- Reveals advice or recommendations of staff or a consultant retained by the County;
- Involves a law enforcement matter;
- Relations with Aboriginal communities;
- Where disclosure could reasonably be expected to prejudice the economic interests, security or competitive position of the County;
- Is subject to solicitor-client privilege;

- Where disclosure could reasonably be expected to threaten the health or safety of an individual; or
- If the information has already been published or will be published within ninety days.

4.2 A Head shall refuse to disclose a record for the following mandatory grounds (except in certain circumstances):

- Confidential information received from the provincial or federal government, or the government of any foreign country or state (there is no mention of other municipalities in the Act);
- Third party information that reveals scientific, technical, commercial, financial or labour relations information, supplied in confidence implicitly or explicitly, if the disclosure could reasonably be expected to prejudice the competitive position of the third party or subject the third party to undue loss or gain; or
- Personal information to any person other than the individual to whom the information relates.

5.0 Informal Access

5.1 Section 50 (1) of the Act provides that “if a head may give access to information under this Act, nothing in this Act prevents the head from giving access to that information in response to an oral request or in the absence of a request.”

5.2 The concepts of routine disclosure and active dissemination are key elements of a transparent and accountable municipal government. The County will endeavour where possible to make records accessible to the public without the necessity of submitting a formal request under the Act.

5.3 *Routine Disclosure*

5.3.1 In response to an oral request or an informal written request, Departments may release certain classes of records routinely and automatically if they do not fall under one of the mandatory or discretionary exemptions listed above. This concept is known as “routine disclosure”.

5.3.2 Staff are encouraged to respond to informal requests for information, but should exercise caution. If there is any question as to the appropriateness of a disclosure, staff should consult with their

supervisor/manager. If the supervisor/manager has concerns regarding the release of a record, he/she should consult with the Legislative Services Coordinator ("LSC"). In the absence of a firm decision at this point, the requester should be encouraged to initiate the formal access procedure described below.

5.3.3 Staff who receive requests from clients, tenants, patients or employees for access to their own personal information should take the following steps:

- Set up an appointment to provide access. The record can then be reviewed to identify and sever any exempt information prior to the appointment;
- Confirm the identity of the requester at the appointment;
- If the person seeking the information is other than, but purports to represent the individual named in the record, then the provisions of Section 54 of the Act apply. For an individual who is a minor, seriously ill or mentally incapacitated, consent may be obtained from a legal guardian or power of attorney;
- A staff member must be present at all times if the requester is viewing an original record;
- Inform the requester if information has been withheld and that he/she may request the withheld records through the formal access procedure under the Act; and
- The requester may not retain the original record, but may request copies of all or a portion of the record.

5.3.4 Reasons for directing the requester to pursue a formal access request include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Search time/preparation time for the requested records would be excessive;
- Records relate to a matter that may result in litigation;
- Records were supplied by a third party;
- Records do not exist;
- Records contain solicitor-client information; or

- Records contain personal information and the person seeking the record is other than the individual named in the record.

5.3.5 Fees for a request for personal information include the request fee and photocopy charges in accordance with the County's Fees and Charges By-law.

5.4 *Active Dissemination*

5.4.1 In the absence of a request, select classes of general records may be periodically released at the discretion of the Head. Whenever the public interest is likely to be engaged and no exemption applies, information may be actively promulgated. This concept is known as "active dissemination".

5.4.2 Active dissemination is customer focused. Rather than being merely reactive to requests from the public, it is proactive in distributing information on our own initiative and enhancing public access through the use of electronic information systems.

5.4.3 Records currently being disseminated in the absence of a request are council agendas, council minutes, auditor's reports, business plans, budget reports, tender results, and media releases

5.4.4 Another class of records subject to active dissemination are records that reveal "a grave environmental, health or safety hazard to the public". As per Section 5 (1) of the Act, if there is reasonable and probable grounds to believe that it is in the public's best interest to release information, then the County has an obligation to disclose, as soon as practicable, in the absence of a request.

6.0 Formal Access

6.1 The Warden is designated by by-law to act as Head of the County for the purposes of the Act.

6.2 County Council has delegated the daily administration of the Act to the Director of Corporate Services or his/her designate through the Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy No 6.14.

6.3 The LSC has been designated to perform the daily administration of the Act, under the direction of the Director of Corporate Services, and is responsible for formulating access and privacy policies and procedures for use by County staff, processing all formal access requests in consultation with staff, and giving direction to staff on how to respond to informal access requests.

6.4 Any person can make a request for access to records. In this instance, a person includes individuals and organizations such as corporations, partnerships and sole proprietorships. The right of access is not limited by citizenship or place of residence.

6.5 The identity of persons making requests is privileged personal information and shall not be disclosed except to those who need to know in order to administer the Act.

6.6 The procedure for formally accessing information under the Act is as follows:

- All requests are to be made in writing and forwarded to the attention of the Legislative Services Coordinator, Corporate Services Department, County of Oxford, 21 Reeve Street, P.O. Box 1614, Woodstock, Ontario, N4S 7Y3. A *Freedom of Information Request Form 8.9A* is available on the County website to assist the public in meeting this requirement, but it need not be used. A simple letter will suffice as long as it specifies that it is a request made under the Act.
- As prescribed by regulation, a $5.00 application fee must accompany the request. This fee must be collected prior to the request being processed. The request is not active until the requester pays the fee.
- The requester must provide sufficient detail to enable the LSC, upon a reasonable effort, to identify the requested record(s). The requestor may be contacted to clarify the request.
- If the request is for access to or correction of personal information, a photocopy of some form of identification bearing a signature is required in order to assist in verifying the identity of the requester.
- If an agent is acting on behalf of the requester, a letter of consent duly signed and dated by the requester is required authorizing the agent to act on his/her behalf as well as a photocopy of the requester's identification bearing his/her signature for verification purposes.

6.7 If the request is on the official *Freedom of Information Request Form 8.9A* or if it is only a letter but refers to the Act and/or includes the $5.00 access fee, then the matter must be formally processed in accordance with the Act.

6.8 The LSC shall locate the record(s) being requested with the co-operation of the Department, review the record(s) to determine if any exemptions apply, and issue a decision letter within 30 calendar days as required by the Act unless he/she requests an extension with reasons in writing. Extensions can only be provided in instances where there is a request for a large number of records, where meeting the 30 day requirement would reasonably interfere with County operations or if the LSC must consult with an external agent to comply with the request

6.9 If the requestor does not receive a response within 30 days, then the request is deemed refused and enables the requestor to file an appeal with the Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC).

6.10 To avoid delays in response, Department or division heads and staff shall notify the LSC immediately upon receipt of a formal request, assist and not impede the LSC in locating and retrieving all records that are responsive to the request and provide background information if known. All responsive records shall be forwarded to the LSC in unaltered format.

6.11 It is an offence under Section 48(1)(c.1) of the Act to alter, conceal or destroy a record, or cause any other person to do so, with the intention of denying a right under the Act to access the record or the information contained in the record. Every person who contravenes subsection (1) is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a fine not exceeding $5,000.00.

6.12 The LSC shall review the assembled records and, in consultation with the Department or division head or their designated alternate, sever from the record(s) to be disclosed such portions as the Act requires or allows, keeping in mind the purposes of the Act.

6.13 Depending on the nature of the request and the volume of records requested, there may be additional mandated fees under the Act. Fee estimates will be given if anticipated fees are $25.00 or more. If the estimate is over $100.00, a 50% deposit will be required prior to processing the request any further.

6.14 The decision letter shall release the records in their entirety, or release them in part, or deny access to them altogether. Where there are denials in whole or in

part, an index of all documents shall be attached to the decision letter explaining the reasons for denial. The decision will be based on the provisions of the Act and on the relevant orders that have been issued by the IPC.

6.15 A notice of refusal to give access must be issued where the requested record does not exist or where access to a record must be refused under the provisions of the Act.

6.16 If access to a record is refused or is only partially granted, the requester will be notified of the decision as well as:

- the specific provision(s) of the Act under which access was refused;
- the reason the provision applies to the record;
- the name and position of the person responsible for making the decision; and
- that the requester has the right to appeal to the IPC within 30 days of receiving the response.

6.17 The process map attached at **Appendix A** is designed to ensure consistency of the formal access procedure. Any questions regarding this process should be directed to the LSC.

7.0 Councillor's Records

7.1 The Head will determine whether the Act applies to a Councillor's records. In making this decision, principles established by the IPC are relied upon as follows:

7.1.1 A Councillor is acting as an officer or employee of the County, or performs a duty assigned by Council, or has records discussing County business or where they relate to County business such as communicating with County staff, such that the records might be considered part of the institution; or,

7.1.2 If the records are in the custody or control of the County on the basis of established principles by the IPC.

7.1.3 According to the established principles by the IPC, a record does not need to be both in the custody and control of an institution for the Act to apply. Councillor's records sent from or received in personal accounts have been found to be subject to the Act.

SECTION:	Communications	APPROVED BY:	County Council
NUMBER:	8.9	SIGNATURE:	Original signed by Peter Crockett, CAO
PAGE:	12 of 17	DATE:	September 23, 2009
REFERENCE POLICY:	5.38, 8.6, 8.13, Privacy Breach Protocol	REVISED:	November 2019

8.0 Correction

8.1 Pursuant to Section 36 (2) of the Act, an individual has the right to challenge the accuracy and completeness of their own personal information if the individual believes there is an error or omission.

8.2 If it is demonstrated that any personal information is outdated, incomplete or inaccurate, it must be updated, completed and/or corrected. Strikeout or clearly label the information that is deemed to be outdated, incomplete or inaccurate and take any corrective actions necessary. A note must be made to the file to advise the reader of the actions taken.

8.3 If there is a dispute about the currency, completeness or accuracy of the information in the record, the requester may attach an explanatory note or statement of disagreement to the information reflecting any correction that was requested but not made. If this is not satisfactory, the requester should be advised of his/her right to appeal.

8.4 If the outdated, incomplete or inaccurate information has been shared with a third party within one year of the time that the correction was requested, then the third party must be notified of the updated, complete and/or accurate information or notified of the existence of the statement of disagreement. This action must be noted in the file.

9.0 Appeal Process

9.1 In accordance with Section 39 of the Act, a requester has the right to appeal the County's access decision to the IPC within 30 days of receiving the response letter if not satisfied with the result.

9.2 Requesters may appeal most actions involved in responding to a request including refusals to give access, fees and time limits.

9.3 An appeal fee of $10.00 for personal information requests and $25.00 for all other requests must accompany the letter of appeal. The letter of appeal should also include a copy of the original request as well as a copy of the County's decision letter.

9.4 Any person who wilfully obstructs the IPC in the performance of its functions, makes a false statement to mislead the IPC, or fails to comply with an order of the

IPC, is guilty of an offence and on conviction is liable to a fine of up to $5,000.00 in accordance with Section 48(2) of the Act.

10.0 Privacy

10.1 To protect the privacy of clients, tenants, patients and employees, the Act places certain restrictions on the collection, use and disclosure of personal information. Both the internal sharing of information within the organization and the external sharing of information outside of the organization is limited by the Act.

10.2 Collection

10.2.1 Section 28 (2) of the Act provides that personal information shall not be collected on behalf of an institution unless the collection is:

- expressly authorized by statute *(for example, employment applications, applications for social assistance, etc.)*;
- used for the purposes of law enforcement *(for example, by-law enforcement, fraud investigations, complaint investigations, etc.);* or
- necessary to the proper administration of a lawfully authorized activity *(for example, payroll, benefits administration, etc.)*.

10.2.2 Collecting personal information indiscriminately is not allowed. The amount and type of personal information collected should not exceed that which is necessary to fulfill the identified purpose.

10.2.3 On the initial collection of personal information, or when personal information is collected for a new, unrelated purpose, the individual to whom the information relates must be informed of:

- the statutory authority for the collection;

the purpose(s) of the collection or intended use; and the title, business address and business telephone number of an officer or employee of the institution who can answer the individual's questions about the collection.

10.2.4 County forms that collect personal information must include a Notice of Collection which includes the three components described in clause 10.2.3. Staff who generate new forms or reprint existing forms that collect

personal information must add a Notice of Collection to the bottom of the form, if appropriate, or update the existing notice for accuracy. An example of a Notice of Collection is set out below:

> Information on this form is collected under the legal authority of the *Family Benefits Act,* the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 , the *Ontario Disability Support Program Act, 1997,* the *Ontario Works Act, 1997,* and/or the *Housing Services Act, 2011*for the purpose of administering Government of Ontario social assistance programs. For more information about this collection, please contact the [title] at (519) 539-9800 (ext. ____) or contact the office directly at [business address].

Notice of collection statements should be prepared in consultation with the LSC.

10.2.5 In some cases, the County collects personal information indirectly (for example, performing a driver's licence check or a criminal records check on potential employees, conducting an asset check on social assistance recipients, etc.). This information is collected from sources other than the individual to whom the information relates and, in these situations, the County must first obtain authorization/consent from the affected individual.

10.3 *Use and Disclosure*

10.3.1 Section 32 of the Act provides that an institution shall not disclose personal information in its custody or under its control except,

- in compliance with Part I of the Act;
- if the person to whom the information relates has consented to its disclosure;
- for the purpose for which it was obtained or compiled *(which is normally identified in the Notice of Collection)* or for a consistent purpose, but only if the affected individual might reasonably expect the subsequent use or disclosure;
- if the disclosure is made to another County employee who needs the information in the performance of his/her work duties and if the disclosure is required in the proper discharge of the institution's functions. *(In other words, employees do not have an automatic right to access personal information by virtue of their employment in a certain Department or program)*;
- for the purpose of complying with any statute;

- if disclosure is to an institution or a law enforcement agency in Canada to aid an investigation;
- in compelling or compassionate circumstances affecting the health or safety of an individual or to facilitate contact with the spouse, close relative or friend of an individual who is injured, ill or deceased; or
- to the provincial or federal government in order to facilitate the auditing of shared cost programs.

10.3.2 Consent may be obtained orally or in writing and may be expressly given or implied. In determining how to obtain consent, the sensitivity of the personal information must be taken into consideration as well as the circumstances surrounding the collection.

10.3.3 Express consent should be used whenever possible and in all cases when the personal information is considered sensitive. In the case of express verbal consent, a note to the client file should be made and attached that is well documented with the date, time and summary of the conversation where the consent was given.

10.3.4 For an individual who is a minor, seriously ill or mentally incapacitated, consent may be obtained from a legal guardian or power of attorney.

10.3.5 If personal information is used or disclosed for a non-routine purpose *(for example, a disclosure of client information to a police officer conducting an investigation)*, then the irregular use or disclosure must be documented in the affected person's file or record.

10.3.6 When a claim is made or an action is brought against the County, records may be disclosed to the County's insurer and/or solicitor to enable them to ascertain the circumstances giving rise to the claim or action and, where appropriate, to defend the County's position.

11.0 Security

11.1 Personal information and any other confidential or sensitive information must be protected against loss, theft and unauthorized use. The County is responsible for protecting personal information regardless of the format in which it is stored.

11.2 During business hours, staff will control access to the premises and direct visitors

to appropriate staff resources and office locations. Physical access to files will be restricted to authorized personnel only.

11.3 Files containing personal information or any other confidential or sensitive information should be kept in a locked desk, locked filing cabinet or locked room when the office is closed.

11.4 Upon leaving the office, desks and workstations should be left clean and free from loose files and papers. Confidential waste material should be deposited into a secure shredding console or otherwise disposed of in a secure manner.

11.5 User IDs and passwords help to secure electronic files by restricting access. Passwords are not to be shared and must be kept confidential. Passwords should be established and changed regularly in accordance with Technology Use Policy No. 8.6.

11.6 Users must log off or lock their computers when away from their workstations.

11.7 Employees should avoid sending fax transmissions containing personal information or any other confidential or sensitive information. If urgently required, fax transmissions of this nature are permissible under the following conditions:

- all personal identifiers must be severed from the record if possible;
- all faxes must be accompanied by the standardized Oxford County fax transmission cover sheet indicating the name and firm of the intended recipient as well as the total number of pages being sent;
- the intended recipient shall be alerted immediately prior to the fax transmission being sent if possible;
- the destination fax number must be confirmed by checking the number on the display screen prior to transmission;
- the fax transmission must be checked after the fax has been sent to verify the completeness and accuracy of the destination fax number, the success or failure of the transmission as well as the number of pages (if any) transmitted. In the case of error, corrective actions should be taken immediately.

11.8 Employees should avoid distributing e-mail messages containing personal information or any other confidential or sensitive information. If it is absolutely

necessary to communicate personal or sensitive information via e-mail, then the recipient should be warned that disclosure is prohibited without the originator's express authorization. Sending a secure, password encrypted document is recommended in this instance.

11.9 Employees shall adhere to the restrictions for saving any confidential information in accordance with Technology Use Policy No. 8.6 and Electronic File, E-mail and Data Storage and Security Policy No. 8.6.

11.10 Employees requiring access to personal information or any other confidential or sensitive information while working remotely should take the precautions set out in the Electronic File, E-mail and Data Storage and Security Policy No. 8.6.

11.11 All employees are required to sign a confidentiality agreement as a condition of employment with the County. Confidentiality is considered to be breached when an employee releases or discusses the personal information of a client, tenant, patient or employee with any third party, including other staff members, without consent from the individual to whom the information relates, unless it falls under one of the permitted uses/disclosures set out in Clause 10.3.1 above. Breaches of confidentiality include accessing personal information without authorization and without a need-to-know. Disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment may be taken against any employee who breaches confidentiality pursuant to Confidentiality Policy No. 5.38.

12.0 Privacy Breaches Complaints or Inquiries

12.1 Complaints or inquiries about the County's privacy policies and/or practices relating to the handling of personal information should be directed to the LSC who will investigate all complaints. If a complaint is held to be justified, appropriate corrective measures will be taken, including amending this policy, as necessary.

12.2 Upon learning of a privacy breach or potential privacy breach, staff shall immediately notify the LSC. The LSC will be responsible for investigating the breach pursuant to the guidelines set out by the IPC and the County's *Privacy Breach Protocol*.

OxfordCounty growing stronger...together	GENERAL POLICY MANUAL		
SECTION:	Communication	APPROVED BY:	County Council
NUMBER:	8.10	SIGNATURE:	MR Bragg
PAGE:	1 of 3	DATE:	April 14, 2010
REFERENCE POLICY:		REVISED:	

Information Oxford Database Maintenance Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set out clear roles and responsibilities for the ongoing maintenance, reporting requirements and safeguarding of the data records contained within the Information Oxford database to ensure the information available to the public is relevant, accurate and current.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Governing Rules and Regulations

1.1 Information Oxford database is an asset of the County of Oxford and is governed by the policies and procedures of the County including but not limited to policies related to Technology Use, Content Management, Data Storage & Security and Access & Privacy.

1.2 Information Oxford database shall be maintained by applying the following industry accepted standards:

1.2.1 InformOntario, including the Style Guide, Subject Record Guide and Naming Standard;
1.2.2 InformOntario, including the use of the AIRS/Info Line Taxonomy of Human Services (Canadian Version);
1.2.3 AIRS Standards; and
1.2.4 211 Southwest Ontario Inclusion Policy.

1.3 Data Sharing Agreements with 211 Southwest Ontario and other potential partners for providing and receiving data records from time to time.

2.0 Responsibility

2.1 The Manager of Information Systems (IS) shall be responsible for overseeing the ongoing maintenance, reporting requirements and safeguarding of the Information Oxford database.

2.2 The County Network Administrator and IS staff shall be responsible for:

2.2.01 preparing database extractions for County and community partners, including Ontario 211 partners as required;
2.2.02 coordinating and performing regular imports of data records maintained by other partner agencies/organizations as required;
2.2.03 providing all 211 related data records in a format acceptable by 211 Southwest Ontario for the purposes of 211 service delivery;
2.2.04 verifying that a backup of the database is performed and safeguarded.

2.3 The Information Oxford Database Editor shall be responsible for:

2.3.01 preparing and reviewing reports generated from the database;
2.3.02 ensuring that all records included in the database are updated on a scheduled yearly basis and are maintained to the standards specific to the nature of the data records;
2.3.03 reviewing all requests for new data records and updates to existing data records and contacting the requesting agency/business to obtain information necessary to ensure the information entered into the database in compliant with this policy and to the standards;
2.3.04 ensuring that all records included in the database are updated when any new information is identified through the media or external or internal resources;
2.3.05 ensuring that all information contained in the database has been reviewed and approved by the organization affiliated to the respective record;
2.3.06 ensuring that all requirements set out in the InformOntario Naming Standard and Style Guide, AIRS/Info Line Taxonomy of Human Services (Canadian Version), Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) Standards and the 211 Southwest Ontario Inclusion Policy are met;
2.3.07 maintaining a record of local modifications made to the Taxonomy;
2.3.08 ensuring all hard copy requests for new data records or changes to existing data records shall be kept on file for a minimum of twelve (12) months;
2.3.09 providing database status reports to the Manager of Information Systems or his/her designate as required; and
2.3.10 maintaining standard operating procedures for database maintenance.

3.0 Terms and Conditions of Use

3.1 Information Oxford data records are made available to the general public through a community web portal - www.InformationOxford.ca.

3.2 Selected Information Oxford data records provide some of the content on the County of Oxford web site and area municipal web sites including contact lists and targeted community events lists.

3.3 Information Oxford data records will be extracted from time to time for approved community service uses and will be subject to a data use agreement. These uses may include but are not limited to:

3.3.1 Ontario 211 Service Corp., Findhelp Information Services, and 211 Southwest Ontario for the provision of 211 services in Oxford County;

3.3.2 Community Employment Services (CES) for the purpose of creating a Community Services Directory and Business Employment and skills development project;
3.3.3 Oxford County Children's Services directory; and
3.3.4 Other uses approved by the Director of Corporate Services and the Manager of Information Systems.

3.4 The County of Oxford reserves the right to charge for data extractions depending upon the use or negotiating with data users for other means of compensation such as in-kind services.

3.5 Organizations may use the data only for the purpose for which it was originally provided and for a term that is reasonable considering its use.

3.6 Organizations may not copy, reproduce or modify the data provided by Information Oxford. The data shall not be provided or sold to any other organizations without written permission. The data may not be used to spread hatred or any philosophy that could be hurtful to the wellbeing of individuals, groups or the community as a whole. The data may not be used in conjunction with any criminal activity.

3.7 Information Oxford provides data it believes to be accurate. However, due to the frequently changing nature and complexity of the information, the County of Oxford assumes no responsibility for damages which may result from errors, inaccuracies or omissions in the data. The County of Oxford is not responsible for the misuse or misunderstanding of the data by users, or for any loss sustained by users as a consequence of using the data.

4.0 Review Process

4.1 This policy is to be reviewed on a bi-annual basis or more frequently if deemed necessary by the Manager of Information Systems and the Director of Corporate Services.

GENERAL POLICY MANUAL

SECTION:	Communications	APPROVED BY:	County Council
NUMBER:	8.11	SIGNATURE:	Original signed by Ben Addley
PAGE:	1 of 10	DATE:	March 28, 2012
REFERENCE POLICY:	8.09	REVISED:	May 14, 2026

Video Surveillance Policy

PURPOSE

There are limited and specific circumstances where video surveillance is necessary for purposes of public and employee safety, crime prevention, and the stewardship of publicly owned assets. Where warranted, the County may use video surveillance systems for the purpose of detecting, deterring and monitoring criminal activity and disruptive behaviour including, but not limited to, theft, vandalism, unauthorized entry, and in defence of legal claims. Where warranted, the County may use video surveillance systems in and around its facilities and properties.

DEFINITIONS

"Authorized Personnel" means a County employee with authorized roles and responsibilities under this policy.

"Authorized Installation Surveillance Sites" means County property which have been warranted to have video surveillance with continuous or periodic video recording or monitoring.

"Destroy" is the physical or electronic disposal of records or data by means of shredding, recycling, deletion or overwriting. This also includes the destruction of records or data residing on computers and electronic devices supplied or paid for by the County of Oxford.

"Law Enforcement" means,

a) policing,
b) investigations or inspections that lead or could lead to proceedings in a court or tribunal if a penalty or sanction could be imposed in those proceedings, or
c) the conduct of proceedings referred to above.

"IPC" is the office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario. The IPC hears appeals of decisions, issues binding orders, conducts privacy investigations, and has certain powers related to protection of personal privacy.

"Lawful Purpose" means the collection or disclosure of a surveillance record authorized by a statute, regulation, by-law, policy or order formally approved by a governing body with the lawful authority to enact such by-law, policy or order.

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"MFIPPA" is the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act legislation that governs access to and the privacy of municipal records.

"Personal Information" in accordance with MFIPPA, means recorded information about an identifiable individual, including:

a) information relating to the race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or marital or family status of the individual;

b) information relating to the education or the medical, psychiatric, psychological, criminal or employment history of the individual or information relating to financial transactions in which the individual has been involved;

c) any identifying number, symbol or other particular assigned to the individual;

d) the address, telephone number, fingerprints or blood type of the individual;

e) the personal opinions or views of the individual except if they relate to another individual;

f) correspondence sent to an institution by the individual that is implicitly or explicitly of a private or confidential nature, and replies to that correspondence that would reveal the contents of the original correspondence;

g) the views or opinions of another individual about the individual; and

h) the individual's name if it appears with other personal information relating to the individual where the disclosure of the name would reveal other personal information about the individual.

"Privacy breach" means an incident involving unauthorized disclosure of personal information, including information being stolen, lost or accessed by unauthorized persons.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Legislative Authority

1.1 Section 2 of the MFIPPA defines "personal information" as outlined above. If a video recording captures these defined characteristics of an identifiable individual or captures activities in which they are engaged, this qualifies as personal information.

1.2 Section 28 (2) of the MFIPPA provides that "no person shall collect personal information

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on behalf of an institution unless the collection is expressly authorized by statute, used for the purposes of law enforcement or necessary to the proper administration of a lawfully authorized activity."

1.3 Section 11 (2) of the *Municipal Act, 2001* provides that a municipality may pass by-laws respecting "the health, safety and well-being of persons" as well as by-laws respecting "the protection of persons and property".

2.0 Staff Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 Pursuant to County of Oxford's 8.09 - Access and Privacy Policy and the 6.14 - Delegation of Powers and Duties Policy, the County Clerk has been delegated the powers and duties vested in the "head" for the purposes of the MFIPPA. As such, the County Clerk and/or designate is responsible for the following:

- Ensuring that the County's video surveillance policy is in compliance with the MFIPPA and any other relevant privacy legislation;
- Ensuring that any personal information captured in a video surveillance recording is collected, used and disclosed exclusively for lawful purposes;
- Create and approve the list of authorized individuals who may view the video surveillance images and recordings;
- Investigating and resolving public complaints received by the County or matters that may give rise to a complaint or legal action received by the County;
- Responding to appeals and privacy complaints received through the IPC;
- Conduct internal audits of the system, as required, to ensure compliance with this policy and MFIPPA;
- Authorizing release of video surveillance images to law enforcement agencies in response to subpoenas, court orders or Freedom of Information requests;
- Providing guidance to County departments who utilize video surveillance on cooperating with active law enforcement investigations, in accordance with applicable laws, privacy requirements, and internal procedures;
- Preparing and maintaining a list of authorized personnel to view video surveillance recordings
- Resolving any issues or conflicts related to this policy; and
- Periodically reviewing and updating this policy.

2.2 The Director of Public Works shall be responsible for the following:

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- Approval of video surveillance systems and camera installations for purposes outlined in this policy.

2.3 The Supervisor of Facilities and Building Foreperson shall be responsible for the following:

- Implementation of all authorized video surveillance systems at County-owned or operated facilities in accordance with this policy, including life-cycle management, generation of specifications and equipment standards, installation, maintenance and replacement of equipment, signage and all other requirements of this policy;
    - Attached to the Policy as “Schedule A” is a flow chart outlining the responsibilities of the Facilities Supervisors and the Supervisor of Network and Security Operations regarding new camera installation at Oxford County facilities and property;
- Recommending locations for video surveillance systems and determining specific camera locations and positioning;
- Day-to-day operation of the video surveillance program in accordance with this policy;
- Securing access to video surveillance equipment;
- Protecting recorded personal information against loss, theft and unauthorized use;
- Limiting access to listed personnel and ensuring viewing and use of video surveillance recordings are in accordance with this policy;
- Prepare and maintain a registry of all cameras and signage at all authorized installation surveillance sites;
- Maintaining an access log for auditing purposes which tracks access to and use of recorded material, including date, time, name and reason for access;
- Providing release of video surveillance images to law enforcement agencies for the purpose of cooperating with active law enforcement investigations, where it is not feasible for the requesting enforcement agency to proceed through an MFIPPA request.
- Keeping a record of incidents and police contacts in the aforementioned access log;
- Working directly with the County Clerk’s Office on responding to access requests under MFIPPA;
- Assist with investigating and reporting any privacy breaches to the County Clerk’s Office; and
- Ensuring that video records are properly retained in accordance with this policy; and

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- Ensuring that old or damaged video tapes or other physical electronic records and electronic media are securely disposed of so that personal information cannot be reconstructed or retrieved.
- Should there be a position vacancy in relation to the above responsibilities, the Director of Public Works will decide on a suitable alternate, in consultation with the County Clerk.

2.4 The Supervisor of Network and Security Operations or Network Technician shall be responsible for the following:

- Assistance with the set-up of new or replacement equipment as needed;
  - Attached to the Policy as “Schedule A” is a flow chart outlining the responsibilities of the Facilities Supervisors and the Supervisor of Network and Security Operations regarding new camera installation at Oxford County facilities and property;
- Troubleshooting malfunctioning equipment or network issues and/or errors; and
- Assisting with retrieving information as requested for an authorized purpose.
- Should there be a position vacancy in relation to the above responsibility, the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services will decide on a suitable alternate, in consultation with the County Clerk.

2.5 The Director of Long-Term Care shall be responsible for the following:

- Approval of video surveillance access at all Long-Term Care Home locations for purposes outlined in this policy.

2.6 The designate of the Director of Long-Term Care, Administrator of Woodingford Lodge or the Supervisor of Environmental Services, shall be responsible for the following:

- Maintaining an access log for auditing purposes which tracks access to and use of recorded material, including date, time, name and reason for access;
- Working directly with the County Clerks Office on responding to access requests under MFIPPA;
- Assist with investigating and reporting any privacy breaches to the Clerk’s Office
- Should there be a position vacancy in relation to the above responsibility, the Director of Long-Term Care will decide on a suitable alternate, in consultation with the County Clerk.

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3.0 Authorized Installation Surveillance Sites and Camera Positioning

3.1 The County shall install video surveillance equipment only at Authorized Installation Surveillance Sites where deemed necessary and viable in the detection or deterrence of criminal activity and disruptive behaviour, such as theft, vandalism and unauthorized entry. Each potential surveillance site will be reviewed individually to decide if installation is justified based on verified incident reports and/or major safety or security concerns, as well as the costs of setting up and managing the system. The County Clerk will determine if a Privacy Impact Assessment (PIA) is needed to identify and address possible issues raised by the proposed use.

3.2 Video surveillance cameras will be installed or configured to limit privacy intrusion and the collection of personal information to that which is absolutely necessary to achieve the desired purpose.

3.3 In accordance with the purposes of this policy, video surveillance equipment will not be installed for the purpose of monitoring employee performance or unjustly intruding in the personal affairs and/or daily activities of tenants. The County supports the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario's position that "pervasive, routine and random surveillance of ordinary, lawful public activities interferes with an individual's privacy".

3.4 Video surveillance cameras will be installed or configured to prevent or limit the ability to record images outside of County of Oxford property boundaries.

3.5 Video surveillance cameras shall not contain video analytic capabilities such as facial recognition. This option shall be disabled if available on the equipment purchased.

3.6 The County shall not install video surveillance cameras in locations where employees and/or the public have a greater expectation of privacy; for example, changerooms, washrooms, meeting rooms and staff lunchrooms. Cameras may be located in hallways, stairwells, entrances, lobbies, elevators, parking lots and common rooms.

3.7 If the installation of video surveillance equipment is being contemplated at a County-owned or operated social housing facility, there are additional considerations to be made in locating and positioning cameras. All video surveillance equipment shall be installed and operated in compliance with applicable privacy legislation and best practices. Camera placement will be carefully evaluated to ensure it is reasonable, proportionate, and does not intrude upon areas where individuals have a heightened expectation of privacy.

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3.8 Video reception equipment and video recordings will be located in restricted access areas.

4.0 Public Notice

4.1 The public must be notified of the presence of video surveillance equipment using clearly written signs. Signs must be prominently displayed at facility entrances and/or at the perimeter of surveillance areas to ensure that the public has reasonable and adequate warning that surveillance is in operation before entering the surveillance area.

4.2 Signage must satisfy the notice requirements set out in Section 29 (2) of the MFIPPA which provides that if personal information is collected on behalf of an institution, the head shall inform the individual to whom the information relates of:

- the statutory authority for the collection;
- the purpose(s) of the collection or intended use; and
- the title, business address and business telephone number of an officer or employee of the institution who can answer the individual's questions about the collection.

4.3 The following wording is recommended for signage at Oxford County facilities and properties, but may be revised on a site-by-site basis to reflect unique or specific uses of video images:

NOTICE

Video images are being recorded on these premises under the authority of Sec.11 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* for the purposes of crime prevention and public safety.

Questions about this collection can be directed to the Clerk's Office at 519-539-9800 (ext. 3910).

4.4 Signage shall adhere to accessibility standards by including a symbol of a video camera.

5.0 Access

5.1 Access to video surveillance recordings must be authorized and facilitated pursuant to Section 2.1 of this Policy and shall be limited to the following purposes:

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- Risk management, complaint investigation, the processing of personal injury claims and claims to the damage of assets, or other insurable claims;
- Law enforcement agencies where recorded images would assist in a law enforcement investigation; and
- Individuals whose image has been recorded who make formal access requests under MFIPPA.

5.2 Authorized Personnel may view video surveillance recordings only in the performance of their work duties and to achieve the desired purposes set out in this policy; for example, when there is reasonable cause to believe that a crime or an act of disruptive behaviour has been, or is in the process of being, committed.

5.3 For the purpose of this policy, viewing live feed on a CCTV monitor or Authorized Personnel viewing recordings is not considered “access” to recorded information.

5.4 Agreements made between the County and a service provider that reference the operation of the video surveillance equipment on behalf of the municipality must include a provision indicating that any video records created by the County’s video surveillance program are under the County’s custody and control and are subject to the MFIPPA.

6.0 Use and Disclosure

6.1 Personal information collected by way of the County video surveillance program shall be used exclusively for detecting, deterring and monitoring criminal activity and disruptive behaviour for the purposes of public and employee safety, crime prevention and the stewardship of publicly owned assets. In the event of a suspected, reported or observed incident, video recordings may be used to assist in the investigation of the incident. Video recordings may also be used as evidence to identify suspects involved in criminal activities. Personal information collected by way of the County video surveillance program shall not be used for any other purpose.

6.2 Section 32 of the MFIPPA provides that an institution may disclose personal information in its custody or under its control if disclosure is to an institution or a law enforcement agency in Canada to aid an investigation.

6.3 Release of video surveillance recordings to police or other public agencies for law enforcement purposes will be authorized, controlled and logged. A record will be kept of the date of the request, the name, title/rank, organization and badge or I.D. number (if

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applicable) of the officer to whom disclosure was made, and the reason for the disclosure. Requests from police or other law enforcement agencies (for example, Ministry of Labour investigations) will be in writing and must identify the legal authority under which the agency is requesting disclosure. All requests will be logged in an access register for tracking and periodic auditing purposes.

6.4 The Clerk's Office will assist with the development of any forms used for access requests pertaining to warrantless disclosures. A form, such as the *Law Enforcement Related Disclosure Form*, is to be used when the County is being asked, but not compelled, to disclose personal information captured in a video recording.

6.5 An individual whose personal information has been captured by the County video surveillance system has a right of access under Section 36 of the MFIPPA. Individuals seeking access to video surveillance recordings under MFIPPA will be directed to submit a formal Freedom of Information (FOI) request to the Clerk's Office for processing in accordance with MFIPPA and County of Oxford's 8.09 Access and Privacy Policy.

6.6 If Authorized Personnel have reason to believe that a video record contains personal information that may be relevant to a law enforcement investigation, they shall notify the Clerk's Office who will immediately remove the video recording from the rotational cycle. This recording shall remain securely stored until police review or take custody of the record. In the event that a video record is in digital format, a separate electronic file may be created and securely transferred to police.

7.0 Retention

7.1 Video recordings must be retained and destroyed in accordance with County of Oxford's Records Retention By-law. Specifically, recorded images will be retained for minimum periods of time which may vary depending on the facility and camera activity level. Cameras are motion activated and recorded images will be automatically and routinely erased and recorded over unless an incident prompts an investigation. Footage utilized for the purpose of an investigation will be retained within the incident file and outside the monitoring system and subject to disposal requirements related to the incident report.

7.2 If video recordings are required for a law enforcement investigation or for defence of a legal action or claim against the County, specific images will be copied, logged and re-classified in accordance with Schedule "A" of the Records Retention By-law. Following investigation and/or legal action, the borrowing agency will be encouraged to return the

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video record to the County for appropriate retention and disposal.

8.0 Privacy Breaches, Complaints or Inquiries

8.1 Complaints or inquiries about the County's privacy policies and/or practices relating to the handling of personal information should be directed to the Clerk's Office who will investigate all formal, written complaints. If a complaint is held to be justified, appropriate corrective measures will be taken, including amending this policy, as necessary.

8.2 Upon learning of a privacy breach or potential privacy breach, staff shall immediately notify the County Clerk and the Clerk's Office will be responsible for investigating the breach pursuant to the guidelines set out by the IPC and the County's Privacy Breach Protocol.

8.3 Violations under this policy may be considered a violation of MFIPPA and may be subject to the consequences under the Act.

OxfordCounty growing stronger...together

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Media Policy

POLICY

The news media play a key role in keeping the public informed about County of Oxford activities. The County strives for a positive, transparent, and cooperative relationship with the media.

Information released to the media is documented, searchable, and becomes part of the County's public record. For this reason, any information released through news channels must be accurate, authorized and responsible.

DEFINITIONS

1. ***Media.*** Refers to all types of news organizations, including but not limited to newspaper, radio, television, print magazines, blog, online publications, etc.
2. ***Media products.*** Includes anything offered to a news organization with the intent or expectation of media coverage, including news releases, media advisories, backgrounders, positioning or stand-by statements, news conferences, public service announcements, telephone or e-mail messages, and social media posts.
3. ***Social media.*** Encompasses tools that allow people to share information and interact in an online environment, for instance blogs, social networking sites, photo and video sharing sites, user review sites, content aggregators, and crowdsourcing sites. For more information see 8.5. Web, Intranet and Social Content Management Policy in the General Policy Manual.
4. ***Corporate Communications.*** Refers to the communications coordinator or designate working under the direction of the CAO.

LEGISLATION

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. This Act applies to municipalities, police services boards, school boards, conservation authorities, boards of health

and transit commissions. Its first purpose is to provide a right of access to government records, subject to limited and specific exemptions. Its second purpose is to protect the privacy of individuals with respect to their personal information held by government institutions. This Act sets guidelines for what information is appropriate for public release. See mini-guide

Personal Health Information Protection Act. This Act sets out the rules for collecting, using and disclosing personal health information, and for protecting the confidentiality of that information and the privacy of individuals.

PROCEDURES

1. Spokespersons

Warden/Acting Warden. The Warden or Acting Warden is the official Council County spokesperson for the County of Oxford.

CAO. The CAO is the official spokesperson for County Administration. Public announcements, media products and related materials must be authorized by the CAO and issued through his/her office by Corporate Communications.

Because the CAO is ultimately accountable for all statements made to the media on behalf of the County by staff members, the CAO makes final determination as to what information is appropriate for release and by whom.

Authorized spokespersons. Members of the senior management team (directors and corporate managers) and/or their approved designates may also serve as official spokespersons.

Unofficial or personal interactions with the media.

(1.) Employees who are not authorized spokespersons should not contact the media to announce County of Oxford news or information.

(2.) If employees are approached by the media for information on County news or issues, the request should be forwarded to either a director or corporate manager or his/her designate, Customer Service, or Corporate Communications so that an authorized spokesperson can fulfil the request.

(3.) Employees who comment on County business from a personal perspective must state for the record that they are not commenting in an official capacity and that their statements are their own opinions and not necessarily reflective of County Administration.

2. Media contacts

Oxford County media contacts are not necessarily spokespersons but are individuals within the organization who are knowledgeable about how to redirect or assign media queries. Authorized media contacts include directors and corporate managers of departments or programs or their designates, Customer Service, or Corporate Communications.

The communications coordinator is available as a resource to authorized spokespersons to help develop media materials and responses, help seek required approvals, release information to the media, and coordinate media interviews.

3. Service commitment

As a service standard, media contacts and/or spokespersons should endeavour to acknowledge media calls within one hour whenever possible. The communications coordinator can assist with acknowledging media calls, developing an interim statement if more research or preparation time is needed, and/or arranging an interview.

4. Media materials

All media materials must be authorized by the CAO. News releases, advisories and backgrounders must use the official templates maintained by Corporate Communications, which use the corporate boilerplate and are marked from the Office of the CAO.

The CAO may designate some officials, such as the CEO of Public Health, to issue media materials from their office.

5. Media distribution

Media materials will be distributed by the communications coordinator on the approval of the CAO unless otherwise determined.

6. Media on site

As is the case for all visitors, members of the media must be accompanied by an Oxford County employee and/or the communications coordinator while they are on site.

7. Corrections

Requests for corrections to information in published or broadcast in news stories will be determined by the CAO as appropriate.

8. Letters to the editor

All letters to the editors or opinion pieces submitted to print or online publications that share County of Oxford information must be approved by the CAO. Employees who wish to submit letters to the editor as private citizens should sign letters as is customary, i.e., name and community. Employees should not sign letters using their work title unless submitting an authorized letter as part of their professional role at the County.

9. Legal issues

The County of Oxford and its employees are prohibited from commenting on activities that are the subject of a police investigation or legal proceedings.

10. Media monitoring

The communications coordinator will ensure there is a process to compile media mentions of the County of Oxford and archive news clippings for future reference.

11. Emergency management

The Communications appendix to the *County of Oxford Emergency Plan* outlines responsibilities for emergency communications.

12. Partnership news releases

Media materials issued in partnership with other external organizations ("joint releases") must be authorized by the CAO. The CAO will approve format and procedure for this type of release (template, placement of logos, etc.).

13. Distribution of third-party news releases

On occasion the County receives requests to issue media materials on behalf of organizations without communications resources. Requests to release material to news media through our distribution channels will be considered and approved by the CAO or designate.

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Electronic Monitoring

POLICY

Oxford County respects employees' right to privacy. For mutually beneficial reasons related to health and safety, productivity, the security of computer systems and other assets, managing employment relationships and conducting operations, Oxford County will monitor employees electronically.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide:

a) Guidance on electronic monitoring, including how and why the County monitors employees and how it collects, stores, safeguards, uses and discloses electronic monitoring data.

b) To ensure relevant legislative compliance and other applicable policies including:

i. 8.04 Technology Use Policy
ii. 8.06 Electronic File, E-mail and Data Storage and Security Policy
iii. 8.07 Remote Access to Network Resources Dialup and VPN
iv. 8.09 Access and Privacy Policy
v. 8.11 Video Surveillance Policy
vi. 8.13 PHIPA Privacy Policy
vii. 9.10 GPS AVL Policy
viii. Record's Retention By-law No. 4957-2008
ix. Any other policy that may become applicable and/or relevant.

c) Balance between employees' right to privacy, transparency and the need to monitor and safeguard operations and assets.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the following persons regardless of work location, whether on-site or working remotely:

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a) All employees, volunteers and students.

b) Members of County Council and Boards and Committees of Council.

c) Other persons, including independent contractors, consultants, certain vendors and other personnel, who, like employees, use or access premises, devices or computer networks that the County owns, leases, uses or controls (that is, Other Personnel). References to employee obligations in this policy apply with the necessary changes to apply to Other Personnel. This policy may also affect other stakeholders, including clients and service users.

DEFINITIONS

"Authorized Personnel" means any employee, consultant or contractor of Oxford County who has been approved by their respective department Director with respect to specific actions under this policy or other corporate policies.

"Automated Vehicle Location (AVL) & GPS" is a device that makes use of the Global Positioning System (GPS) to enable a business or agency to remotely track the location of its vehicle fleet by using the Internet.

"Covert monitoring" refers to surveillance without the employee's knowledge or awareness. Covert monitoring may include hidden cameras, for example. Systematic and occasional monitoring may be covert.

"Electronic monitoring" is the surveillance of employees or their activities using computer, digital, optical, magnetic, electrical or similar technologies. Monitoring includes obtaining, collecting, viewing, using or processing of surveillance information.

"**Location tracking**" uses GPS or satellite, RFID, and similar technologies and other tools to track geographic locations or the movement of people or assets. Location tracking includes geo-fencing and geolocation.

"Mobile Device(s)" defines any cell phone, tablet, personal digital assistant or any other related mobile device that can access the Internet. For the purpose of this policy, laptop computers are not considered mobile devices.

"Network" means a network (either wired or wireless) capable of accessing Corporate Information.

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“Occasional Monitoring” refers to monitoring that occurs on a periodic or ad hoc basis in response to an operational issue or need. Occasional monitoring is time-limited, short-term, and intermittent or targets only certain employees.

“Personal Information” means recorded information about an identifiable individual within the meaning of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

"Server" is a computer (either virtual or physical) which typically performs a dedicated function, centrally located on a network.

“Systematic monitoring” refers to surveillance that occurs on a routine and ongoing basis for all employees or a select group of employees. For example, a CCTV camera may be installed and continuously operated at the entrance to capture every employee who enters. Systematic monitoring may be covert.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Procedure

1.1 Oxford County (the County) may conduct electronic monitoring through camera surveillance, audio surveillance, telephone monitoring, computer monitoring and location tracking, using a wide range of media, equipment, tools and technologies, including those not specifically outlined in this policy.

1.2 The County may audit and or conduct systematic, covert or occasional electronic monitoring at any time.

1.3 The County utilizes tools that are able to systematically, occasionally and covertly monitor employee activity. The majority of the County’s electronic monitoring is done occasionally, through the creation of electronic records by employees in the normal course of fulfilling their employment duties and regular County business.

1.4 Information recorded via electronic monitoring activities will be retained in accordance with the County’s Records Retention By-law No. 4957-2008 to be used for employment-related purposes including, but not limited to, purposes such as assessing productivity, in the investigation of alleged violations of law, regulations, or applicable County policies, procedures and expectations, or other instances of misconduct or concerns related to health, safety and security.

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2.0 Scope of Use

2.1 The County may share monitoring data externally for the following reasons:

2.1.1 With service providers for maintenance, troubleshooting, auditing or similar purposes;

2.1.2 Under contracts or other legal obligations;

2.1.3 With law enforcement, with or, if necessary or advisable, without a warrant;

2.1.4 With private investigators that the County retains;

2.1.5 Under access, privacy or other statutes and/or County policies;

2.1.6 With lawyers, other legal representatives, persons in the justice system or as part of the disclosure obligations in investigations or legal proceedings, be they arbitration, mediation or civil or criminal court proceedings;

2.1.7 With others, where necessary, to ensure someone's safety, preserve life, avert a medical emergency or other serious or imminent threat;

2.1.8 With others, on consent of the data subjects; or

2.1.9 With others, in contexts not outlined in this policy but in circumstances where no reasonable employer would be expected to restrict disclosure.

2.2 Before disclosing data externally or with someone who does not routinely have access to the data, the person making the disclosure will ensure that they:

2.2.1 Update electronic or manual logs;

2.2.2 Consider individuals' privacy interests;

2.2.3 Share information only on a need-to-know basis;

2.2.4 Consider whether to encrypt, redact, edit (for example, crop images), strip audio from a video or use other techniques to safeguard privacy or confidentiality. Sometimes privacy and confidentiality will be best protected by refusing to disclose information;

2.2.5 Have privacy training appropriate to their role and understands confidentiality and privacy obligations; or

2.2.6 Consult with the Legislative Services Coordinator or Director of Corporate Services if there is any doubt about whether or how information should be shared.

3.0 Responsibilities

3.1 Responsibilities under this policy are carried out by Corporate Services, Human Resources and Public Works. The responsibilities outlined herein are applicable to designate employees, subject to the discretion of those specifically named herein.

3.2 The Director of Corporate Services will:

a) Maintain the Electronic Monitoring Policy and notify those whom this policy applies to, including the implementation of and subsequent amendments;

b) Approve electronic monitoring tools used while ensuring compliance with legislation, privacy and County values;

c) Approve disclosure of monitoring data related to disciplinary or other sensitive issues, and provide other approvals required under the policy in consultation with the Director of Human Resources.

3.3 The Director of Human Resources will:

a) Provide a copy of this policy to all newly hired employees of the County;

b) Investigate and resolve complaints or disputes involving employees; and,

c) Administer the electronic monitoring policy fairly and equitably in disciplinary proceedings, and in the context of other policies including those on disconnecting from work, health and safety, flexible work arrangements, accommodations, use of technology and appropriate conduct.

3.4 The Director of Public Works will:

a) Facilitate smooth operation of the electronic monitoring policy by supporting the broader County in investigating, developing, acquiring, installing and maintaining systems and tools for electronic monitoring.

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3.5 The Manager of Information Technology will:

a) Facilitate the smooth operation of the electronic monitoring policy by providing automated or other tools, training, advice and technical support. IT will also implement computer monitoring or other forms of monitoring to safeguard information and technology assets;

b) Support the broader County in investigating, developing, acquiring, implementing and maintaining systems and tools for electronic monitoring, some of which may not have anything to do with IT's own requirements;

c) Utilize electronic monitoring tools to secure IT assets and systems, wherever they are used or located in the County with the following objectives to ensure:

i. End-user computing activities are appropriately supported and controlled;
ii. Access to the County's systems and information is reliably controlled; and
iii. Information technology security is managed in an efficient and effective manner.

3.6 The Coordinator of Legislative Services will:

a) Provide guidance with respect to this policy relative to collection, storage, disclosure, use and destruction of electronic monitoring data;

b) Prepare privacy impact assessments as necessary for new electronic monitoring tools; and

c) Report to the Director of Corporate Services regarding privacy related issues and or complaints.

3.7 Each employee has an obligation to:

(a) Understand the scope and application of the electronic monitoring program.

(b) For instance, employees should know how the County uses and discloses monitoring information. Be aware that the County may carry out any form of electronic monitoring, including camera surveillance, audio surveillance, telephone monitoring, computer monitoring and location tracking, and may:

(i) Block access to certain sites;
(ii) Monitor internet access and usage;
(iii) Monitor emails, even if they are deleted;
(iv) Block or quarantine inbound or outgoing emails for security or other purposes;
(v) Monitor entrances, reception, foyers, interview rooms, storage rooms, parking lots and other common areas;
(vi) Monitor semi-private spaces, including private offices.
(vii) Ask for consent for certain types of electronic monitoring, but not others.

(c) Understand and comply with the policies that electronic monitoring is meant to enforce. Policies include those around acceptable email use (size, types, attachments); acceptable phone use; acceptable Internet use (permitted webpages, avoiding offensive content, appropriate length of time to use the Internet for personal use, etc.).

(d) Understand that the County will not:
(i) Monitor private spaces, including washrooms, bathrooms, toilets, change rooms, fitting rooms, locker rooms, and other areas where there is an expectation of privacy.
(ii) Provide prior notice or warnings where covert monitoring is in progress.
(iii) Ask for consent; legally, it does not require your consent for electronic monitoring.

(e) Understand that the County will:
(i) Comply with privacy and other laws and best practices with respect to the use, storage, retention, destruction, transfer and disclosure of monitoring data.
(ii) Select the least intrusive forms of electronic monitoring where possible.
(iii) Automate electronic monitoring as opposed to relying on human review of monitoring data where possible.
(iv) Restrict access to sensitive monitoring data to trusted personnel who have been trained in privacy principles.

(f) Understand that there is no guarantee of privacy when using the County's devices or networks. Employees should assume that all personal information on or transmitted through these networks may be accessible to others in the County and may be disclosed externally.

(g) Understand that:
(i) To the extent possible and reasonable, the County will limit monitoring outside of working hours. For instance, employees who drive GPS-monitored vehicles will typically be allowed to switch these devices off

during non-work hours. However, the County reserves the right to require employees to keep these devices engaged at all times while the vehicle is in use if it deems this necessary.

(ii) The County monitors its networks at all times, including outside of work or business hours.

(iii) The County will monitor its physical sites at all times using closed-circuit television (CCTV) or other tools, and may capture images or data for guests or other third parties.

(h) Take steps to preserve their privacy and confidential information where necessary, for instance, by

(ii) Using personal devices, networks or accounts for personal or private matters. Personal contacts should be asked to use the employee's personal accounts instead of work accounts.

(i) Raise any issues with or seek clarity from the employee's direct manager or other supervisors, the Legislative Services Coordinator, HR, IT or others when necessary.

(j) Comply with this and related policies. Non-compliance may be grounds for discipline, including termination.

4.0 Access and Privacy

4.1 The County values employee privacy and its use of information obtained from electronic monitoring tools for employment-related or disciplinary purposes. This policy does not create any new privacy rights for employees or a right to not be electronically monitored. Nothing in this policy affects or limits the County's ability to use information obtained through electronic monitoring, subject to applicable law.

4.2 Some information collected by electronic monitoring may be considered personal information. When personal information is under the County's control, it is the responsibility of the municipality to protect it. Therefore, all information collected through electronic monitoring will be securely stored and protected.

4.3 The County will restrict access to sensitive monitoring data to authorized personnel. Any request for information collected under this policy shall be logged for future review. Logs shall include the requester's name, the nature of the request (with confidential information redacted), all approvals obtained, the type of data obtained, and the method, date and time in which it was delivered to the

requester. The log will be maintained by the Director of Corporate Services and designates.

4.4 The County will comply with privacy and other laws and best practices with respect to the use, storage, retention, destruction, transfer and disclosure of monitoring data.

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Artificial Intelligence

1.0 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish a governance and accountability framework to enable the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies that enhance delivery of County services and administrative functions while having regard for potential risks and ensuring Transparency and accountability.

2.0 SCOPE

2.1 This policy applies to all staff using Automated Decision Systems to fully or partially automate an administrative decision.

2.2 Automated Decision Systems include those that rely on AI and other technologies.

2.3 For AI systems used, legislative requirements such as those concerning security, privacy and information management, will apply.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 For the purposes of this policy:

3.1.1 **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** means any technology that enables machines to simulate human intelligence, including machine learning, natural language processing, and computer vision.

3.1.2 **Automated Decision System (ADS)** means software or system that makes or informs decisions without human intervention. Examples of ADS in a municipal context could include decision or related assessments of planning applications; hiring and/or appointing individuals to a position; investigations into an individual's conduct; or client assessment for supportive services.

3.1.3 **Accountability** means the obligation to ensure AI systems operate as intended and their impacts are monitored and addressed.

3.1.4 **Bias** means systematic and unfair discrimination against individuals or groups in AI decision-making, including both data and process Bias.

3.1.5 **Confidential Data** means any information collected or communicated to the County that is not intended to be, or was reasonably expected not to be, disclosed to any other party including intellectual property and commercial trade secrets.

3.1.6 **County** means the County of Oxford or Oxford County.

3.1.7 **Generative AI** means a type of Artificial Intelligence that generates new content, such as text, images, music, or videos, by learning patterns from existing data and generates outputs based on those patterns.

3.1.8 **Personal Information** means any information about an identifiable individual including, without limitation, personal identifying information, health information, and financial information.

3.1.9 **Transparency** means the ability to provide clear and understandable explanations of AI decisions and processes that are open and accessible to the public and stakeholders.

4.0 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.1 This policy conforms with the County Mission statement “Deliver responsible and responsive services that improve the community’s social, environmental, and economic well-being” complemented by values to uphold service excellence through accountability, innovation, integrity, teamwork, sustainability, diversity, equity and inclusion.

4.2 All use of AI must reasonably align with the County’s mission and values based on the following considerations:

4.2.1 **Risk:** Prior to use, the evaluation of AI systems for potential ethical, legal, and operational risks.

4.2.2 **Bias and Impact:** Conduct review to identify Biases and unintended negative consequences.

4.2.3 **Ongoing Monitoring:** AI systems will be continually monitored for performance, fairness, and security risks.

4.2.4 **Review and Revocation:** AI systems that no longer meet policy requirements or cause harm must be modified or decommissioned.

4.3 All use of AI, including inputting data and drawing information from AI systems, shall be done in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations including, without limitation: access to information, copyright, intellectual property, privacy laws and regulations, and County policies.

4.4 Personal Information and/or Confidential Data shall not be inputted into an AI system in the absence of clear lawful authority to do so, and if such authority is not available, prior written authorization and/or consent from:

4.4.1 the individual to whom the Personal Information pertains to, in the case of Personal Information; and

4.4.2 in consultation with the Clerk's Office, in the case of Confidential Data.

4.5 An AI Meeting Assistant may be used during meetings for purposes of transcription, recordkeeping or analytics, provided:

4.5.1 the use of AI is disclosed to attendees prior to its use;

4.5.2 AI generated content is reviewed for accuracy; and

4.5.3 there is no expectation that confidential or privileged information shall be discussed during the meeting.

4.6 All data generated from an AI system shall be reviewed for accuracy, reliability, misuse of intellectual property, privacy infringements and latent Biases prior to any use or reliance on the data.

4.7 All data and information generated by AI and included in final reports shall reference the source of data and/or information in a footnote.

4.8 Schedule A to this Policy provides a reference guide for using AI tools responsibly as prepared by the Government of Canada.

5.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** Oversees AI governance and ensures compliance with this policy, ensuring responsible AI adoption and compliance with this policy and applicable regulations and legislation; and coordinates with the Manager of Information Technology and Clerk's Office to ensure compliance with risk management, Transparency, and data governance standards.

5.2 **Information Technology:** Responsible for providing technical guidance by reviewing and assessing an AI system prior to acquisition, including without limiting the following: information technology and data related risk assessments and evaluations where required; security and ethical standards; and compatibility with the Guiding Principles contained herein.

5.3 **County Staff:** Must comply with this policy as it pertains to ethical use of AI technology and County's privacy policies. Staff shall report any concerns with potential or known undisclosed data exposure, Biases or other concerns related to AI to their supervisor and Information Technology support.

5.4 **Corporate Services Department:** Monitor use of AI within the organization and regularly update this policy to remain relevant and in compliant with legislation.

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Referenced and Related Policies

5.38 Confidentiality Policy
8.09 Access and Privacy Policy
8.13 PHIPA Privacy Policy

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Schedule "A"

General Principles for Use of AI
Adapted from the Government of Canada *Tips to Use AI Responsibly*

Principle	Do	Don't
Fair	Write your prompt or instructions in a way that will produce comprehensive, impartial responses. Check that the output is not Biased or discriminatory and does not contain harmful stereotypes.	Use outputs that are Biased, discriminatory or exclusionary, or that misrepresent population groups.
Accountable	Take responsibility for what you prepare using GenAI. Review generated content to make sure it is accurate. Check that it does not contain material that is protected by copyright; to do this, search the Internet and compare the output with published materials.	Assume the output is correct. Delegate tasks to GenAI that should be completed by a person.
Secure	Understand the terms of use of the tool. Understand how the tool collects, stores and uses data to generate content.	Input personal, proprietary, sensitive or protected information into GenAI tools. Try to find ways around the tool's safety rules.
Transparent	Disclose on the final product that you used Generative AI. Let your manager know that you used an AI tool in your work.	Pass off AI-generated content as your own work.
Educated	Learn about the strengths, limitations and responsible use of AI and GenAI tools. Learn how to create effective prompts. Learn to identify potential weaknesses in the outputs.	Use Generative AI tools to generate material you do not have the expertise to verify. Assume that a single training session is enough (keep learning as the tools evolve).
Relevant	Remember that Generative AI is not appropriate for all uses. Use it only when it helps you do your work.	Use Generative AI tools for tasks that research shows they do not do well, such as arithmetic and tasks involving nuanced or emotional language. Overly rely on Generative AI tools.

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Schedule "B"

Artificial Intelligence Use Guidelines

These guidelines are to provide additional context on the potential use of Artificial Intelligence as set out in this Policy. If users are still uncertain about authorized and appropriate use not clarified by this Policy and/or its Guidelines, contact Information Technology for assistance at support@oxfordcounty.ca.

Acceptable Uses of Artificial Intelligence
Examples where AI is considered appropriate uses by County staff.

1. Write a memo or briefing note.
   Prompt: "Write a memo to the [Department] about the potential benefits of the use of Generative AI in Oxford County."
   - No personal details mentioned.
   - Information is publicly available.
   - Ensure to fact-check the text generated by AI.
   - Ensure the AI generated text is adapted to reflect the tone, style and content used for other communications.

2. Improve your decision-making.
   Prompt: "I am trying to decide if I should [Business Decision]. Give me a list of pros and cons that will help me decide why I should or should not make this decision."
   - No personal details mentioned – Business Decision is publicly available.
   - Reduces Bias as the prompt seeks both pros and cons.

3. Rewrite and simplify written work.
   Prompt: "Rewrite the text of my speech below in simple and easy-to-understand words. Simple and easy enough for a high school student."
   - No personal details mentioned – speech is publicly available.

4. Use the 80/20 method to learn anything faster.
   Prompt: "I want to learn about [Topic]. Identify and share the most important 20% of learnings from this topic that will help me understand 80% of it."
   - Efficient way to increase productivity.
   - Information is publicly available.
   - Ensure to fact-check the text generated by AI.

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Unacceptable Uses of Artificial Intelligence
These are examples where using AI could pose a risk and should not be used.

1. Entering Personal Information:
   Prompt: “Write a contract for an offer of employment to [Name], [Social Insurance Number], [Date of Birth].”
   - This is unacceptable as personal information such as birthdays and social insurance numbers are included.

2. Confidential Documents:
   Prompt: “Write a confidential report to council about a pending lawsuit.”
   - Do not generate content involving sensitive legal matters or those that would be considered confidential.

3. Copyrighted Content:
   Prompt: “Rewrite the [Copyrighted Content] so it does not look the same.”
   - Unless fact-checked and backed up by a third-party source, this is unacceptable as it involves using copyrighted content without providing credit and fact-checking where necessary.

If still uncertain about the appropriateness of using AI, seek clarification from Information Technology at support@oxfordcounty.ca.

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Recruitment

POLICY

Recruitment for position vacancies will be completed in a timely, fair, equitable and inclusive manner in compliance with Employer policies, collective agreements and applicable legislation.

DEFINITIONS

Internal Posting	A position vacancy that is posted and available for current Oxford County employees.
External Posting	A position vacancy that is posted and available to the general public.
Student	An individual who is currently enrolled in a high school or post secondary institution and is returning to school immediately following the school break. Student practicums which occur at the end of a school program are exempt.

PROCEDURE

1.0 General Recruitment:

1.1 Oxford County only accepts resumes for posted vacancies.

1.2 To commence the recruitment process, a Staff Requisition Form must be submitted with the required approvals/workflow to Human Resources.

1.3 Oxford County is an equal opportunity employer and every effort is made to make the recruitment process accessible to all qualified candidates. The County will attempt to provide reasonable accommodation for a known disability for an applicant or employee if requested.

All human resources staff and leaders involved in recruitment and selection should become familiar with the best practices and guiding principles outlined in the County's DEI Human Resources Guidebook, and make efforts to implement them to reduce

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barriers to recruitment and promotion for historically underserved, underrepresented, and equity-seeking groups.

1.4 Unionized positions are posted in accordance with collective agreement requirements. Selection and advertising external to the bargaining unit is made in accordance with contractual requirements.

1.5 Job postings will contain, at a minimum, the salary rate or range of the vacant position, and the reason for vacancy (existing vacancy or new position). If artificial intelligence (AI) is ever utilized to screen, assess, or select applicants, the use of AI will be disclosed in the job posting.

1.6 Non-union positions are posted internally for a minimum of five (5) working days. External advertising for non-union positions may run concurrently with internal postings. In consultation with Human Resources, departments may use their discretion in posting temporary positions that are less than six (6) months duration.

1.7 Permanent positions and temporary (contract) positions that are longer than six (6) months which are not filled by an internal applicant are to be posted externally.

1.8 External postings include a reference to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy legislation and that the County is an equal opportunity employer.

1.9 The cost of external postings is typically the responsibility of the hiring department.

1.10 Applicants may be shortlisted by Human Resources against the job profile requirements upon request of the hiring manager. All external applicants who confirm their participation in the interview process will be required to provide a minimum of three (3) references (supervisory preferred) and sign the County's Nepotism Policy (5.11).

1.11 During the interview process, all applicants will be informed of police check requirements, in accordance with the Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Checks Policy 5.04, immunization requirements, in accordance with the Schedule of Occupational Immunizations Form 7.08B, and driver's license requirements. The top candidate is selected by an interviewing panel comprised of the supervisor of the vacant position and a representative from Human Resources. Additional department representative(s) may participate if deemed necessary.

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1.12 Internal applicants not selected for an interview will be informed prior to conducting interviews.

1.13 All candidates are evaluated against the same criteria and interview questions are prepared in advance of the interview to provide consistency and fairness to the selection process. Interview questions must be in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code.

1.14 In certain instances, pre-screening, job–related testing, and/or a second interview with selected candidates may occur as part of the selection process.

1.15 A minimum of two (2) reference checks must be completed by Human Resources prior to an offer of employment being extended to the candidate.

1.16 The Non-Union Employee Manual, Job Evaluation and Salary Administration Policy 5.42 or the applicable Collective Agreement should be referenced for guidance related to starting salaries and vacation entitlement.

After determining an appropriate starting salary, an offer is made by Human Resources to the selected candidate and an indication of their acceptance/denial of the offer is communicated to the supervisor. The offer is confirmed in writing by Human Resources, with an acknowledged copy to be returned by the candidate. A copy of the letter is forwarded to the position supervisor, payroll and union representative, as applicable.

1.17 Unsuccessful candidates who were interviewed are informed that they were not successful no later than forty-five (45) days following their last interview.

1.18 Copies of external job postings and a record of the information provided to applicants who were interviewed will be retained for three years following the conclusion of the recruitment process.

2.0 Student Recruitment:

2.1 For an unpaid student practicum, work placement or co-op position, refer to Policy 5.43 Volunteer and Student Placements. The procedure for paid positions should be in accordance with this policy.

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2.2 All student resumes are to be forwarded to and are maintained by Human Resources so that they are accessible to all departments.

2.3 Students hired for school break periods must present proof of school enrollment by the time their employment begins, and can include a copy of a tuition payment, course schedule or a letter from their educational institution.

2.4 Collective agreements, where applicable, should be referenced for provisions pertaining to student hiring.

3.0 Senior Leadership Recruitment:

3.1 Recruitment for the position of Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) is completed by a Selection Committee designated by Council.

3.2 Recruitment for senior leadership positions will be completed by the CAO.

3.3 Human Resources will act as a resource to the committee and the CAO. The Director of Human Resources will participate in interviews for senior leadership positions.

3.4 The recruitment process is completed in accordance with 1.0 General Recruitment; however, the CAO and/or Committee may choose to use the services of an Executive Search Firm to assist with recruitment of senior leadership positions.

When an Executive Search Firm is used, the recruitment process will be agreed upon between the Search Firm and the CAO and/or Selection Committee. Executive Search Firm fees will be paid for by the respective department for whom the position is being filled.

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REFERENCE POLICY:		REVISED:	April 7, 2020 September 10, 2026

Criminal Record and Vulnerable Sector Checks

POLICY

Oxford County makes every reasonable effort to ensure the safety and security of persons who are under the County's care, protect County assets, and comply with applicable legislation. Accordingly, the County will designate those positions requiring a Criminal Record or Vulnerable Sector Check.

DEFINITIONS

Criminal Record Check (CRC) — An individual's criminal record as it appears in the National Repository of Criminal Records maintained by the RCMP. This Check includes only unpardoned *Criminal Code* convictions and charges under the *Criminal Code* which are pending before the courts.

Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) — An expanded Check for individuals responsible for the well-being of one or more children or vulnerable persons. This Check includes unpardoned *Criminal Code* convictions and charges under the *Criminal Code* which are pending before the courts, as well as information about persons who have received a pardon for a sexual offence.

Vulnerable Sector — Persons who because of their age, a disability or other circumstances, whether temporary or permanent, are in a position of dependence on others; or are otherwise at greater risk than the general population of being harmed by persons in a position of authority or trust relative to them.

PROCEDURE

1.0 All positions in the following departments/divisions will require a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) be completed as a condition of employment:

- Human Services (except Support Clerks)
- Public Works Facilities
- Woodingford Lodge
- Library

- Paramedic Services

Positions/departments will be added to this list upon the recommendation of a Director to the CAO.

2.0 All positions not requiring a VSC, will require a CRC be completed as a condition of employment.

3.0 Applicants will be informed at the commencement of their interview that the successful candidate will be provided with a CRC or VSC Request Form for their submission to their applicable police department or local OPP detachment (see Form 5.04A).

4.0 A successful candidate to whom an employment offer is made will be required to obtain the appropriate Check at their own expense, as a condition of employment. If the candidate has received a completed CRC or VSC in the last 6 months (from the date of the offer of employment), this can be provided to the employer for review.

5.0 If it is necessary to proceed with an offer of employment prior to the receipt of the required Check, such offer letter will include a written statement to the effect that the offer and continued employment are contingent upon the receipt of a CRC or VSC which is acceptable to the employer.

6.0 For volunteers at the County, a current VSC (completed within the last 6 months) must be provided before being allowed to interact with children or vulnerable persons. Once in receipt of an acceptable Check it is understood that the County will reimburse the volunteer 100% of the total cost of the VSC. The County reserves the right to accept or deny volunteer assistance.

7.0 If a candidate or volunteer submits a completed CRC or VSC which reveals unpardoned convictions or charges, or any other questionable results, this information will be considered in the context of the nature of the offence(s) and the specific duties of the position. A discussion will be held with the management of the Department concerned and the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services to assess the effect of this information on the employment/volunteer decision.

At the request of the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services, the candidate/volunteer may be given the opportunity to explain the results of their Check in writing (see Form 5.04B). If the individual's written explanation is satisfactory, they will be able to continue employment or volunteering at the County. If the individual chooses not to provide a written explanation or their written explanation is unsatisfactory to the County, the

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employment offer will be withdrawn immediately or the individual will not be permitted to volunteer with the County of Oxford.

8.0 In accordance with the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, a current CRC or VSC will be required of employees and volunteers under 18 years of age in accordance with this policy.

9.0 If a candidate has previously provided a CRC or VSC, a new check is not required solely because they are assigned new duties or transferred to new responsibilities.

Current employees who were not previously required to submit a VSC or CRC as a condition of employment may be required to provide one when transferring internally to a new County position, at the discretion of the hiring manager and Human Resources. In these instances, the County will reimburse the employee for the completion of the requested VSC or CRC.

10.0 New hires in Paramedic Services are required to submit a VSC according to this policy and at their own expense. Current employees of Paramedic Services are required to obtain a CRC every other year or as additionally required per Ministry direction.

11.0 Personal information collected as a result of the CRC and VSC is necessary for the proper administration of a lawfully authorized activity under Sec.11 and Sec.270 of the *Municipal Act, 2001* and is to be collected pursuant to Sec.29 and Sec.32 of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* regarding indirect collections.

12.0 All employees are required to sign an annual declaration stating that their record remains free of any convictions (see Form 5.04 C). Departments may have their own Declaration forms that align with applicable Ministry or other governing body policy requirements. Supervisors are responsible to have employees sign the declaration and forward the form to Human Resources.

13.0 An employee who, at any time, is convicted of a criminal offense must contact their supervisor or Human Resources immediately to discuss the conviction and any possible impact on their employment. Failure to disclose current charges or convictions may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

14.0 Management reserves the right to request any current employee have an updated VSC or CRC completed. Supervisory staff must consult with Human Resources prior to this request. In these cases, Oxford County will reimburse employees for the completion of a VSC or CRC.

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Tuition Reimbursement

POLICY

Oxford County promotes a learning environment for its employees and promotes career development for the mutual benefit of the employee and the County. A wide range of learning and development opportunities are available to employees, including tuition reimbursement in accordance with this policy. Full-time employees may seek approval for reimbursement for the cost of tuition fees and associated learning materials for course(s) through their departmental budget, subject to the criteria outlined below.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Subject to approval by Supervisor/Manager, Department Director and Learning and Development, employees may be reimbursed up to a maximum of $2000 annually for the cost of educational courses and associated learning materials, provided the following conditions are met:

1.1 The course directly relates to their present job or future career interests and potential at Oxford County.

1.2 The course is offered by a certified educational institution, which is typically a College or University, but can also include an organization such as AMCTO.

1.3 The employee completes and submits the application form, which includes an Individual Development Plan (IDP) that specifies educational or career goals tied to the desired course for approval by their Supervisor/Manager, Department Director and Learning and Development Specialist.

1.4 The IDP and application form are submitted for approval no later than July 15th each year for reimbursement in the following calendar year, if approved. Applications may be considered after the July 15th deadline in extenuating circumstances and based on departmental budget.

1.5 Reimbursement for the course is approved by the employee's Supervisor/Manager, Department Director and Learning and Development Specialist prior to the course start date in accordance with budget and approval timelines.

1.6 The employee signs the declaration statement, which states they may be required to pay back the reimbursed amount should they voluntarily leave their employment at the County within one year from the course completion date.

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1.7 The employee successfully completes the course and submits documentation of completion, along with a receipt for the course fees and/or books, using an employee expense form for reimbursement of eligible expenses.

2.0 While a course may be part of an overall certificate, diploma, or degree program, each course must be submitted and approved individually as per this policy. At no time will any commitment be made to an employee that the County will reimburse an entire program of study.

3.0 The Employer will provide flexibility during normal working hours for employees to attend classes and/or write examinations for any course approved and authorized under this policy, provided that such attendance does not conflict with the Employer's right to maintain efficiency, and further, that the class and/or exam cannot reasonably be attended or written at a time outside of normal working hours.

4.0 Where management requests or requires an employee to take a specific course(s), the County shall assume responsibility for 100% of the cost involved, and no application for reimbursement under this policy is required.

5.0 Employer initiated learning and development opportunities, such as coaching and/or leadership development programs, annual corporate learning and development opportunities (Oxford Grows), position specific training, etc. are excluded from this policy and are paid for directly by the County.

6.0 Professional development, such as conferences, workshops, and seminars, are excluded from this policy and are reimbursed under Employee Expense Policy 6.02.

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Harassment and Discrimination in the Workplace

POLICY

Oxford County is committed to providing a work environment in which all workers are treated with respect and dignity. Workplace harassment will not be tolerated from any person in the workplace.

Harassment and discrimination are violations of the *Ontario Human Rights Code*; harassment is also a violation of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act.* This policy shall provide a framework for the County to meet its obligations under the *Human Rights Code* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, as well as provide a process for responding to and resolving complaints. Any conduct considered to be discriminatory or harassing as defined in this policy will not be tolerated. This policy considers harassment from all sources, such as customers/clients, the employer, supervisors, employees and members of the public.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying — Behaviour which usually involves repeated incidents, or a pattern of behaviour, that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of persons.

Complainant — A person who has alleged a violation of this policy.

Respondent — A person who has been alleged to have violated this policy.

Discrimination — Unfair or adverse treatment based on one or more of the prohibited grounds, as defined in the *Ontario Human Rights Code.* Examples include, but are not limited to, denial of a promotion, work assignment, career development or training.

Workplace Harassment

a) Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace, including through the use of information and communications technology, that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
b) Workplace sexual harassment (see definition below).

Examples include, but are not limited to, bullying, racial jokes, offensive communication via electronic mail or other electronic technologies, and/or display of derogatory or offensive pictures.

<u>Harassment does not include:</u>

1) Appropriate direction, evaluation and/or discipline by supervisory staff;

2) Stress associated with the performance of legitimate job duties;
3) Consensual relationships.

Generally in order for behaviour to be considered harassment, there is usually some element of repetition or persistence although in some cases a single, serious incident may be sufficient.

Workplace Sexual Harassment

a) Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace, including through the use of information and communications technology, because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
b) Making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

Examples include, but are not limited to, unwelcome remarks, jokes, slurs, innuendos or taunting about a person's body or sex, unwelcome sexual advances (verbal, written, physical), leering, whistling or other suggestive sounds, attainment and/or distribution of improper information of a sexual nature including, but not limited to, electronic mail or other electronic technologies.

Poisoned Work Environment

Any conduct or comment which may not be directed at a specific individual but nevertheless generates a degrading or offensive work environment. It may be created by comments or conduct of any person regardless of his/her position or status.

Examples include, but are not limited to, displaying of sexually explicit pictures in a workplace, displaying offensive cartoons or signs, or telling insulting jokes.

Prohibited Grounds

Refers to the characteristics of race, sex, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, citizenship, family status, record of offences, creed (religion), and gender identity or gender expression. The *Ontario Human Rights Code* prohibits harassment and/or discrimination on any one or more of these grounds.

Workplace

Includes all vehicles, facilities, work-sites and any other location where County employees conduct work related business. For the purposes of this policy, the workplace also includes harassment which occurs outside the

workplace or hours of work but nevertheless has an impact on an individual's work environment; such as, on social media or at County and non-County sponsored social events.

Workplace Violence

a) The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
b) An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker;
c) A statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

Workplace violence is prohibited and incidents shall be handled in accordance with the provisions and reporting obligations of Policy 7.10 - Workplace Violence Prevention.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1.0 Responsibilities of Employer

1.1 Provide a work environment in which all work related interactions are conducted with respect and dignity;
1.2 Ensure that this policy is accessible and available to all staff and the public through the County's website;
1.3 Post in the workplace, information regarding harassment and discrimination prevention;
1.4 Provide training to all staff so they are aware of their obligations in regards to harassment and discrimination and the resolution process;
1.5 Do not ignore or condone behaviour that is contrary to this policy;
1.6 Investigate and deal with all complaints or incidents of workplace harassment in a fair and timely manner even in the absence of a formal complaint;
1.7 Do not engage in behaviour that is contrary to this policy;
1.8 Ensure employees who have been subject to discrimination and/or harassment are made aware of the County's Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP), if appropriate;
1.9 Review this policy at least annually, as per the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

2.0 Responsibilities of Supervisors

2.1 Provide a work environment in which all work related interactions are conducted with

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NUMBER:	5.06	SIGNATURE:	Original signed by: Ben Addley, CAO
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respect and dignity;

2.2 Do not ignore or condone behaviour that is contrary to this policy by discussing with Human Resources, and conducting an investigation appropriate to the situation;
2.3 Do not engage in behaviour that is contrary to this policy;
2.4 Manage workplace related conflicts/concerns toward a resolution between the parties, with a focus on correcting the behaviour and preserving positive relationships.

3.0 Responsibilities of Employees

3.1 Do not engage in any behaviour that is contrary to this policy;
3.2 Recognize and refrain from actions that intimidate, offend, embarrass or humiliate others, either deliberately or unintentionally;
3.3 Do not make allegations of improper behaviour that are frivolous or vindictive;
3.4 Make an effort to resolve workplace related conflicts/concerns, where possible;
3.5 Report acts of discrimination or harassment in a timely manner to an appropriate person such as the supervisor, Department Head or Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services;
3.6 Cooperate in the investigation of discrimination and harassment complaints.

PROCEDURES

4.0 Timing

The complaint should be made as soon as possible after the alleged harassment / discrimination occurred and in any event no later than one year after the last incident of harassment / discrimination, unless there are compelling reasons why it was not practicable to bring it forward sooner.

5.0 Resolution & Complaint Procedure

The goal of the County's Harassment & Discrimination in the Workplace Policy is to promote an environment in which all workplace interactions are conducted with respect and dignity while also providing procedures to resolve complaints internally.

Upon becoming aware of an incident or receiving a complaint of workplace harassment, the supervisor, Department Head or Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services will ensure that an investigation appropriate in the circumstances will be conducted.

This does not preclude an employee's right to file a complaint at any time with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario in accordance with the *Human Rights Code* if a prohibited ground has been violated. Unionized employees may also file a grievance in accordance with their collective agreement.

5.1 Individual Action (Optional)

5.1.1 Often individuals are not aware of the impact of their behaviour or actions and a

simple discussion may resolve the issue. Individuals are encouraged to attempt to discuss their concerns with the respondent.

5.1.2 Failing resolution through individual action or if you are not comfortable approaching the respondent, the complainant should report the issue to an appropriate person such as the supervisor, Department Head, or Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services.

5.1.3 Employees should keep a written record of any occurrences including:

- When it started?
- What happened (be specific)?
- Were there any witnesses?
- What was your response?

5.1.4 Maintain any documentation or materials that are relevant (e.g. letters, e-mails, notes, offensive pictures etc.).

5.2 Mediation (Optional for internal conflicts only)

5.2.1 Mediation will only be conducted with the consent of both the complainant and respondent.

5.2.2 Mediation is a voluntary process whereby the complainant and respondent meet with a mediator to determine whether a complaint can be resolved in a mutually satisfactory manner.

5.2.3 In order for mediation to take place, both the respondent and the complainant must agree on the selection of a mediator (the mediator may be internal or external).

5.2.4 If the parties resolve the matter through mediation, the settlement shall be reduced in writing, signed by both parties. If the mediated settlement requires action on the part of the County it shall require the approval of the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services.

5.3 Formal Resolution

A formal written complaint may be submitted to the Department Head or the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services via email or on the “Harassment and Discrimination Incident Report – Form 5.6A”. The complaint shall include:

- The complainant’s name and contact information
- The general nature of the complaint
- The name of the respondent
- The date and description of the incident(s)
- The names of any witnesses, if applicable.

Complaints shall be submitted no later than one year after the last incident of harassment / discrimination, unless there are compelling reasons why it was not practicable to bring it forward

sooner.

In accordance with 5.0 of this policy, management will initiate the formal resolution process in the absence of a formal written complaint, if appropriate in the circumstance.

5.3.1 Depending on the circumstances, the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services or designate shall appoint a sole investigator or investigation team. The investigator or the investigation team shall consist of one of the following:

- A member of Human Resources as the sole investigator.
- Where there is a complainant and the complainant is a unionized employee, and the union wishes to participate in the investigation process, a co-investigator will be selected by the union which represents the complainant and appointed to the team by the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services.
- An external investigator.

5.3.2 Where there is an allegation involving any member of the senior leadership team, the Chief Administrative Officer or designate shall engage an external investigator to conduct the investigation.

5.3.3 Upon receipt of the complaint and once the investigator(s) have been determined, the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services or designate will acknowledge the complaint in writing to both the complainant (if applicable) and the respondent as soon as practicable. The acknowledgment shall include: the names of the respondent and complainant (if applicable, the nature of the allegations, and a general overview of the investigative process.

5.3.4 A copy of this policy shall be provided to all investigators prior to commencing the investigation.

5.3.5 The investigation team shall meet prior to conducting any part of the investigation to review the complaint and to discuss the steps necessary to conduct the investigation and the expected time frame. The complainant (if applicable), the respondent, and any other persons who may be able to provide relevant information will be interviewed separately. The interviews shall be documented in writing and signed by the investigator(s) and interviewee to confirm the accuracy of the information recorded.

5.3.6 If the respondent is not an Oxford County employee, the investigator will make reasonable efforts to interview him or her.

5.3.7 Complainants and respondents are entitled to each have a support person attend meetings to support them if they desire. The role of the support person is not to speak or advocate on behalf of the individual.

5.3.8 All persons who are interviewed will be advised of the importance and responsibility of maintaining confidentiality in regards to the names of the parties, allegations and the investigation.

5.3.9 If thirty (30) days have elapsed and the investigation is still ongoing, the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services will contact the parties involved to keep

them informed of the progress of the investigation, recognizing that specific details of the investigation will remain confidential.

5.3.10 The investigation team or investigator, as the case may be, will determine if, on a balance of probabilities, the complaint is substantiated. Balance of probabilities means that, based on the evidence, it is more likely than not that the allegations took place. This may involve an assessment of the parties' credibility and/or information attained from the parties and witnesses.

5.3.11 The investigation team or investigator, as the case may be, shall prepare a written report summarizing the findings of the investigation. In the event the co-investigators do not agree on the findings, the report may reflect the differences in the findings.

5.3.12 The investigation team or investigator, as the case may be, shall strive to have the investigation completed within ninety (90) days of the filing of the formal complaint and submit the same to the Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services or designate. This time frame may be extended where circumstances warrant (i.e. illness, complex investigation).

5.3.13 The Director of Human Resources and Corporate Services or designate will provide the complainant (if applicable) and respondent with a written summary of the results of the investigation, following the receipt of the investigation report.

5.3.14 The results will be communicated in writing within ten (10) calendar days of the investigation being concluded.

6.0 Corrective Action and/or Disciplinary Action

6.1 Where there is a finding of discrimination and/or harassment, the County shall determine what corrective action and/or disciplinary action is to be taken. Such action may include, but is not limited to, counselling, education/training, suspension without pay, demotion, or termination of employment. A record of such action shall be placed in the respondent's personnel file.

6.2 The County will ensure that any corrective action taken will be communicated to the complainant and the respondent. The amount of information provided about the corrective action will depend on the circumstances, but must indicate what steps have been taken or will be taken to prevent a similar incident.

6.3 Where the complaint has not been substantiated, no reference of the incident will be placed in either the complainant or the respondent's personnel file.

7.0 Record Keeping

Oxford County will keep records of all complaints and reported incidents of workplace harassment and/or discrimination including:

- A copy of the complaint or details about the incident;
- A record of the investigation including notes;
- Copy of witness statements, if taken;
- A copy of the investigation report, if any;

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- A copy of the results of the investigation that were provided to the complainant and the respondent; and
- A copy of any corrective action taken to address the complaint or incident of workplace harassment and/or discrimination.

8.0 Confidentiality

The administration of this policy will be in accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.* Confidentiality of information obtained during the investigation will be maintained to the extent possible, subject to the County's obligation to investigate the complaint and take appropriate corrective and/or disciplinary action, or is otherwise required by law.

9.0 Reprisals Prohibited

Reprisal or retaliation against a person who has filed a complaint, participated in an investigation, provided representation, advised an employee or provided witness information in good faith and in accordance with this policy is prohibited. Reprisal/retaliation may include, but is not limited to, unwarranted discipline, dismissal, suspension, intimidation, or coercion. An individual who has been found to have engaged in reprisal/retaliation may be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.

10.0 False and Frivolous Complaints Prohibited

No individual shall file a complaint with malicious intent or in bad faith. The filing of such a complaint is regarded as a serious offence and will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal, in the case of an employee.

11.0 Interim Measure

In certain situations, such as where the safety of an individual may be at risk, it may be necessary to take immediate measures to address the circumstances. Such interim measures may include relocating the respondent or placing him/her on a non-disciplinary suspension with pay, pending the outcome of the investigation. The implementation of interim measures may mean that certain aspects of this policy, including confidentiality, will be set aside.

12.0 Criminal Proceedings

Where criminal proceedings are initiated against the respondent based on the allegations in a complaint of harassment or discrimination that fall within the scope of this policy, the County will conduct its own independent investigation, if possible, into the allegations and make its own determination in accordance with this policy.

13.0 Non-employee Related Complaints

Discriminatory, harassing and threatening behaviour by clients and the public will not be

tolerated. Where it is determined that action shall be taken against an individual who is not an employee of Oxford County, the County will take such corrective action as is reasonable in the circumstances and permitted by law to ensure that the behaviour stops. County departments may refer to section 11.0 Service Restrictions & Limitations in Policy 7.10 – Workplace Violence Prevention for additional actions that may be taken where inappropriate behaviours or actions warrant mitigation.

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REFERENCE POLICY:	7.17	REVISED:	June 2022

Dress Code

POLICY

To provide guidance for employees regarding standards of dress to project an image of professionalism while recognizing that there are also times when more casual attire is appropriate or required.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Employees are expected to use good judgement and professional taste. Courtesy to coworkers and your professional image to customers should be considered when assessing whether your attire is appropriate.

2.0 Clothing must be neat and clean. Clothing which is immodest, excessively worn, tattered or torn is not appropriate.

3.0 Oxford County takes pride in celebrating the diversity of its employees and acknowledges that dress code related accommodations may be required by employees based on their diverse sociocultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds, age and accessibility needs, and preferred gender expressions.

4.0 Employees are encouraged to “dress for their day” and business/work circumstances will dictate when formal or casual wear is more appropriate. Employees who work within an office or with the public typically wear business casual wear; however, more casual attire, such as jeans, may be worn on Fridays or if a particular work situation dictates.

5.0 Employees who work “in the field” or outdoors will dress appropriate to their tasks, work environment and weather conditions, while complying with applicable occupational health and safety requirements. Footwear will be constructed of durable material, have a closed heel and toe, with good arch support and a non-slip flexible sole. Refer to Policy 7.17 – Personal Protective Equipment and Clothing for specific health and safety apparel requirements

6.0 The interpretation of this policy is subject to supervisory discretion. If it is determined that the employee is inappropriately dressed, the employee may be sent home and required to return to work in acceptable attire. Time away from work in order to change clothing may be considered to be unpaid personal time off.

7.0 Where appropriate, individual departments, or divisions within a department, may have supplementary dress code policy requirements provided that they adhere to the purpose and intent of this policy. Employees that are in positions that require the wearing of

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uniforms must adhere to the department or division uniform requirements

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REFERENCE POLICY:		REVISED:	December 10, 2019 November 2025

Performance Management

POLICY

Performance management is a critical leadership responsibility and is an ongoing process that involves planning, developing, coaching, providing feedback and evaluating employee performance. Through regular, objective feedback, leaders coach and support employees in their personal and professional growth and help them achieve personal, division, department and organization goals and expectations. Performance management is not simply an annual event. Leaders are continually expected to collaborate with staff to set clear expectations and goals, provide ongoing monitoring and coaching, offer feedback, support development, and recognize achievements.

The goals of the County's performance management framework are:

- To help ensure that the quality and quantity of work performed by employees best meets the County's expectations;
- Foster regular, open, and honest conversations between leaders and employees to build trust, strengthen relationships, and support ongoing feedback;
- To offer the leader and employee the opportunity to develop a set of goals and expectations that are aligned with department and organizational objectives;
- To provide the opportunity for the supervisor and employee to reflect on the employee's past performance and future development; and
- To provide supporting documentation for pay decisions, promotions, transfers, complaints, disciplinary actions, and terminations.

PROCEDURE

The procedure for each department will contain, as a minimum, the following general steps:

1.0 Every employee who is hired into a position at the County serves a probation period that is outlined in their non-union manual, collective agreement or employment offer. Every employee meets with their supervisor at least once during the probation period and again near the conclusion of the probation period; however, the leader may establish more regular check in meetings.

2.0 Following successful completion of the probationary period, leaders meet with employees annually to complete the Performance and Development Check-in Tool. Departments can work with human resources to develop job specific forms to meet any

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Ministry or position requirements.

3.0 During the annual performance and development check-in the leader and employee will also review the employee's job profile to ensure it remains accurate. If the position has multiple incumbents, all incumbents should be given the opportunity to review the job profile. The leader is to obtain second level approval and forward any necessary changes to Human Resources. Once the job profile has been updated, Human Resources will send a copy back to the leader and employee.

4.0 Employees who did not meet performance expectations may be subject to one or more of the following: be ineligible for their annual grid increase, have their grid increase delayed, have a follow up performance check-in meeting at a later date determined by their leader, and/or be placed on a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP). For unionized employees pay increases are in accordance with their collective agreement; however, unionized employees who did not meet performance expectations may have a follow up performance check-in meeting at a later date or be placed on a PIP. Human Resources should be consulted prior to placing any employee on a PIP or delaying a grid increase.

7.0 The County will accommodate the needs of employees who have disabilities in the implementation of this process, and will consult individual accommodation plan(s) where necessary.

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REFERENCE POLICY:	5.8	REVISED:	September 11, 2019

Progressive Discipline

POLICY

Oxford County encourages and supports an effective and productive work environment to set the stage for employee success and ultimately achieve organizational objectives. Oxford County commits to providing appropriate direction and resources to employees, monitoring and recognizing good performance and addressing situations where employees' performance or behaviour is unacceptable.

DEFINITIONS

Management Staff Refers to a position that has responsibility for staff supervision, and therefore able to apply discipline.

Misconduct Generally refers to behaviour that an employee should have known is not appropriate. It would involve either an inappropriate action taken by an employee or a failure to act appropriately. While misconduct might be wilful, intention is not a necessary component. Negligence can be considered misconduct.

Performance Counselling A session or a meeting between the employee and manager to communicate standards and/or expectations in the workplace. Performance counselling is not discipline but a process to ensure that the employee realizes what the expected standards are, the need to improve, the steps that must be taken and the timeframe for improvement.

Progressive Discipline An instructive process structured to reinforce the expected standards with respect to workplace behaviour and to deter inappropriate conduct.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1.0 Responsibilities of Employees

1.1 Be aware of standards including, but not limited to, applicable legislation, County policies and procedures, departmental/divisional policies and procedures, and expectations of management.

1.2 Advise management staff if they are having difficulty carrying out their duties or if they do

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not have the proper resources to do so.

1.3 Be aware of the consequences of unacceptable conduct as outlined in this policy.

1.4 Participate in investigations related to potential misconduct.

1.5 Inform management staff if there are considerations under the Ontario Human Rights Code that may impact their performance which need to be discussed.

2.0 Responsibilities of Management Staff

2.1 Provide appropriate direction and resources to employees.

2.2 Ensure that employees' are provided with clear expectations and standards including, but not limited to, applicable legislation, County policies and procedures, departmental/divisional policies and procedures.

2.3 Complete performance appraisals as per policy 5.8 Performance Management.

2.4 Address misconduct in a timely manner, with the understanding that employee work schedules and arranging union representation, as applicable, may cause delays.

2.5 Consult with human resources before progressing to a suspension, or sooner if management would like support and/or advice at any step in the process.

2.6 Ensure employees' are aware that union representation is encouraged and/or arranged for as applicable.

2.7 Ensure relevant documentation is forwarded to human resources, to be saved in the employee's file.

3.0 Responsibilities of Human Resources

3.1 Support management staff with their responsibilities under this policy.

3.2 Assist or lead investigations into misconduct, as necessary.

3.3 Ensure relevant documentation is saved in employee files.

3.4 Ensure fair and consistent application of this policy across the organization.

PROCEDURE

4.0 Progressive Discipline Process

4.1 Discipline usually progresses as follows:

- Verbal warning
- Written warning
- Period(s) of suspension without pay
- Termination

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4.2 Where a collective agreement outlines a different progression of discipline or is inconsistent with any sections of this policy, the collective agreement shall supersede.

4.3 The progression of discipline may alter depending on the nature and circumstances of the misconduct. Steps may be repeated or skipped depending on the circumstance. An employee may face severe disciplinary action, up to and including termination, if the misconduct warrants it, even if there is no past disciplinary record.

4.4 Performance counselling should take place when, through the investigation into the misconduct, it is revealed that there is a genuine reason for the employee not being aware of the standards or expectations. Performance counselling should not be applied when an employee is aware, or ought to have been aware, of the standards and expectations.

4.5 Where there is concern about possible misconduct by an employee, an investigation will be conducted, gathering information from all sources to determine if discipline is warranted. The employee shall be given an opportunity to explain their reason for the misconduct, which may be requested in writing.

4.6 Management may seek assistance from human resources or another member of management as necessary during the course of the investigation.

4.7 Before deciding whether or not to apply progressive discipline and if so, what level of discipline, management shall give consideration to the following:

4.5.1 The information gathered during the investigation
4.5.2 The severity of the misconduct
4.5.3 The explanation provided by the employee regarding the misconduct
4.5.4 Whether or not the misconduct was intentional
4.5.5 Whether or not the employee is accepting responsibility for their actions
4.5.6 Whether or not the misconduct is an isolated incident
4.5.7 The employee's past disciplinary record (taking into account collective agreement timeframes as applicable). If management is unaware of the employee's past disciplinary record, human resources should be contacted to provide such information.

4.8 If management concludes that disciplinary action is required, the employee, union, as applicable, and human resources are to be notified and management shall clearly articulate to the employee in writing:

4.6.1 The misconduct that was confirmed during the course of the investigation

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4.6.2 The level of discipline being imposed
4.6.3 The behavior and expectations that are required in the future
4.6.4 Where possible and appropriate to the circumstance, offer support to the employee in improving performance or avoiding misconduct in the future
4.6.5 That repeated occurrences may lead to further discipline, up to and including termination of employment

4.9 The employee, union and human resources shall be provided a copy of any disciplinary document that is to be saved in the employee's file. An employee has the right to respond in writing to any discipline imposed and such response will be saved in the employee's file.

4.10 The Director of Human Resources should be contacted prior to imposing discipline when severe disciplinary action is being contemplated.

5.0 Non-disciplinary Suspension with Pay or Reassignment – Pending Investigation

5.1 In the event that an employee is placed on a non-disciplinary suspension with pay or reassigned pending the results of an investigation, the employee will be notified of the decision, a stated timeline for the investigation and the actions that predicated the decision. Should the investigation not be completed during the stated timeline, the employer may extend the suspension or reassignment, as necessary. This form of suspension or reassignment is not disciplinary but is intended to allow the employer to examine the issues thoroughly and to determine appropriate action.

5.2 An employee on a suspension with pay must ensure they are available to meet with the employer during the course of the investigation.

5.3 An employee on a suspension with pay should not have contact with anyone from the County other than management, human resources and their union representative, if applicable.

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REFERENCE POLICY:	5.2, 5.11, 5.15	REVISED:	November 10, 2010

Nepotism Policy

POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to avoid conflicts of interest by providing direction regarding hiring and promoting relatives of current employees and members of County Council.

DEFINITIONS

Relative means:

(a) a spouse as defined below;
(b) children and grandchildren, including step children and step grandchildren;
(c) sons-in-law and daughters-in-law;
(d) parents and grandparents, including step parents and step grandparents.
(e) brothers, sisters, step brothers and step sisters
(f) mothers and fathers in law; and,
(g) brothers and sisters in law.

Spouse means a person,

(a) to whom the person is married, or

(b) with whom the person is living outside marriage in a conjugal relationship, if the two persons,

(i) have cohabited for at least one year,

(ii) are together the parents of a child, or

(iii) have together entered into a cohabitation agreement under section 53 of the *Family Law Act*; (“conjoint”)

PROCEDURE

1.0 Relatives of County Employees and Relatives of Members of County Council may only be hired by the County if each of the following conditions is met:

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1.1 the hiring of the relative will not result in the situation where an employee will be the direct supervisor of a relative or the situation where the employee will be the functional supervisor of a relative;
1.2 an application has been received in the normal manner and the standard recruitment process was followed;
1.3 the candidate to be hired is, in the opinion of the interviewers, the best qualified with respect to the requirements of the position;
1.4 there was no undue influence exerted on the interviewers;
1.5 no potential conflicts or other difficulties appear to exist;
1.6 a relative of the candidate to be hired did not take part in the recruitment process.

2.0 In the event that a conflict with this policy is created through marriage or promotion, a review will be undertaken by Human Resources staff and such review will seek to find a solution that is consistent with:

2.1 the purpose of this policy;
2.2 relevant provisions of the Human Rights Code;
2.3 acceptable to the parties concerned.

3.0 Any employee-relative conflicts in existence prior to the date of original approval of November 22, 2000 will be exempted. Any Council-related conflicts in existence prior to the revised date of March 24, 2004 will be exempted.

I have read and understand the County of Oxford Nepotism Policy. I do not have any conflict of interest with 1.1 of this policy. Any false representation with regard to this policy will be grounds for termination of employment.

Date _____ Signature _____

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REFERENCE POLICY:		REVISED:	October 15, 2018

Alcohol and Drug Impairment in the Workplace

POLICY

Oxford County is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its employees and the community that it serves. It is recognized that the use of alcohol and drugs while at work or carrying out work duties can pose a significant risk to safety and work performance. The purpose of this policy is to ensure all employees understand their obligations to report to work fit for duty and not impaired by the use of alcohol and/or drugs.

DEFINITIONS

alcohol — any beverage which contains ethyl alcohol, including beer, wine, liqueurs, and spirits. Very low alcohol products (beer with 0.5% alcohol by volume) are included in this definition.

drugs — any substance that may if present in the body, have a psychoactive and/or physiological effect and may adversely affect work performance and/or fitness to work safely including drugs prohibited by law (e.g. cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines and others), recreational drugs (e.g. cannabis) and medications.

fit for duty — means being able to safely and productively perform assigned work duties without any limitations caused by the effects of alcohol, drugs, medication and/or any other substance.

impairment — means a functional limitation resulting from the use of alcohol and/or drugs which negatively affects the employee's ability to carry out the requirements of the job in a safe and productive manner.

medication — drugs which have been legally obtained with a physician's prescription and/or are obtained over-the-counter and are being used for the purposes for which they were prescribed or manufactured.

safety sensitive position — any position in which impairment could result in a direct and significant risk of injury to the employee, a co-worker and/or a threat to public safety.

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PROCEDURE

Employers are required to take all reasonable precautions to protect the health & safety of employees and to provide safe work environments. Employees have a duty to work safely and not to endanger themselves or others. An employee impaired by alcohol or drugs can pose a significant safety risk to themselves, their co-workers and the public. Therefore Oxford County has adopted a zero tolerance policy as a major component of its overall safety program which minimizes the risks associated with our operations in order to ensure a safe, healthy and productive workplace. Zero tolerance includes the County's proactive approach to prevention and early identification of potential problem situations involving the misuse of drugs and alcohol.

The County prohibits the unlawful use, manufacture, dispensation, possession, purchase, sale or distribution of illegal drugs, prescription drugs or alcohol on County property, in County equipment/vehicles, on County time or at County events.

The County recognizes that the use of drugs or alcohol may, for some employees, constitute a disability within the meaning of applicable human rights legislation. The County will accommodate, to the point of undue hardship, the limitations and restrictions of any employee which arises from a drug or alcohol dependency. The application of this policy to such employees will be modified accordingly.

This policy outlines the expectations for all employees regarding their obligation to report to work fit for duty and provides guidance to supervisory staff in managing alcohol and drug related issues. Management has the authority and discretion to remove from duty any employee where it is reasonably believed they are in violation of the policy pending the results of an investigation.

This policy applies to all employees when they are performing job duties or conducting business on behalf of Oxford County both on and off County property.

1.0 Responsibilities of Employer and Supervisors

1.1 Ensure all employees are aware of the requirements of this policy and provide supervisory staff the resources and support to manage it.

1.2 Enforce this policy so that the use of alcohol and drugs by employees does not negatively impact workplace and community safety and work performance.

1.3 Investigate promptly when a concern is raised regarding an employee's fitness for duty. Do not perpetuate any stigma regarding substance use or pass any moral judgment. Focus on the safety or performance issues.

1.4 Initiate disciplinary action when an employee has been found to have violated this policy. Consult with the Department Head and the Director of Human Resources

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or designate.

1.5 Provide support to employees that have voluntarily disclosed an alcohol or drug dependency. Please refer to Temporary Accommodation Policy 5.44. Ensure the employee is provided information on and encouraged to contact the Employee & Family Assistance Program (EFAP), their family physician or appropriate community services for assistance. Recognize that alcohol and substance dependency are defined as disabilities by the Ontario Human Rights Commission and are subject to the same rights of accommodation as other protected grounds.

1.6 Take measures to ensure the confidentiality of all personal information obtained through the application of this policy and share only as reasonably required.

2.0 Responsibilities of Employees

2.1 Do not report to work while impaired by alcohol or drugs.

2.2 Do not consume alcohol, recreational drugs or misuse prescription and over-the-counter medications while at the workplace or while conducting work on behalf of the County.

2.3 Do not possess, distribute, offer or sell illicit drugs, drug paraphernalia, recreational drugs or alcohol while at the workplace or while conducting work on behalf of the County.

2.4 Employees contacted to report to work for an emergency or other unscheduled reason must not accept a work assignment if they have reason to believe they are not fit for duty.

2.5 Ensure fit for duty status when scheduled to be on-call and are expected to be available to attend the workplace, provide sound advice and/or respond to carry out County business.

2.6 Report to your supervisor anytime there is a concern about a co-workers fitness for duty or breach of this policy.

2.7 Report to your supervisor the personal use of any medication that may impair the ability to perform the job in a safe manner. Employees have a responsibility to manage potential impairments while in the workplace as a result of legitimate use of medications in consultation with their personal health care provider. The County may require additional medical documentation to ensure workplace health & safety is not compromised.

2.8 Make accommodation needs known to your supervisor or Human Resources for alcohol and drug dependency.

2.9 Employees concerned about or experiencing alcohol and drug-related problems are encouraged to seek assistance from the Employee & Family Assistance Program (EFAP), their family physician or appropriate community services before job performance is affected and violations of this policy occur.

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3.0 Suspected Impairment and Investigation

3.1 Any individual who has a reasonable belief that an employee is in violation of this policy shall report the circumstances immediately to their supervisor. Where the employee believed to be in violation of this policy is a supervisor, the report shall be made to the Department Head.

3.2 The supervisor shall investigate promptly when a concern is raised regarding an employee's fitness for duty. The following approach shall be taken:

3.2.1 Discretely escort the employee to a private area to discuss the concern.

3.2.2 Ask another supervisor to serve as a reliable witness and notify union representation, if applicable.

3.2.3 State the concerns relating to safety and performance to the employee and allow them to provide an explanation. The following factors shall be considered when determining reasonable grounds for suspecting impairment:

3.2.4.1 **Facts to indicate impairment –** is there a change in behaviour, abilities, actions or work performance? Is there a change in appearance including: slurred speech, unsteadiness, blood shot eyes or odours?

3.2.4.2 **Reliability –** are the facts reliable? Did the supervisor witness the employee's conduct or behaviours? Have others raised the issue? Are the witnesses known?

3.2.4.3 **Reasonableness** – can the facts and concerns be accurately explained and communicated? Is there a reasonable alternative explanation for the employee's conduct, behaviour or appearance?

3.2.4.4 **Timeliness –** were the concerns just raised or did it happen in the past? Is this a repeating or ongoing situation? Are facts clearly remembered?

3.2.4.5 **Documentation –** are the facts capable of documenting? Are the dates, times, locations and names of witnesses accurately documented?

3.2.5 Where the supervisor has a reasonable belief that a violation of the policy has occurred or the employee is unfit for duty, the employee shall be relieved of their duties until further investigation and a follow up meeting occurs.

3.2.6 Provide the employee with information regarding the Employee & Family Assistance Program (EFAP).

3.2.7 Arrange safe transportation for the employee home, do not allow them to drive if you suspect impairment.

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3.3 The supervisor responsible shall report all incidents to the Department Head and the Director of Human Resources or designate to discuss next steps and appropriate disciplinary action.

4.0 Alcohol and Drug Testing

4.1 Workplace alcohol and drug testing is permissible in some circumstances for employees in safety-sensitive positions or in high hazard workplaces including:

4.1.1 **Reasonable cause testing** – this testing may be required based upon specific observations of an employee's appearance, behaviour, speech, body odours, witness or admissions of use that gives rise to a reasonable belief that the employee is impaired by the use of drugs or alcohol.

4.1.2 **Post incident/accident testing** – this testing may be required if an employee is involved in a significant workplace accident, incident or near-miss. The determination to conduct post-incident/accident testing is made on a case-by-case basis depending on the circumstances and severity of the occurrence, the employee's behaviour, actions or omissions and the potential contribution to the incident.

4.1.3 **Return to work testing** – this testing may be required if an employee is returning to work after a previous violation of this policy and/or while obtaining treatment for substance dependency or addiction and as part of a rehabilitation monitoring agreement.

4.2 Supervisors shall consult with the Director of Human Resources or designate before requiring an employee to undergo alcohol or drug testing.

4.3 The following actions will be considered to be a violation of this policy:

- failure to report directly for a test;
- refusal to submit to a test;
- refusal to agree to the disclosure of test results to the County; or
- an attempt to tamper with a test sample.

5.0 Disciplinary Action

5.1 Violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action. The appropriate discipline in each case will be assessed in an individualized manner, taking into account all of the circumstances, including the nature of the policy violation and the particular situation. The County will make best efforts to ascertain whether an employee breaching this policy suffers from a drug or alcohol dependency and will comply with its obligations under applicable human rights legislation. When it has been determined an employee has put other employees, clients and/or the general public at risk due to their impairment, disciplinary action shall be appropriate to

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the circumstances and may include termination of employment.

5.2 Supervisors shall consult with the Director of Human Resources or designate before initiating disciplinary action for workplace alcohol and drug violations.

5.3 Law enforcement officials may be contacted if there is any unlawful alcohol or drug use at the workplace.

6.0 Impaired Driving Charges and Convictions

6.1 The following provisions apply to all employees operating a motor vehicle or a piece of equipment for or on behalf of the County.

6.1.1 Impaired Driving Charges

Any employee who has been charged with an impaired driving offence, including but not limited to, blowing over the legal Blood Alcohol Content (BAC), driving while impaired or refusing to provide a breath sample must inform the County as soon as reasonably possible, but by no later than the commencement of the employee's next scheduled shift.

A failure to report such charges to the County may result in discipline, up to and including termination.

6.1.2 Temporary Licence Suspension

An employee who has been issued an Administrative Drivers Licence Suspension must report it to their immediate supervisor prior to the commencement of their next scheduled shift. In any event, the employee shall not operate a County vehicle or piece of equipment, or perform any work on behalf of the County until cleared to do so by their manager/supervisor.

6.1.3 Conviction for Impaired Driving

A conviction for impaired driving or related *Criminal Code of Canada* driving convictions may be grounds for termination. Each situation will be fully investigated by the County and the County shall take such action that it deems appropriate in the circumstances.

7.0 Prevention

7.1 The County recognizes that in certain instances, alcohol and drug dependency may be considered a treatable illness and that early intervention improves the probability of a lasting recovery from dependency. The County will assist its

employees with problems of abuse, dependency, or addiction associated with alcohol or drugs, with an aim to preventing these problems. The County, through its EFAP, will provide access to treatment resources to its employees and will encourage employee participation in effective prevention and rehabilitation programs where appropriate.

7.2 No employee with a dependency or addiction will be disciplined or involuntarily terminated because of the employee's involvement in a rehabilitation effort or for voluntarily requesting rehabilitative help in overcoming the problem. Involvement in a rehabilitative effort or seeking rehabilitative help for an abuse, dependency or addiction problem after a significant incident or significant near miss has occurred, or after a demand is made for the employee to undergo testing for reasonable cause under this policy, will not prevent an employee from being disciplined or terminated. An employee's use of the EFAP or other rehabilitation efforts does not eliminate the requirement of meeting satisfactory performance levels or compliance with this policy.

8.0 Getting Help with a Substance Abuse Problem

8.1 To get help with a substance abuse problem, visit the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse web site at www.ccsa.ca for a list of treatment organizations in your area. You may also communicate with Homewood Health, the County's EFAP provider.

9.0 Contact

9.1 If you have questions regarding this policy, consult your supervisor for further guidance.

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PAGE:	1 of 3	DATE:	December 14, 2005
REFERENCE POLICY:		REVISED:	January 1, 2019

Leaves of Absence

POLICY

All County of Oxford employees are entitled to the job-protected leaves as defined in the Employment Standards Act. Employees may also be entitled to unpaid leaves of absence for any other reason as outlined in their Collective Agreement or Non-Union Manual.

DEFINITIONS

Pregnancy Leave	Up to 17 weeks of job-protected time off work, provided the baby's expected due date is at least 13 weeks after the date an employee started employment.
Parental Leave	New parents (e.g., birth parent, adopting parent, person in a relationship with a parent of a child with plans to treat the child as their own) employees have the right to take job-protected time off work once a child is born or first comes into their care, provided they have been employed for at least 13 weeks before the start of the leave.
Sick, Family Responsibility & Bereavement Leave	Unpaid, job-protected time off work – 3 days for personal illness, 3 days for family related illness, and 2 days for the death of a prescribed individual.
Family Caregiver Leave	Unpaid, job-protected time off work to provide care or support to specified family members who have a serious medical condition.
Family Medical Leave	Unpaid, job-protected time off work to provide care or support to certain specified individuals who have a serious medical condition with a significant risk of dying within 26 weeks.
Critical Illness Leave	Unpaid, job-protected time off work to provide care or support to a critically ill minor child or adult who is a family member, provided an employee has been employed for at least six consecutive months.
Organ Donor Leave	Unpaid, job-protected leave for the purpose of undergoing surgery to donate an organ.
Child Death Leave	Available to employees whose child dies or disappears and it is probable, considering the circumstances that it resulted from a crime, provided the employee has been employed for at least six consecutive months.

Crime-related Child Disappearance Leave	Available to employees whose child disappears and it is probable, considering the circumstances that it resulted from a crime, provided the employee has been employed for at least six consecutive months.
Domestic or Sexual Violence Leave	Job-protected leave If an employee or an employee's child has experienced or been threatened with domestic or sexual violence, provided the employee has been employed for at least 13 weeks before the start of the leave.
Reservist Leave	Unpaid, job-protected leave for employees who are military reservists and who are deployed to an international operation or to an operation within Canada that is or will be providing assistance in dealing with an emergency or its aftermath (including search and rescue operations).

PROCEDURES

1.0 General

1.1 To be eligible for the leaves defined above, employees must have been employed with the County for the time frame specified in the Employment Standards Act.

1.2 Employees may be asked to provide proof of eligibility for any leave which has been requested, in accordance with the Employment Standards Act.

1.3 An employee may be entitled to more than one of these leaves for the same event. Each leave is separate and the right to each leave is independent of any right an employee may have to the other leave(s).

1.4 Employees continue to earn seniority and credit for length of service while on leave.

1.5 The employer will continue to pay employer contributions into benefit plans. If the employee is responsible to pay a percentage of benefit premiums, they are to make arrangements with Human Resources to pay their share during the period of leave.

1.6 On return from leave, employees will be reinstated to their former position, if it still exists, or to a comparable position if it no longer exists.

1.7 At any time, should a collective agreement or non-union employees manual provide a greater right or benefit than outlined in this policy, the collective agreement or non-union manual will supersede.

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1.8 Additional information regarding the legislative provisions of each leave of absence can be found on the Ministry of Labour website: https://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/es/pubs/brochures/br_leaves.php

2.0 Responsibilities of Employees

2.1 Employees eligible to take a leave outlined above, must provide their supervisor with the appropriate notice as outlined in the Employment Standards Act.

2.2 Employees are expected to maintain communication with their supervisor throughout the period of leave, as reasonable in the circumstances. For example, employees are expected to maintain communication regarding the length of their leave, covering their workload where applicable, etc.

3.0 Responsibilities of Supervisors

3.1 The supervisor is to notify Payroll and Human Resources of the last day in which the employee should be paid by the County and the day in which the employee will return to work from the leave.

3.2 The supervisor should notify Information Technology (IT) and Facilities for leaves of absence that are for a longer time frame and therefore require access being disabled during the period of leave.

4.0 Responsibilities of Payroll

4.1 Once notified of the employee's last paid day, Payroll completes a Record of Employment (ROE), and the employee can retrieve the ROE electronically though Service Canada.

4.2 Payroll will notify OMERS of any employee that has been absent from work in accordance with the requirements of the OMERS pension plan.

GENERAL POLICY MANUAL

SECTION:	Personnel	APPROVED BY:	County Council
NUMBER:	5.29	SIGNATURE:	Original signed by: Michael Duben
PAGE:	1 of 2	DATE:	September 11, 2002
REFERENCE POLICY:	2.0	REVISED:	March 2022

Acting Pay – Non-Union Management

POLICY

To provide a framework for the appointment and compensation of an employee elevated to acting status within the non-union management staff as a result of an extended absence or vacancy.

DEFINITIONS

Anniversary Date The date in which an employee commences a position and is eligible for an annual grid increase until they reach job rate of their salary band. An employees' anniversary date may be different than their hire date, which is the date an employee originally commenced employment at the County.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Once a vacancy or an extended absence of greater than 3 consecutive weeks, is identified, the Director or designate will complete the required form and obtain appropriate approvals to initiate the acting assignment. The CAO and Department Director must approve acting assignments for Manager level positions and above, and the Department Director must approve all other acting assignments.

2.0 Extended absences or vacancies include: illness, retirement/resignation, leave of absence, extended vacation, promotion or termination and the position is not made redundant. Other unique circumstances that may arise are subject to CAO discretion and approval.

3.0 The employee will be placed on a step within the salary range of the acting position, which provides a minimum 5% increase, not to exceed the job rate of the salary range. When the duration is known to last in excess of 3 consecutive weeks, acting pay will be effective the date the employee commenced the acting position. When the duration is unknown, the acting pay will be effective upon completion of 3 consecutive weeks, retroactive to the day the acting position commenced.

4.0 Should an employee who has been in an acting capacity, be the successful candidate for the permanent position, their anniversary date for the position shall be the date they commenced the acting position.

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SECTION:	Personnel	APPROVED BY:	County Council
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PAGE:	2 of 2	DATE:	September 11, 2002
REFERENCE POLICY:	2.0	REVISED:	March 2022

5.0 Employees acting in excess of one continuous calendar year will be eligible for a grid increase effective the anniversary date of the commencement of the acting assignment.

6.0 Staff who are covering for a higher level position for durations of less than 3 calendar weeks should be referred to as “designate”.

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SECTION:	Personnel	APPROVED BY:	County Council
NUMBER:	5.30	SIGNATURE:	Original signed by: Ben Addley, CAO
PAGE:	1 of 3	DATE:	March 26, 2003
REFERENCE POLICY:	5.40	REVIEWED:	March 12, 2019 March 11, 2026

Overtime – Non-Union Employees

POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to define overtime eligibility and compensation for non-union employees.

Overtime / lieu time under this policy is not to be confused with the banking of hours option under the flexible work arrangement program, in which employees must apply for and be approved to participate in.

DEFINITIONS

Overtime	Hours worked in excess of a department's full-time equivalent hours of work per week (35, 40 or 42.5 hours) and in accordance with the policy provisions.
Senior Leadership Team	CAO, Directors
Other than Senior Leadership Team	All non-union employees together with supervisory staff up to and including Senior Managers except those noted under the Senior Leadership Team definition.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Employees should first consider their ability to flex their day and/or week when overtime is required. Overtime must be pre-approved otherwise it is not eligible for consideration under this policy, except in emergency situations.

2.0 Overtime applies after an employee has worked more than one-half (1/2) hour beyond the department's full-time equivalent hours of work per week and is to be accumulated in one-half (1/2) hour increments.

3.0 In certain circumstances as defined by the Employment Standards Act, the employer can require that an employee work overtime. In such circumstances, Human Resources

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should be consulted.

4.0 The following circumstances are eligible for overtime consideration: meetings, hearings, emergency call-in, and any other approved overtime work.

As noted above, flexing daily or weekly hours should be considered before banking overtime hours (i.e. working 3 additional hours on Tuesday to attend an evening meeting, and leaving early on Friday or beginning work at noon and ending at 8:00 p.m.).

The following circumstances are not eligible for overtime consideration: educational/training sessions, seminars, conferences, travel time, stand-by. Normal workload requirements should not typically necessitate regular and ongoing overtime. However, extenuating circumstances—such as staff vacancies or time-sensitive projects—may require overtime and will be considered for supervisor approval on a case-by-case basis. Leaders should regularly review workload demands and re-prioritize work as needed.

5.0 Compensation for overtime worked is typically time in lieu of pay. Every effort should be made to take time off in lieu within the same calendar year it is earned. All overtime accumulated as of December 1st in each year shall be paid on the last pay prior to Christmas each year, except where supervisory approval to carry such accumulated time over to the following year has been received.

An exception is time worked by employees who have a direct bearing on public safety or the overtime is in response to a requirement to meet provincial legislation, in which case, with the approval of a member of the senior leadership team, the employee can choose to be paid instead of given time in lieu.

For employees defined as “Other than Senior Leadership Team”, overtime hours worked to a maximum of 44 hours per week is compensated at straight time. Overtime worked beyond 44 hours per week is compensated at time and one-half.

For members of the senior leadership team, overtime is compensated through the provision of 35 hours of time in lieu per calendar year.

The preceding provisions regarding compensation for overtime can be altered by direction of the Chief Administrative Officer under exceptional circumstances.

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6.0 The County's scheduling software must be used to track overtime accumulation and use. The employee's supervisor or designate shall approve overtime accumulation.

7.0 The employee and immediate supervisor must mutually agree upon when the accumulated overtime is to be taken.

8.0 Upon termination of employment outstanding approved overtime is paid out in accordance with the Employment Standards Act.

9.0 In general, an employee is not to be scheduled for more than 60 hours per week. Certain exceptions are allowed under the Employment Standards Act; however, Human Resources should be consulted prior to working beyond 60 hours per week.

10.0 Employment Standards legislation also has provisions for employees who are scheduled to work more than 48 hours in a week. Human Resources should be consulted in these circumstances also.

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PAGE:	Page 1 of 2	DATE:	October 28, 2024
REFERENCE POLICY:		REVISED:	December 9, 2014 May 13, 2009

Driver's Licences

POLICY

Oxford County shall check the driver's licences and confirm the driving record of employees who are required to drive County owned/leased vehicles and equipment to ensure proper licensing in compliance with the Ontario Highway Traffic Act and insurance requirements.

DEFINITIONS

statement of driving record — This is a 3-year snapshot of a driver's history. It contains the driver's name, licence number, class, expiry date, conditions/restrictions, driver's Ontario *Highway Traffic Act* and *Criminal Code of Canada* convictions, suspensions and reinstatements over the past 3 years as well as conviction dates, earliest licensed date available, demerit point total and medical due date for commercial drivers.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Responsibilities of Employer and Supervisors

1.1 Human Resources shall ensure that employees have the proper driver's licence, endorsements and an acceptable driving record and advise the department, division or office prior to hiring and authorizing the use of County owned/leased vehicles and/or equipment.

1.2 Supervisors shall report to the department head and Human Resources any changes relating to an employee's driver's licence status and/or driving privileges.

1.3 Supervisors shall ensure that all employees adhere to this policy and deal promptly with non-compliance issues.

2.0 Responsibilities of Employees

2.1 Always operate vehicles and equipment in a safe manner in compliance with Oxford County policies, the Ontario Highway Traffic Act and associated regulations.

2.2 Immediately report to the immediate supervisor any changes relating to their driver's licence status and/or driving privileges.2.3 Under no circumstances shall an employee with a suspended driver's licence operate a County

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owned/leased vehicle or equipment deemed by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and/or the Oxford County to require a driver's licence.

3.0 New Hire Driver Licence Check Procedure

3.1 Human Resources shall have job candidates complete a *Driver's Licence Check Authorization – Form 5.35A* during the interview process for all positions that require the operation of County owned/leased vehicles and/or equipment deemed by the Ministry of Transportation and/or Oxford County to require a driver's licence.

3.2 Human Resources shall request a statement of driving record and ensure that job candidates have the proper driver's licence, endorsements and an acceptable driver record in consultation with the hiring supervisor prior to making an offer of employment.

4.0 Bi-annual Driver Licence Check Procedure

4.1 Human Resources shall perform bi-annual driver's licence checks on all employees who are authorized to operate County owned/leased vehicles and/or equipment.

4.2 Human Resources will inform the immediate supervisor of any employees who have accumulated six (6) or more demerit points. The immediate supervisor will discuss the record with the employee and encourage future improvement.

4.3 Human Resources will immediately contact the immediate supervisor and department head of any employees who have a suspended or conditional driver's licence or who have accumulated nine (9) or more demerit points and risk the Ontario Ministry of Transportation revoking their driving privileges. An interview will be arranged with the employee, the supervisor, a union representative (if applicable) and Human Resources to discuss their job-related driving requirements and employment status.

4.4 Additional drivers abstract checking may occur to verify an employee's driver's licence status and/or driving privileges where it is determined reasonable and necessary.

5.0 Confidentiality

This policy and all information collected in relation to this policy shall be in accordance with the Ontario Ministry of Transportation's Authorized Requestor Information Service Agreement (ARIS), the Ontario Highway Traffic Act and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

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REFERENCE POLICY:		REVISED:	May 26, 2015

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

DEFINITION

The County of Oxford has custody and control of confidential information that it must protect for commercial and legal reasons. Confidential information means:

- Personal Information1; that is recorded information about an identifiable individual, including:
  a) information relating to race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation or marital or family status of the individual,
  b) information relating to the education or the medical, psychiatric, psychological, criminal or employment history of the individual or information relating to financial transactions in which the individual has been involved,
  c) any identifying number, symbol or other particular assigned to the individual,
  d) the address, telephone number, fingerprints or blood type of the individual,
  e) the personal opinions or views of the individual except if they relate to another individual,
  f) correspondence sent to an institution by the individual that is implicitly or explicitly of a private or confidential nature, and replies to that correspondence that would reveal the contents of the original correspondence,
  g) the views or opinions of another individual about the individual, and
  h) the individual's name if it appears with other personal information relating to the individual or where the disclosure of the name would reveal other personal information about the individual;

- Personal Health Information2; that is identifying information about an individual in oral or recorded form, if the information,
  a) relates to the physical or mental health of the individual, including family medical history,
  b) relates to the provision of health care to the individual, including the identification of a person as a health care provider to the individual,
  c) relates to payments or eligibility for coverage for health care with respect to the individual,
  d) relates to the donation of any body part or bodily substance of the individual,
  e) is an individual's health card number, or
  f) identifies an individual's substitute decision-maker; and

1 Sec.2(1) of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
2 Sec.4(1) of the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*.

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- information about the County of Oxford's business that is not a matter of public record including
  a) information that would reveal the substance of deliberations of a meeting of Council or a committee of Council that is closed to the public;
  b) advice or recommendations of an officer or employee of the County;
  c) information that would interfere with a law enforcement matter;
  d) confidential information from other government bodies;
  e) confidential information supplied by third parties that could significantly prejudice their competitive position or that is protected by license or agreement;
  f) information that is subject to solicitor-client privilege; or
  g) any other information that would reasonably be excluded from access under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

PROCEDURE

1. Employees and volunteers will receive access to confidential information in the course of performing their duties and responsibilities. All employees and volunteers must respect the following rules regarding the treatment of confidential information:

   a) employees and volunteers must not access, collect, use or disclose confidential information unless it is required to perform their duties and responsibilities;

   b) employees and volunteers must not disclose (internally or externally) confidential information except with the consent of the individual employee/resident/client the information pertains to or as required by law;

   c) employees and volunteers must take reasonable steps to prevent unauthorized access to confidential information by others (for example not leaving resident medical charts in a public place);

   d) employees and volunteers must not take any files containing personal information about employees, residents, clients and volunteers out of the facility without express permission of their immediate supervisor or designate;

   e) employees and volunteers must report any breaches of confidentiality to their immediate supervisor or designate pursuant to the corporate Privacy Breach Protocol;

   f) employees and volunteers must not allow another person to use their user name or password to gain access to confidential information stored on a County computer; and

g) if an employee or volunteer is unsure if disclosure of or access to confidential information is permitted, he or she shall seek guidance from his or her supervisor.

2. The County of Oxford is subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* as well as the *Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004*. As representatives and agents of the County, employees and volunteers must comply with the County's obligations under these Acts and compliance shall continue even after the employment or volunteer relationship terminates. As such, all employees and volunteers of the County of Oxford shall sign the Confidentiality Acknowledgement Form 5.38A attached to and forming part of this policy.

3. Any violation of the above rules may result in termination of privileges, disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, legal action or any similar action as determined by the County of Oxford.

FORM 5.38A

CONFIDENTIALITY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I acknowledge that I have reviewed, understand and will remain current with updates of County of Oxford Confidentiality Policy No. 5.38. I understand that I must abide by its terms and that failure to do so may result in termination of privileges, disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, legal action or any similar action as determined by the County of Oxford. I further acknowledge and understand that compliance with this policy shall continue even after my employment or volunteer relationship terminates.

_____ _____

Name Date

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NUMBER:	5.40	SIGNATURE:	Original signed by Michael Duben, CAO
PAGE:	1 of 2	DATE:	October 12, 2016
REFERENCE POLICY:		REVISED:	July 2021

Flexible Work Arrangements

POLICY

The County of Oxford supports flexibility in employee work arrangements, scheduled hours of work, and/or work location, without compromising effective and efficient service delivery to the citizens of the County.

DEFINITIONS

Flexible Work Arrangements	Work arrangements that allow employees to have a more variable schedule and/or work location, while fulfilling the expectations of their position.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Flexible working arrangements provide employees and management with flexible options to the normal business day and work location while ensuring that business requirements are met in a safe, secure and timely basis. These approved arrangements, subject to the conditions in this policy, may be for the purpose of increasing productivity, meeting customer needs, to improve upon customer service or for the purpose of providing the flexibility to meet an employee's personal and family responsibilities.

2.0 In alignment with flexible work arrangements, the County also remains committed to evolving and adapting to changing needs of employees and members of the public. This may include working and providing services in a variety of formats, such as in-person, virtual and hybrid models, depending on the employee or customer need.

3.0 Duties, responsibilities, and employment status determine suitability for the various flexible work arrangements; therefore, not all employees and/or positions may be suitable for the work options outlined.

4.0 The Flexible Work Arrangement Handbook provides further details in regards to the options available and is intended to assist employees and management staff to understand each of the options and how to apply and administer these options.

5.0 The following provisions will apply to all flexible work arrangements:

- Flexible work arrangements are a privilege;

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- Organizational and operational requirements, as determined by management, will supersede any and all requests;
- The work habits, skills, abilities and performance level of employees will impact the decision to approve any request(s);
- No arrangements will be agreed to that contradict any applicable collective agreement;
- There can be no increased labour costs (i.e. paid overtime) or significant net operational costs as a result of the arrangement;
- Service delivery will continue to be seamless to all other parties, both internal and external;
- Job descriptions must not be altered as the result of any agreements; the nature and function of all affected positions must remain intact;
- Unless otherwise stated, annual sick time and vacation entitlement is based on your standard daily hours, prior to any Flexible Work Arrangements.

6.0 Employees may request any of the arrangements as outlined in the program. Other work arrangements not outlined in this program should be discussed and reviewed with Human Resources prior to implementation to ensure compliance with labour and contractual requirements.

7.0 Flexible Work Arrangements must be discussed and agreed upon with applicable management staff. Details of the arrangement will be documented in the Flexible Work Arrangement Agreement.

8.0 Any flexible work arrangement may be cancelled without notice; however, the supervisor will endeavour to provide reasonable notice where possible.

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Exit Interview

POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to recognize the importance of exit interviews in identifying reasons why employees leave the organization. The objective is to ensure that all employees have an opportunity to express their feelings, both positive and negative, towards their employment and that appropriate corrective action can be taken by Management, if deemed appropriate to do so.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Any employee who has completed at least 3 years of active service who voluntarily leaves their employment will be contacted by a third party company to complete an exit interview.

2.0 If deemed necessary, an exit interview can be requested by the CAO, Department Director, or Director of Human Resources where a departing employee has not completed at least 3 years of active service and/or the employee is transferring to another County department.

3.0 The results of the exit interview will be reviewed by the Director of Human Resources who will share the information with the Department Director and/or Chief Administrative Officer as deemed appropriate, with the intent being to address any problem areas and/or positive aspects identified by the employee.

4.0 The completed exit interview form will be saved in the departing employee's personnel file.

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Non-Union Job Evaluation and Salary Administration

POLICY

This policy is established to outline the objectives of Oxford County's non-union job evaluation system, and to provide the process to be followed regarding the evaluation of newly created and significantly changed positions within the County; as well as to outline the County's non-union salary administration processes.

DEFINITIONS

Appeal — The process through which incumbents can request a review of their job evaluation results within a specified time frame.

Incumbent — An individual who holds an employment position with the County.

Internal Equity — Refers to the pay relationships among non-union jobs internal to the organization, regardless of gender.

Factor — Factors and sub-factors make up the job evaluation plan, and encompass skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions. Positions are evaluated on the basis of these factors and sub-factors.

Grade — The grade is determined by the total number of points a position receives through the evaluation. The position is placed within the County's non-union salary structure according to grade.

Job Profile — A document consisting of the principal responsibilities, minimum qualifications and working conditions of a position, and is used as a basis for the preliminary rating of the position. It shall not be construed to be a detailed description of all requirements inherent to the position.

Job Evaluation — The process of analyzing the content of a position based on a variety of factors necessary to fulfil the requirements of the position, and the rating of the position by use of a job evaluation plan to determine the relationship of the position to other positions covered under the job evaluation system.

Job Evaluation Plan	The document that contains the basic guide for analyzing and evaluating the content of a position, based on a variety of factors as previously defined.
Job Evaluation Questionnaire	A document consisting of questions, used to gather the detailed information about a job and used as the primary source of information for the final rating of the position when an incumbent or applicable management appeals a job evaluation.
Job Rate	The highest salary rate of a grade within the non-union salary grid.
Job Rating	The selection of degree levels and definitions for each factor, which establishes a rating for a position in accordance with the job evaluation plan, which becomes the official rating for the position.
Pay Equity	"Equal pay for work of equal value". The *Pay Equity Act* requires that jobs be evaluated and work mostly or traditionally done by women, be compared to work mostly or traditionally done by men.
Points	Each factor within the job evaluation plan has points associated with the various degree levels. The total points of the evaluation determine which grade is assigned to a position.
Green-Circled	A wage rate an employee receives that is in excess of the job rate that has been established for the position in accordance with the job evaluation system. An employee who is considered green circled is only eligible for any approved cost of living increases, until the salary range for their evaluated grade catches up to their salary, at which point the “green circle” is removed and the employee progresses as normal for any future grid increases.
Significantly Changed Position	A position that experiences a change in duties and/or responsibilities that has the potential to impact one or more job evaluation ratings.

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PROCEDURES

1.0 Objectives of the Non-Union Job Evaluation System

1.1 The evaluation of positions serves to:

1.1.1 Group positions having relatively equal point values into the same grade;
1.1.2 Enable the assignment of positions into their proper salary grade; therefore, providing the basis from which to determine an equitable salary rate;
1.1.3 Meet requirements under the *Pay Equity Act*;
1.1.4 Maintain internal equity;
1.1.5 Provide a consistent approach to evaluate all non-union positions.

1.2 In the application of the Job Evaluation Plan, the following general rules shall apply:

1.2.1 It is the content of the position that is being evaluated, not the qualifications and/or capabilities of the individual doing the job or their performance in the job;
1.2.2 Workload is not a consideration when evaluating a position;
1.2.3 The rating of each position shall be relative to, and consistent with the ratings of all other positions within the non-union group;
1.2.4 Human Resources shall communicate the final rating and/or other decisions made to the incumbent(s) and applicable management. Subject to completion of the request for review procedure, noted herein, such decision shall be binding.

2.0 Newly Created Non-Union Position

2.1 When a new position is established at the County, the following procedure shall apply:

2.1.1 Following approval by the respective department Director, the department shall meet with Human Resources to draft a job profile. This will ensure that the information is complete, consistent with other County job profiles, and that Human Resources has all of the information required to complete the job evaluation and a fulsome understanding of the new profile. If the new position is in Human Resources, the draft job profile will be reviewed with the CAO.
2.1.2 Based on the job profile, a job evaluation rating shall be established and Human Resources will notify applicable management of the rating and corresponding salary range within three (3) weeks of the job profile being finalized.
2.1.3 At approximately the one (1) year mark of an incumbent working in the newly

created position, Human Resources will confirm with the incumbent and applicable management that the job profile remains accurate. If updates to the job profile are necessary, refer to section 3.0.

3.0 Changes to a Non-Union Position Previously Evaluated

3.1 In accordance with Policy 5.08 Performance Management, job profiles will be reviewed annually during the Performance Appraisal period. If during this process or through other means, the content of a position within the County is changed significantly enough to potentially impact one or more job evaluation ratings, the following re-evaluation procedure shall apply:

3.1.1 A revised job profile is submitted to Human Resources by the department. Human Resources shall meet with the department requesting the revision to ensure understanding of the proposed revisions to the job profile. Human Resources shall determine if the changes to the job content are significant enough to potentially impact one or more job evaluation ratings, and therefore, require a job re-evaluation.

If deemed necessary by Human Resources, in consultation with the CAO, an external consultant may be asked to provide an opinion on whether the changes to a job profile are significant enough to potentially impact one or more job evaluation ratings, and therefore require a job re-evaluation.

3.1.2 If it is determined that the changes to the job content are significant enough to potentially impact one or more job evaluation ratings and therefore require a job re-evaluation, a re-evaluation based on the changes in the revised job profile shall be completed. At any time, Human Resources may need to meet with the incumbent and applicable management to more fully understand the changes to the position to accurately re-evaluate the position. Once complete, Human Resources will communicate the rating to the incumbent and applicable management. Salary adjustments, if any, will be applied in accordance with section 5.0 of this policy.

4.0 Appeal of Job Evaluation Final Rating

4.1 The incumbent(s) and/or supervisor may initiate a request for review via email of the

final rating of the position within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the rating from Human Resources. Next:

4.1.1 Upon receipt of the request for review email, Human Resources will send the employee and supervisor a Job Evaluation Questionnaire (JEQ).
4.1.2 The incumbent shall complete the JEQ, submit to their supervisor for approval, and return the completed questionnaire to Human Resources within (30) calendar days of Human Resources sending the JEQ.
4.1.2 Human Resources shall refer the appeal and the completed JEQ to an external consultant for review.
4.1.3 Upon receipt of the consultant's results, the information will be communicated to the incumbent and the applicable management, by Human Resources. The results of the review by the job evaluation consultant shall be binding.

5.0 Application of the Job Evaluation Results on Salary

5.1 If the result of the evaluation is a lower evaluation and salary grade for a position, the incumbent(s), whose existing salary is higher than the newly established rating of the position, shall be identified as green-circled. If the incumbent leaves the position, the position is posted at the newly evaluated rate.

5.2 If the result of the evaluation is a higher evaluation and salary grade for a position, the incumbent(s) of such position shall be increased to the closest salary step in the new grade that provides a minimum 5% salary increase. The new rate shall be become effective on the date the incumbent commenced the new or significantly changed position.

The CAO has the authority to determine an effective date, if the date the incumbent commenced the new or significantly changed position is unclear.

6.0 **Salary Administration**

6.1 All employees, at the time of hiring, may receive fair recognition for past experience when determining credited service for placement on the salary grid, and vacation entitlement. Where a department wishes to start a new employee higher than level three (3) on the salary grid and/or in excess of three (3) weeks' vacation, the hiring manager will present a rationale to the Department Director and the Director of Human Resources who shall approve or deny the request. Employees who are given recognition for past

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experience and start at a higher vacation entitlement will progress through future vacation entitlement increases as outlined in section 1.01 of the Non-Union Employee Manual.

6.2 On an annual basis (retroactive to the anniversary date outlined in their offer letter) and based on successful performance, employees will advance one step on the grid that corresponds to the salary grade for their position as determined through the job evaluation process, until they reach the maximum step of the grid. If a supervisor believes that an employee's performance warrants a delayed grid increase, they must consult with Human Resources. The grid increase may be delayed until such time that performance improves and expectations are successfully met. The delayed grid increase will be documented in a letter to the affected employee.

6.3 When an employee experiences a change in salary grade due to a promotion or job re-evaluation, the following will apply:

- In the case of promotions, future grid increases are effective on the anniversary date of the promotion based on successful performance. Other conditions may be imposed based on an employee's offer letter, for example, a grid increase only following completion of specific education or training.
- In the case of job re-evaluations, future grid increases are effective from the employee's last anniversary date based on successful performance.

6.4 In exceptional circumstances grid increases may be approved to be effective on a date other than an employee's anniversary date and/or approval may be granted to advance an employee more than one step on the grid that corresponds to their position. Exceptional circumstances could include, but are not limited to, issues related to employee retention and compensation equity/fairness in relation to existing staff and new hires/internal promotions.

In situations where the CAO feels an exceptional circumstance may exist with one of their direct reports, they shall consult with the Director of Human Resources, prior to making a decision. Where a Department Director feels an exceptional circumstance exists within their department, they shall outline the exceptional circumstance and corresponding salary/grid increase request to the CAO, who will consult with the Director of Human Resources, and approve or deny the request. In any case where an

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exceptional circumstance is approved, the salary adjustment will be documented to the employee and saved in their employee file.

6.5 In order to maintain salary competitiveness with comparator municipalities, the County will conduct a non-union compensation review every three to four (3-4) years. Implementation of any recommendations for adjustments to the non-union salary grid to maintain competitiveness will be subject to Council approval.

6.6 The County's comparator group will be established with the commencement of each compensation review, having regard for:

- historical comparators
- geography
- recruitment and retention trends
- size/scope of services
- Broader public and private sectors where possible and relevant

6.7 The non-union salary grid will be reviewed and adjusted annually, subject to County Council approval, for cost of living increases with consideration given to:

- projected increases of the comparator municipalities used in the last compensation review,
- negotiated union increases,
- and any other published salary data that may be applicable.

6.8 Effective January 1, 2026, Oxford County is committed to ensuring that all positions are compensated at or above the minimum living wage set by the Ontario Living Wage Network for the Elgin, Oxford, and Middlesex region.

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REFERENCE POLICY:	5.4, 5.38	REVISED:	January, 2015

Volunteer and Student Placements

POLICY

The County of Oxford supports volunteer and student placements and recognizes that this type of participation enhances the existing programs delivered by the County to the community and its citizens.

DEFINITIONS

volunteer placement is a placement by a member of the community who undertakes, without compensation, a designated task or tasks that support County sponsored activities. Volunteer placements may or may not have a predetermined duration.

student placement is a placement, co-op or precept undertaken by a person who is required to participate as a condition of an educational program that they are enrolled in. Student placements do not provide compensation and have a predetermined duration. They may include secondary school and post-secondary students.

PROCEDURES

1.0 Guidelines for Volunteer and Student Placements

1.1 Volunteers should be recruited for specific and interesting assignments that are meaningful to volunteers and complement the programs or services the department delivers.

1.2 Student placements should be recruited in assignments that are related to their field of study and provide educational value and/or work experience.

1.3 Volunteer and student placements shall not be recruited or used to replace or displace paid employees. Placements shall not be used in an employment capacity as deemed by the Employment Standards Act.

1.4 Ensure all placements have been given instruction on their placement duties and adequate information on related County policies, procedures and guidelines.

1.5 Provide adequate levels of supervision according to their participation and provide regular opportunities for feedback.

1.6 County departments, divisions and offices may develop placement specific policies, procedures or guidelines as required to address placement or worksite specific needs.

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2.0 Responsibilities of Volunteers and Student Participants

2.1 Always conduct one self professionally when conducting County business.
2.2 Keep placement commitments regarding time and participation.
2.3 Act within the boundaries and parameters of the placement assignment.
2.4 Follow directions and respond to feedback as appropriate.
2.5 Keep in confidence all information acquired while on the placement and do not disclose personal, privileged or proprietary information.
2.6 Be aware of and abide by County policies, procedures and guidelines.

3.0 Volunteer and Student Placement Registration and Indemnification

3.1 All volunteer and student placements must complete and sign the County's Placement Registration Form (Form 5.43A) and Release, Waiver & Indemnification Form (Form 5.43B) before commencing their placement.
3.2 Supervisors are responsible for maintaining all records for volunteer and student placements including: Placement Registration Form, Indemnification Form, **placement agreements**, criminal record check etc.

4.0 Insurance Requirements

4.1 The County of Oxford does not provide Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D), Personal Accident or Disability insurance for volunteers, students or participants in the *Take Our Kids to Work* ™ program who are injured or harmed in the course of their duties or visit. Individuals may obtain private personal disability insurance that provides benefits in such situations at their own expense, or they may be eligible for disability benefits under the Canada Pension Plan.
4.2 Workplace Safety & Insurance benefits are not available to persons who are injured during the course of doing volunteer work or visiting a workplace.
4.3 **Insurance coverage for student placements is often provided by the sponsoring educational institution or training agency. Before a placement begins, it is essential that the County department sponsoring the placement receive confirmation in writing.**
4.4 The County discourages the use of volunteer or student placements using their personal vehicle in the performance of their placement duties. Where driving is unavoidable, the supervisor must confirm from the volunteer or student that they carry not less than one million dollars per occurrence Standard Automobile Liability Insurance and that his/her driving licence is in good standing.

5.0 Criminal Reference Checks

5.1 A criminal reference check shall be required for volunteer or student placements where their duties require direct contact with children or vulnerable adults.

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Criminal reference checks shall be conducted in accordance with County Policy 5.4 – Vulnerable Sector Screening Certificate.

6.0 Orientation and Training

6.1 Supervisors are responsible for providing adequate orientation and training to volunteers and student placements suitable to their role and work site.

6.2 It is essential that volunteers and students receive health & safety training to the extent needed to protect their health & safety.

7.0 Employment Opportunities

7.1 County volunteers and students are recognized as valuable partners in implementing the mission and programs of Oxford County but will not be given preferential treatment for job opportunities. Volunteers and students will be given fair and equitable consideration of their application to appropriate job vacancies based on their skills, education and job qualifications.

8.0 Confidentiality

8.1 County volunteers and student placement participants shall sign a confidentiality acknowledgement in accordance with Policy – 5.38 – Confidentiality Policy.

8.2 This policy and all information collected in relation to this policy shall be in accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

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Workplace - Temporary Accommodation

POLICY

The County of Oxford will attempt to provide a Return to Work program to accommodate employees with temporary or short term medical restrictions due to disability in accordance with the *Workplace Safety & Insurance Act, 1997, Ontario Human Rights Code, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005* and the Employee's Collective agreement (if applicable).

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to facilitate a Return to Work process for employees with temporary disabilities into a work environment that restores the employee's sense of confidence and self-esteem and that is safe and reduces the risk of re-injury to the injured worker or their co-workers. The work is to be productive to the injured worker and offer value to the employer and be compliant with the *Workplace Safety & Insurance Act, 1997* and the Ontario *Human Rights Code.* Employees who have permanent medical restrictions are referred to the Workplace - Permanent Accommodation Policy # 5.45.

DEFINITIONS

Accommodation - an adaptation or adjustment made to enable a person with a disability to perform the essential duties or requirements of the position.

Disability – shall be as defined in the Ontario Human Rights Code:

(a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting

the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

(b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,

(c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,

(d) a mental disorder, or

(e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

EHC – Employee Health Coordinator

Functional Ability Evaluation – this objective tool is completed by an independent third party and assists in determining suitable job duties based on the employee's functional abilities.

Functional Ability Form – the FAF is a tool to facilitate return to work discussions between the employer and the injured/ill employee. The worker must complete and sign the consent form to release functional information to the employer. The FAF is completed by the employee's treating health care professional and returned to the Employee Health Coordinator.

Health Care Professional - Treating Physician, Dentist, Physiotherapist, Chiropractor and Optometrist.

Occupational Injury/illness - Any injury, disease or illness incurred by an employee in the performance of or in connection with his or her work.

RTW – Return to Work

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PROCEDURE

1.0 For non-occupational disabilities, a non-occupational functional ability form (FAF) is completed by the health care professional who provides clear temporary restrictions, including prognosis and whether a complete recovery is expected. Payment for the completion of this paperwork is in accordance with the employee's collective agreement (if applicable) or non union manual.

2.0 For occupational disabilities, a Workplace Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB) FAF is completed by the health care professional who provides clear temporary restrictions, including prognosis and whether a complete recovery is expected. The health care professional will be paid for the completion of the paperwork according to WSIB policy.

3.0 All FAF's and signed consent forms are to be submitted to the Employee Health Coordinator (EHC) for review and a return to work (RTW) meeting will be arranged. All original FAF's and consent forms will be maintained in the Employee's health file.

4.0 The employee is to adhere to their departmental practice if they are not able to perform their regular duties by following to the normal "call in" process that normally takes place when they can not attend work.

5.0 During a RTW meeting the Employee, EHC, Immediate Supervisor, and Union representative (if applicable) develop an individualized RTW plan based on the

specific needs or restrictions of the employee which will not pose a risk of re-injury or injury to others.

Discussions during the meeting may include:

- Review of current duties
- Treatment plan
- Modified/Alternative tasks to be performed while on plan; which may include change of normal work hours and/or work location
- Re-assessment date
- Prognosis

6.0 The RTW plan is signed by the Employee, Supervisor, and Union Representative (if applicable). Copies of the RTW plan are provided to the Immediate Supervisor and Employee. The hard copy is maintained in the Employee health file.

7.0 RTW meetings will be scheduled on a bi-weekly basis unless identified differently in the RTW meeting. RTW plans should be progressive and lead the employee to resuming full regular duties of the pre-injury position.

8.0 Prior to the commencement of a temporary RTW plan there must be an expectation, stated in writing from the health care professional, of a full return to regular duties within a short period of time; not more than 16 weeks. This is to be clearly documented on the RTW plan.

9.0 When an employee has been off work due to medical reasons the time off and the RTW plan combined should not exceed sixteen (16) weeks.

10.0 On an individual basis the RTW plan may be extended by the employer, provided there is updated medical information and a prognosis for return to regular duties.

11.0 The employee is to provide regular medical progress reports at approximately two week intervals unless otherwise identified in the RTW plan. These dates are to be clearly stated on the RTW plan.

12.0 The disability should improve while the employee is on the temporary RTW plan. Clarification may be requested from the health care professional if there is little or no sign of improvement. Continuation of the temporary RTW plan may be delayed until clarification is provided.

13.0 Assigning task(s), which belong to the pre-injury job classification, is preferable; however, RTW plans may include change of tasks, change of work location, and change of hours.

Roles and Responsibilities

1.0 **Employee**

1.1 When an employee injures themself within the workplace they are to immediately notify their Supervisor and obtain necessary first aid and/or health care in accordance with Policy # 7.4; Incident & Injury Reporting.

1.2 For all injuries/illnesses that require medical aid from a Health Care Professional, the employee is to obtain the package/forms that is appropriate for the situation for completion. Staff are encouraged to contact the Human Resources Office when they are unclear which package is appropriate. This package includes:

- Covering letter outlining the Employer's Return to Work program addressed to the doctor
- Functional Ability Form (FAF) which includes the consent form

- Offer of modified duties

1.3 Make accommodation needs known to the employer.

1.4 Provide timely, accurate and objective medical information; specific information about restrictions is a requirement.

1.5 Participate in discussions regarding possible modified work solutions.

1.6 Cooperate in the accommodation process and adhere to the RTW plan.

1.7 Promptly advise the Supervisor or the EHC of difficulties experienced in the RTW plan.

1.8 Promptly advise the Supervisor or the EHC of changes regarding restrictions that may alter the accommodation or end the need for accommodation.

1.9 Accept reasonable offers of accommodation.

1.10 Attend medical and/or therapy appointments during non working hours; in the event it is not possible to attend medical appointments outside of work, arrangements must be discussed and agreed upon with the employer.

2.0 **Supervisor**

2.1 Assist and participate in the development of a RTW plan in collaboration with the Employee, Union Representative (if applicable) and EHC.

2.2 Review employee progress regularly to ensure successful rehabilitation.

2.3 Attempt to communicate with employees who fail to communicate with the Employer during an absence.

3.0 **Union (if applicable)**

3.1 Participate in RTW meetings by assisting in identifying suitable work that is within the employee’s restrictions.

3.2 Be receptive to the various ways employees can be accommodated, whether from within their bargaining unit or outside of their local.

3.3 Cooperate with viable accommodation options.

3.4 Consider waiving provisions of the collective agreement, such as job postings and the transfer of seniority dates, to facilitate accommodation.

4.0 **Employee Health Coordinator**

4.1 Organize and facilitate RTW meetings.

4.2 Provide advice as required and assist in the development of a RTW plan.

4.3 Document all details of the accommodation process; be specific and thorough.

4.4 Retain copies of RTW plans for temporary accommodation.

4.5 Communicate essential information regarding functional ability and prognosis to the Supervisor.

4.6 Forward copies of the RTW plans for occupational disabilities to WSIB, as required.

4.7 May request updated medical information.

4.8 May communicate and consult with treating health care professional(s).

4.9 Coordinate third party Functional Ability Evaluations and other assessments.

4.10 Liaise with all applicable parties.

4.11 Address concerns that the employee may have while on a return to work plan.

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Workplace - Permanent Accommodation

POLICY

The County of Oxford will make a reasonable attempt to accommodate employees with permanent medical restrictions due to disability in accordance with the Workplace Safety & Insurance Act, 1997, Ontario Human Rights Code, Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, 2005 and the Employee's Collective agreement (if applicable).

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this policy is to facilitate a process for the integration of employees with permanent restrictions due to disability and to be compliant with the *Workplace Safety & Insurance Act, 1997* and the Ontario *Human Rights Code*. Employees who have temporary medical restrictions, whereby it is the expectation that the employee will make a full return to regular duties, are referred to the Workplace - Temporary Accommodation Policy #5.44.

DEFINITIONS

Accommodation - an adaptation or adjustment made to enable a person with a disability to perform the essential duties or requirements of the position.

Disability – shall be as defined in the Ontario Human Rights Code:

(a) any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical co-ordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impediment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a

guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device,

(b) a condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability,

(c) a learning disability, or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language,

(d) a mental disorder, or

(e) an injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997.

EHC – Employee Health Coordinator

Functional Ability Evaluation – this objective tool is completed by an independent third party and assists in determining suitable job duties based on the employee's functional abilities.

Functional Ability Form – the FAF is a tool to facilitate return to work discussions between the employer and the injured/ill employee. The worker must complete and sign the consent form to release functional information to the employer. The FAF is completed by the employee's treating health care professional and returned to the Employee Health Coordinator.

Health Care Professional - Treating Physician, Dentist, Physiotherapist, Chiropractor and Optometrist.

Occupational Injury/illness - Any injury, disease or illness incurred by an employee in the performance of or in connection with his or her work.

RTW - Return to Work

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PROCEDURE

1.0 The employee will provide to the Employee Health Coordinator (EHC) an objective medical report issued by their treating health care professional. The report is to include current restrictions/limitations and clearly state that the current restrictions are not expected to change and that the employee has reached maximum medical recovery. Medical restrictions may be defined as prolonged, indefinite or unknown. Payment for the completion of this paperwork will be in accordance with the employee's collective agreement (if applicable) or non-union manual.

2.0 It may not be possible to pursue permanent accommodation in the absence of clear assessment information. In this circumstance, the EHC shall obtain clarification from the employee or the treating health care professional. In some circumstances an independent third party assessment may be necessary.

3.0 The employee is to follow the departmental practice if they are not able to perform their regular duties by following the normal "call in" process that is followed when they can not attend work.

4.0 It may be necessary for a Functional Ability Evaluation (FAE) to be conducted. This is coordinated through the EHC and paid for by the employee's department.

5.0 For a disability caused by a occupational injury or illness, the employee may be entitled to a labour market re-entry program.

6.0 In the event of a disability which prevents an employee from performing the regular duties of their pre-injury position a long term disability application will be

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submitted to the County's benefit insurer by the EHC for those employees that have long term disability coverage.

7.0 Following the EHC's receipt of the permanent restrictions, a Skills Inventory Accommodation Form is to be completed (Appendix 5.45A) by the employee with assistance from the EHC and union representative (if applicable). The employee is also required to attach an updated resume.

8.0 The EHC reviews vacancies on a weekly basis within the employee's own department and identifies any opportunities that are within the employee's skills, qualifications, and restrictions. At times it may be necessary to have an independent third party assessment completed to determine if the work is suitable. The assessment is paid for by the employee's department.

9.0 If there are no suitable vacancies within the employee's department opportunities will be reviewed throughout the entire organization on a weekly basis.

10.0 A return to work (RTW) meeting may be convened as necessary.
The review of vacancies by the EHC will be for a period of two (2) years from date of injury or illness.

11.0 Employees are also encouraged to visit the Oxford County website to view vacancies. http://www.oxfordcounty.ca/site/699/default.aspx

12.0 Permanent Accommodations may include:

12.1 Changed or reduced work hours

12.2 Assistive devices

12.3 Assignment to a different department that matches the employee's functional capabilities, skills and qualifications

12.4 Accommodations may result in a change of compensation. Employee must perform the essential duties of the accommodated position.

13.0 The employer is not required to create a new position to accommodate an employee and will not displace an existing employee in order to create a vacancy for accommodation purposes.

14.0 While the accommodation process is being considered it may be necessary that the employee remain off work.

15.0 Discussions may be required concerning issues such as waiving a job posting and the transfer of seniority when employees are going to be accommodated outside their job classification or bargaining unit. All parties are to work cooperatively to reach agreement on such issues.

Roles and Responsibilities

1.0 Employee

1.1 Make accommodation needs known to the employer.

1.2 Provide timely, accurate and objective medical information; specific information about permanent restrictions is a requirement.

1.3 Participate in discussions regarding possible accommodation solutions.

1.4 Cooperate in the accommodation process and adhere to the accommodation plan.

1.5 Promptly inform their Supervisor and/or EHC of difficulties experienced in the accommodation.

1.6 Promptly inform their Supervisor and/or EHC of changes regarding restrictions that may alter the accommodation plan.

1.7 Accept reasonable offers of accommodation.

1.8 Attend medical and/or therapy appointments during non working hours; in the event it is not possible to attend medical appointments outside of work, arrangements must be discussed and agreed upon with the Employer.

2.0 Supervisor

2.1 Assist in the development of a permanent accommodation plan in collaboration with the Employee, Union Representative (if applicable) and EHC.

2.2 Review employee progress regularly to ensure successful accommodation.

2.3 Attempt to communicate with employees who fail to communicate with the employer during an absence.

2.4 Address concerns that the employee may have while on an accommodation plan.

3.0 Union (if applicable)

3.1 Participate in RTW meetings by assisting in identifying suitable work that is within the employee’s restrictions.

3.2 Be receptive to the various ways employees can be accommodated, whether from within their bargaining unit or outside of their local.

3.3 Cooperate with viable accommodation options.

3.4 Consider waiving provisions of the collective agreement, such as job postings and the transfer of seniority dates, to facilitate accommodation.

4.0 Employee Health Coordinator

4.1 Organize and facilitate RTW meetings as necessary

4.2 Ensure alternative approaches and solutions are considered to facilitate

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suitable accommodation.

4.3 Review all vacancies on a weekly basis to identify suitable accommodations.

4.4 Develop a permanent accommodation plan through collaboration with the Employee, Union (if applicable), and applicable Supervisor.

4.5 Document all details of the accommodation process; be specific and thorough.

4.6 Liaise with all applicable parties.

4.7 May request updated medical information.

4.8 May communicate and consult with health care professional(s); as required.

4.9 May coordinate referrals to specialist and/or treatment provider to facilitate permanent accommodation.

4.10 Communicate essential information regarding functional abilities and prognosis to the Supervisor.

4.11 Provide awareness regarding other disability income programs.

GENERAL POLICY MANUAL

SECTION:	Personnel	APPROVED BY:	County Council
NUMBER:	5.46	SIGNATURE:	Original signed by Benjamin Addley, CAO
PAGE:	1 of 2	DATE:	June 17, 2024
REFERENCE POLICY:	5.03, 5.11, 5.43	REVISED:	September 12, 2017 August 8, 2012

Student Hires

POLICY

The County of Oxford attempts to provide students with the opportunity for temporary paid employment in accordance with this policy.

DEFINITIONS

Student/Co-Op	An individual who is currently enrolled full-time in high school or a post-secondary institution. Students are required to be returning to their studies on a full-time basis after 4 or 8 months. Student practicums which occur at the end of a school program are exempt.
Work Term	The time period in which a student is temporarily employed (ex. during a school break or paid co-op).

PROCEDURE

1.0 When filling student work terms, preference will be given to students that are enrolled in a post-secondary program that relates to the position in order to provide them with meaningful employment and to provide value to the organization.

2.0 All students will attend a corporate orientation session facilitated by human resources. Supervisors will provide them with orientation to their department and the work they will be performing.

3.0 Supervisors will conduct a performance appraisal, using the student performance appraisal form, with all student employees prior to the completion of their work term. The purpose of this is to document suitability for future employment opportunities with the County of Oxford and to provide the student with written feedback on their performance.

4.0 Supervisors will use their discretion in granting time off to students employed for the work term, taking into consideration operational needs.

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5.0 Student and co-op wage rates are determined by the Senior Management Team each year prior to budget preparations and except where prescribed in a collective agreement.

6.0 Nepotism Policy 5.11 should be referred to when hiring students who are relatives of current employees.

7.0 The process for hiring paid student positions is completed in accordance with Policy 5.03 Recruitment.

8.0 For an unpaid student practicum, work placement or co-op position, refer to Policy 5.43 Volunteer and Student Placements.

GENERAL POLICY MANUAL

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REFERENCE POLICY:	5.28, 5.30	REVISED:	

Disconnecting From Work

POLICY

Work-related pressure and the inability to disconnect from work can lead to stress and deterioration of mental health and overall well-being. Oxford County understands that due to work-related pressures, the current landscape of work, or an employee's work environment or location, employees may feel obligated or choose to continue to perform their job duties outside their normal working hours.

Employee health and well-being are priorities while working and away from work. Oxford County is committed to increasing overall employee health and wellness and providing employees with a better work–life balance. This policy has been established to support employee wellness, minimize excessive sources of stress related to work or workload, and ensure that employees have the ability to disconnect from their work outside their normal work day or hours, while outlining exceptions to disconnecting from work to maintain optimal service delivery.

DEFINITIONS

Disconnecting From work — Not engaging in work-related communications, including emails, telephone calls, video calls or the sending or reviewing of other messages, so as to be free from performing work.

Normal work day — The typical number of hours an employee is scheduled for in a work day. A normal work day varies by employee, position and/or department.

Due to the nature of their position, some employees are afforded flexibility in working hours and location, which may occasionally affect their normal work hours in a day. For example, an employee attends a personal appointment during their regular work day, but subsequently works past their normal end time to account for time spent at the personal appointment. For the purposes of this policy, the employee's normal work day would be considered extended accordingly.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Employees should disconnect from their work outside of their normal working day without fear of reprisal. Employees are encouraged to set clear boundaries between their work and personal lives.

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2.0 Disconnecting from work means that employees:

2.1 Can and should stop performing their job duties and work-related tasks when they are not expected to work;

2.2 Are not expected or required to respond to work-related communication outside their regular working hours, while on break, or during any paid or unpaid time off;

2.3 Are encouraged to utilize their scheduled breaks and time off entitlements for non-work related activities; and

2.4 Will not face repercussion or be penalized for not communicating or continuing to work outside of their regular working hours.

3.0 Employees must also be respectful of others' right to disconnect and should not expect others to respond, communicate, or complete work outside of their normal work day.

4.0 Where employees are required to work outside of their normal work day, they will be entitled to banked lieu time or overtime in accordance with their Collective Agreement or Policy 5.30 Overtime – Non-Union Employees.

5.0 Employees who, on a regular basis, cannot manage their workload during their normal work day should meet with their direct supervisor/manager to evaluate their current workload, priorities, and due dates. Managers/supervisors will work with employees to come up with a solution to ensure regular job duties can be completed during their normal work day.

6.0 **Communication**

6.1 Oxford County maintains "Service Excellence Standards", which outline expectations regarding response times to phone, email and written communication. Employees should recognize that there is no organizational expectation of immediate response outside of their normal work day, and they can disconnect at the end of their normal work day. The standards can be found here - http://intranet4.oxfordcounty.local/Corporate%20Communication%20Guidelines/Customer%20Service%20Communication%20Guidelines.pdf

6.2 Employees may feel obligated to send or respond to messages when not working. On occasion communication may be sent to employees when they are not working, such as on an employee's day off or scheduled vacation. Employees are not expected to read or respond to any organizational communication when not at work, with the exception of unforeseen

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circumstances, such as an emergency, or in relation to reasons outlined in section 7.0.

6.3 It may be necessary to communicate with or forward important information to an employee who is not working. If employees do send communications to others who are not at work, they should not expect a response until the other employee returns. If the matter is urgent or an emergency and requires an immediate response from a colleague, employees must reach out to their manager/supervisor, or other management designate, if their manager/supervisor is also away from work.

7.0 Exceptions

7.1 Oxford County understands that employees may want or need to work outside their normal work day to meet a time-sensitive deadline, to attend to an urgent or emergency matter, or due to unforeseen circumstances; however, employees are not required to regularly or frequently work outside their scheduled hours to complete or catch up on work.

7.2 Some employees are required to participate in an on-call/standby rotation in accordance with Policy 5.28 or their Collective Agreement. For the purposes of this policy, an employee being compensated to be on stand-by/on-call does not have the right to disconnect from work related to the reasons for being on-call (communication unrelated to being on-call may be addressed during normal working hours).

7.3 Work-related communications that employees are expected to respond to outside of normal working hours include those related to shift scheduling, arrangements for off-shift meetings or arranging a return to work if employees have been out of the workplace for a period of time.

8.0 Time Away From Work

8.1 Oxford County understands the importance for employees to have time off away from work. Employees should use their annual vacation time in accordance with their Collective Agreement, Non-Union Manual, and any other applicable County policy for rest, relaxation, and personal pursuits.

8.2 At least one week in advance of a scheduled vacation, employees should discuss

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with their supervisor any job duties that need to be completed while the employee is on vacation. Managers/supervisors will work with employees to delegate job-specific duties that must be completed maintain workflow and productivity. Employees should not be reluctant to take vacation due to workload, unless there are limitations or restrictions because of a due date, project priority, scheduling conflict, unforeseen circumstance or other urgent operational need that prevent an employee from taking a vacation at a specific time requested.

9.0 **Productivity**

Working additional hours does not always equate to higher productivity. Employees can maximize their productivity during their work day by using time management tactics, such as:

9.1 Blocking off periods in their schedule and calendar to complete specific tasks or address communication;
9.2 Working with their manager to organize work in order of priority or importance;
9.3 Breaking down projects and tasks into manageable chunks;
9.4 Setting goals to work continuously for a specified period before taking a break or responding to communication.

10.0 If an employee believes they are being subject to reprisal for disconnecting from work in accordance with this policy, they should contact Human Resources.

Report 2026-45
HUMAN RESOURCES & CORPORATE SERVICES
Board Date: November 17, 2026

REPORT TO LIBRARY BOARD

2026 Library Board Evaluation

To: **Oxford County Library Board**

From: **CEO / Chief Librarian**

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That the Library Board receives Report 2026-45 to initiate the 2026 Board evaluation process and set the Board Evaluation Form submission due date of no later than _____, 2026.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- This report sets out the method and timing for the 2026 annual Board Evaluation.
- The evaluation results will be presented to the incoming 2027 Library Board along with the 2023-2026 Library Board Legacy Document.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Board members will be provided a deadline to complete the Board Evaluation Form. The CEO/Chief Librarian, in their role as Secretary, will receive all completed forms, tabulate the responses and provide the Board with a final Evaluation Report provided to the incoming 2027 Library Board.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact beyond what has been approved in the current year's operating budget.

Communications

Key findings from the evaluation will be provide to the incoming 2027 Library Board and be made available publicly as part of a future agenda package.

2024-2028 LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Library Board approved the 2024-2028 Library Strategic Plan on February 20, 2024. The Plan outlines three key goals to advance the Library's vision to "Connect, discover, share, become." These goals are: *(1) Sustain service excellence, (2) Grow engagement and member relationships, and (3) Innovate access to service*.

The recommendation in this report supports the following strategic goals.
Strategic Goals and Strategies

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
		
Strategy 1.3 – Develop and implement a strategic approach to attract, retain and develop employees and volunteers to enhance and sustain OCL service excellence.		

See: Oxford County Library 2024-2028 Strategic Plan

DISCUSSION

Background

At the January 16, 2024, meeting the Library Board conducted its first evaluation since the adoption of the Annual Board Evaluation policy in 2022.

At that time, staff created a Board Evaluation Form adapted from the Board Self-Evaluation Questionnaire created by the Non-Profit Sector Leadership Program at Dalhousie University.

At the September 17, 2024, Board meeting the Library Board reviewed and adopted a revised version of the Annual Board Evaluation policy. A copy of that policy has been provided to the Board as Attachment 1.

The current evaluation form was revised in 2024 with suggested edits provided at the September 17, 2024, meeting.

Comments

Library staff have prepared the 2026 Board Evaluation form for completion by individual Board Members. The form will be available to Board members as an online form (sections A & B only) or a fillable PDF. Subsequent pages of the evaluation form, found only on the PDF version, are provided for self-evaluation of individual members for personal reflection.

The link to the online form and the PDF fillable form will be sent out to Board members at the close of the November 17, 2026, meeting. Board members should fill out the form and submit or return to library administrative staff by the date determined by the Board.

The CEO/Chief Librarian will report key findings to the incoming 2027 Library Board at a future meeting.

CONCLUSIONS

The Annual Board Evaluation Policy ensures the Board monitors its effectiveness in fulfilling its role of providing good governance for Oxford County Library and assists in identifying areas for improvement.

SIGNATURES

Departmental approval:

Original signed by

_____
Lisa Marie Williams
CEO/Chief Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 Annual Board Evaluation Policy, 2024
Attachment 2 Library Board Evaluation Form, 2025

Oxford County Library connect. discover. share. become.	**OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD POLICY MANUAL**		
Board Motion Number:	2024-41	Date of Review:	September 17, 2024
Date Approved:	March 21, 2022	Chairperson's signature:	

ANNUAL BOARD EVALUATION

BACKGROUND

As the Library Board is accountable to Oxford County Council and to the residence of Oxford County, the Library Board shall demonstrate its accountability through the annual Business and Budget Plan.

The Library's Strategic Plan outlines the goals and objectives approved by the Library Board. This plan creates further accountability for the strategic goals and objects the Board has highlighted for achievement during their term.

Evaluation is the process by which the board determines if the organization is achieving what it should. It is an essential task of governing. Unless the board can assess its own skills, it will not have the credibility to judge the skills and performance of others.

PURPOSE

Oxford County Library Board is committed to continuously improving its performance, as well as the overall governance of the Oxford County Library.

To achieve this goal, the Board will evaluate itself, through a Board Self-Evaluation process.

The Board will monitor its own effectiveness in fulfilling its major responsibilities and achieving strategic goals through this self-evaluation process. The process will identify key areas for board improvement and requisite follow-up action or further training.

PROCEDURES

1. Under the leadership of the Board Chair, the Board will conduct a self-evaluation annually in conjunction with the CEO/Chief Librarian Performance Review.

2. The Board may request senior management (through the CEO/Chief Librarian) and/or an external party to act as a resource in making this self-evaluation.

3. The annual evaluation will focus on the Board's responsibilities with particular emphasis on those areas outlined in Board Duties and Responsibilities policy.

4. Areas of focus for the evaluation will include both what was accomplished in the previous year and what the Board plans for the upcoming year.

5. The CEO/Chief Librarian will work with the Board Chair to distribute a report to the Board prior to the next meeting outlining the results of this assessment.

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD POLICY MANUAL			
Board Motion Number:	2024-41	Date of Review:	September 17, 2024
Date Approved:	March 21, 2022	Chairperson's signature:	

References and Related Documents:

Oxford County Library

Oxford County Library. (2024, February). Library Strategic Plan (2024-2028).

https://www.oxfordcounty.ca/en/library/resources/Your-OCL/OCL-Strat-Plan-FINAL20240415-AC.pdf

Oxford County Library. Annual Business and Budget Plan.

Legislation

Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P. 44.

Oxford County Library Board Self-Evaluation Form

Rating Scale: 5 = Strongly Agree, 4 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 2 = Disagree, 1 = Strongly Disagree
Please use 0 if you are unable to assess due to insufficient data or feel the item is not applicable.

Section A: How well has the Board done its job?

Statement	Rating					
	5	4	3	2	1	0
Oxford County Library Board operates with a strategic plan and a set of measurable goals and priorities						
The Board's regular meeting agenda items reflect our priorities and plans						
The Board has created or reviewed in this period policies as part of the regular review cycle.						
The Board collaborates with the Library CEO/Chief Librarian to set goals and revise policies when appropriate.						
The Board has ensured that the Library's accomplishments and challenges have been communicated to key stakeholders.						
The Board has understood and respected that our role is in governance and not operations.						
Comments / Suggestions:						

Section B: How well has the Board conducted itself?

Statement	Rating					
	5	4	3	2	1	0
Board members are aware of what is expected of them.						
The agenda of board meetings is well planned to address all necessary board business.						
Board members come to meetings prepared.						
Written reports are provided at least 72 hours in advance of board meetings as laid out in the Oxford County Procedural By-Law.						
All members of the Board are provided the opportunity to participate in discussions.						
The Board does a good job encouraging and dealing with different points of view.						
All members of the Board support decisions made.						
Comments / Suggestions:						

Section C: How well have I done my job as a member of the Board?
(This section is for your own personal reflection and does not need to be shared with the Board as a whole)

Statement	Rating					
	5	4	3	2	1	0
I rarely miss a scheduled board meeting.						
I am prepared for all meetings.						
I read all documents and reports prior to voting on issues.						
I respect and support all Board decisions even if I do not agree with those decisions.						
I use my individual abilities and skills to enhance the Board's overall performance.						
I understand that I have an obligation to act in the best interests of the library at all time.						
I freely offer my opinions during any deliberations.						
I welcome and consider the opinions and perspectives of others.						
I do not attempt to exert individual authority and/or influence over the CEO or staff.						
I respect the confidential nature of items discussed closed session.						
I feel comfortable with my understanding of the **Public Libraries Act**.						

Adapted from © 2005 Non-Profit Sector Leadership Program, Dalhousie University.

I support the Board chair in promoting effective meetings.						
I have a clear understanding of my role.						
I am careful to focus on only board issues and leave the running of the library to the CEO / Chief Librarian.						
I can provide feedback in discussion in a constructive manner.						
I am a strong advocate for the best possible library system in Oxford County.						
I am committed to the library's new mission and vision.						
I support the library in a variety of ways (e.g., attend events, etc.)						
I understand the library's financial reporting and budgeting.						
I am aware of the programs, services and events of our communities' libraries.						
Comments / Suggestions:						

Adapted from © 2005 Non-Profit Sector Leadership Program, Dalhousie University.

Report 2026-46
HUMAN RESOURCES & CORPORATE SERVICES
Board Date: November 17, 2026

REPORT TO LIBRARY BOARD

Library Board 2027 Draft Meeting Schedule and Library Closures

To: **Oxford County Library Board**

From: **CEO / Chief Librarian**

RECOMMENDATION

1. **That the Library Board adopts the draft schedule for 2027 Library Board meetings and Library Closures as set out in Report 2026-46.**

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- Establishes the 2027 closure schedule for all statutory holidays and staff planning and development days.
- Establishes a draft meeting schedule for regular Library Board meetings in 2027 to ensure compliance with the Public Libraries Act.
- The draft schedule will provide a starting point for the incoming 2027-2030 Library Board.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Upon approval of the 2027 Library Board Meeting Schedule and Library Closures, staff will update all areas of public information and the library's integrated library system. Library Administrative staff will use the draft schedule to make appropriate preparations for the 2027 library board meetings.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact beyond what has been approved in the current year's operating budget.

Communications

Library administrative staff will update the Oxford County Library website and will provide internal communications to all Library and County staff impacted by the 2027 schedule.

2024-2028 LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Library Board approved the 2024-2028 Library Strategic Plan on February 20, 2024. The Plan outlines three key goals to advance the Library's vision to "Connect, discover, share, become." These goals are: *(1) Sustain service excellence, (2) Grow engagement and member relationships, and (3) Innovate access to service*.

The recommendation in this report supports the following strategic goals.
Strategic Goals and Strategies

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
		
Strategy 1.3 – Develop and implement a strategic approach to attract, retain and develop employees and volunteers to enhance and sustain OCL service excellence.		

See: Oxford County Library 2024-2028 Strategic Plan

DISCUSSION

Background

In accordance with the *Public Libraries Act,* section 16(1), a Library Board is required to hold at least seven regular meetings annually. However, Library Boards may choose to hold meetings more frequently.

Regular Board Meetings must be open to the public, unless the Board wishes to hold a Closed session for a reason that is permitted by legislation.

The library closure schedule also provides staff and the public with a consistent and planned schedule for closures, following the statutory holidays included in the Oxford County Non-Union manual and 5 days for staff planning and development.

Comments

Draft 2027 Library Board Meeting Schedule

The proposed schedule is presented below as a schedule starting point for the incoming 2027 Oxford County Library Board. At the incoming Board's inaugural meeting, a motion to change the schedule may be presented. Any meetings that may be required for special or strategic planning purposes have not been included in the schedule posted for public information. Should the Chair or majority of Board members determine that a special meeting be called, the Secretary will follow the appropriate notice provisions within the Procedure By-law – by including notice on the website as soon as possible, no later than 48 hours prior to the meeting, except in the event of an emergency.

For the purposes of this schedule, all dates have been proposed at the Oxford County Administrative Building. This is subject to change based on orientation tours of branches in 2027.

All meetings will be tentatively scheduled for 3:30pm, subject to change by the incoming 2027 Library Board.

Meeting Date	Proposed Location
January 19	Room 222, Oxford County Administrative Building, Woodstock
February 16	Room 222, Oxford County Administrative Building, Woodstock
March 16	Room 222, Oxford County Administrative Building, Woodstock
April 20	Room 222, Oxford County Administrative Building, Woodstock
May 18	Room 222, Oxford County Administrative Building, Woodstock
June 15	Room 222, Oxford County Administrative Building, Woodstock
July 20	Room 222, Oxford County Administrative Building, Woodstock
September 21	Room 222, Oxford County Administrative Building, Woodstock
October 19	Room 222, Oxford County Administrative Building, Woodstock
November 16	Room 222, Oxford County Administrative Building, Woodstock

2027 Library Closures

The Oxford County Library Board sets the hours of operation and establishes holiday closures the year. The planned closure dates are provided for consideration in the preceding year to ensure adequate notice to the public and staff.

The following closure dates are recommended by the CEO/Chief Librarian in consultation with the Library Leadership Team.

Date	Reason	Branches Impacted
Friday, January 1, 2027	New Year's Day	ALL
Monday, January 4, 2027	Program Planning Day	ING, TIL
Monday, February 15, 2027	Family Day	HQ, ING, TIL
Friday, March 26, 2027	Good Friday	ALL
Monday, April 5, 2027	Staff Development Day	HQ, ING, TIL
Monday, May 24, 2027	Victoria Day	HQ, ING, TIL
Monday, June 7, 2027	Staff Development Day	HQ, ING, TIL
Thursday, July 1, 2027	Canada Day	ALL
Monday, August 2, 2027	Civic Holiday	HQ, ING, TIL
Monday, September 6, 2027	Labour Day	HQ, ING, TIL
Monday, September 20, 2027	Staff Development Day	HQ, ING, TIL
Thursday, September 30, 2027	Truth and Reconciliation Day	ALL
Monday, October 11, 2027	Thanksgiving Day	HQ, ING, TIL
Monday, November 29, 2027	Staff Development Day	HQ, ING, TIL
Friday, December 24, 2027	Christmas Eve	ALL
Saturday, December 25, 2027	Christmas Day	ALL
Monday, December 27, 2027	For Christmas Day	HQ, ING, TIL
Tuesday, December 28, 2027	For Boxing Day	HQ
Friday, December 31, 2027	New Year's Eve	ALL

CONCLUSIONS

The draft 2027 Library Board Meeting schedule may be adjusted at any time throughout the year by the incoming Board, as long as the revised schedule is made publicly available and provides a minimum of 48 hours notice to the public.

The 2027 Library Closures schedule will be implemented and communications updated throughout the year to provide the public with ongoing reminders of impacted dates.

SIGNATURES

Departmental approval:

Original signed by

Lisa Marie Williams
CEO/Chief Librarian