Rural Municipality of Buckland No. 491
Bylaw 6 of 2025

A BYLAW TO ESTABLISH A CODE OF ETHICS FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS

PART I

GENERAL

Short Title

1. This bylaw may be cited as the "Code of Ethics Bylaw".

Preamble

2. The members of council of the RM of Buckland No. 491 recognize that their actions have an impact on the lives of all residents and property owners in the community. Fulfilling their obligations and discharging their duties responsibly requires a commitment to the highest ethical standards.

   The members of council recognize that the quality of the public administration and governance of the RM of Buckland No. 491, as well as the reputation and integrity, depend on their conduct as elected officials.

Purpose and Interpretation

3. The purpose of this bylaw is to outline basic ethical standards and values for members of council. It is to be used to guide members of council respecting what their obligations are when fulfilling their duties and responsibilities as elected officials. It also explains the procedure for filing a complaint, investigating a complaint, and enforcing these standards and values.

   This bylaw is to be interpreted in accordance with the legislation applicable to the RM of Buckland No. 491, the common law, and the policies and bylaws of the RM of Buckland No. 491.

   Neither the law nor this bylaw is to be interpreted as exhaustive. There will be occasions which council will need to adopt additional rules of conduct in order to protect the public interest and to enhance the public confidence and trust in local government. It is the responsibility of each member of council to uphold the standards and values set out in this bylaw.

Definitions

4. In this bylaw:

   a) **Act**: means *The Municipalities Act*
   b) **Complainant:** means an individual/organization/municipal employee/member of council.
   c) **Designated Officer**: means a person designated by council or a person to whom power or authority is delegated by the administrator or, in the absence of a designation by council, the administrator.
   d) **Members of Council**: means the council of the RM of Buckland No. 491, and includes the reeve and each councillor.

PART II

STANDARDS AND VALUES

5. Members of council must uphold the following standards and values:

   a) Honesty

      i. Members of council shall be truthful and open in their roles as council members and as members of the communities they serve.

   b) Objectivity

      i. Members of council shall make decisions carefully, fairly, and impartially.

   c) Respect

      i. Members of council shall treat every person, including other members of council, municipal employees, and the public, with dignity, understanding, and respect;

ii. Members of council shall not engage in discrimination, bullying, or harassment in their roles as members of council;
iii. Members of council shall not use derogatory language towards others;
iv. Members of council shall treat people with courtesy; and
v. Members of council shall recognize the importance of the different roles others play in local government decision-making.

d) Transparency and Accountability

i. Members of council shall endeavour to conduct and convey council business and all their duties in an open and transparent manner, other than those discussions that are authorized to be dealt with in a confidential manner in a closed session, so that stakeholders can view the process and rationale used to reach decisions and the reasons for taking certain actions; and
ii. Members of council are responsible for the decisions they make. This responsibility includes acts of commission and acts of omission.

e) Confidentiality

i. Members of council shall refrain from disclosing or releasing any confidential information acquired by virtue of their office except when required by law or authorized by council to do so; and
ii. Members of council shall not take advantage of or obtain private benefit from information that is obtained in the course of or as a result of their official duties or position and that is not in the public domain. This includes complying with *The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* in their capacity as members of council of a local authority.

f) Leadership and the Public Interest

i. Members of council shall serve their constituents in a conscientious and diligent manner and act in the best interests of the RM of Buckland No. 491;
ii. Members of council shall strive, by focusing on issues important to the community and demonstrating leadership, to build and inspire the public's trust and confidence in local government;
iii. Members of council are expected to perform their duties in a manner that will bear close public scrutiny and shall not provide the potential or opportunity for personal benefit, wrongdoing, or unethical conduct; and
iv. Members of council shall not accept a gift or personal benefit greater than $30.00 that is connected directly or indirectly with the performance of their duties.

g) Responsibility

i. Members of council shall act responsibly and in accordance with the Acts of Parliament of Canada and the Legislature of Saskatchewan, including *The Municipalities Act*;
ii. Members of council shall disclose actual or potential conflicts of interest, either financial or otherwise, related to their responsibilities as members of council, following the polices and procedures of the RM of Buckland No. 491, and exercising all conferred powers strictly for the purpose for which the powers have been conferred; and
iii. Members of council are individually responsible for preventing potential and actual conflicts of interest.

PART III

COMPLAINT PROCESS

Informal Complaint Process

6. Any person who has witnessed or believes that a member of council has contravened the bylaw may advise the member that they are in contravention of this bylaw and encourage the member to stop.

Formal Complaint Process

7. To report an alleged contravention of the bylaw, the complainant shall submit the Complaint Form found in Schedule A, personally or by sending the form directly to the designated officer by mail, email, fax or courier.

8. As soon as possible after receiving the complaint, the designated officer will issue the Receipt of Complaint form, found in Schedule B, to the complainant, personally or by sending the form by mail, email, fax or courier.

9. Within 5 days of issuing the Receipt of Complaint, the designated officer will review the complaint to ensure the following:

    a) The complaint meets the scope of the code of ethics bylaw; and
    b) The complaint form is filled out completely and in detail.

10. After review of the complaint, the designated officer shall, within 10 days, notify:

    a) The complainant, in writing that the complaint does not meet the scope of this bylaw or that the complaint form is not filled out completely. If applicable, the designated officer will direct the complainant to another process for addressing the complaint; or
    b) The complainant in writing that the complaint meets the requirements of this bylaw; and
    c) The alleged council member(s) in writing that a complaint has been filed pursuant to this bylaw.

11. The designated officer shall inform all parties of the following:

    a) Who will be investigating the complaint;
    b) The investigation process;
    c) When the investigation will be initiated; and
    d) How the investigation's findings will be communicated.

12. At the next council meeting, upon being informed by the designated officer, council will acknowledge by resolution that a code of ethics complaint has been filed and will initiate the investigation process.

Investigation

13. The investigation must, as is reasonably possible, protect the names of all parties involved.

14. The investigation shall be done in a confidential, objective, and unbiased way.

15. At a minimum, the investigation must:

    a) Clarify what the complaint is about;
    b) Verify the information provided in the complaint is relevant and accurate;
    c) Provide an opportunity for all parties involved to review the preliminary findings and to provide contrary and/or additional information that may be relevant;
    d) Determine what section(s), if any, of this bylaw was contravened; and
    e) Summarize the results of the investigation into a written report.

16. The investigator will provide the report to council in a closed meeting.

17. The council member(s) against whom the complaint is made shall not participate in the closed meeting.

18. If the complainant is a council member, that council member shall not participate in the closed meeting.

19. Upon the report from the investigator, in an open meeting, council shall pass a resolution stating that the complaint is either unsubstantiated or substantiated.

20. If the complaint is unsubstantiated, it is deemed dismissed, and council shall notify all parties involved of the following:

    a) The reasons the complaint is dismissed; and
    b) The ability to contact Ombudsman Saskatchewan if they feel they have been treated unfairly in the handling of the complaint.

21. If the complaint is substantiated, council shall provide all parties involved with the following:

    a) The reasons for the substantiation;
    b) What remedial action(s), if any, will be imposed as per section 22; and
    c) Information about the ability to contact Ombudsman Saskatchewan if they feel they have been treated unfairly in the handling of the complaint.

Remedial Action

22. The remedial action(s) imposed should be corrective and progressive and have a realistic time frame for completion. Council should take into consideration the nature and severity of the violation as well as whether the council member(s) has previously violated this bylaw.

23. The remedial action(s) imposed by council shall be decided by resolution, at a meeting open to the public. The remedial action may include, but is not limited to:

    a) An apology, either written and/or verbal, by the member of council to the impacted individual(s), council, and/or the general public.
    b) Educational training on ethical and respectful conduct, potentially at the expense of the offending party.
    c) Repayment of any moneys/gifts received.
    d) Removal of the member from council committees and/or bodies.

e) Dismissal of the member from a position of chairperson of a committee.
f) Reduction in remuneration and/or benefits and/or expenses.

24. Failure to comply with the course(s) of action set out by council may lead to further remedial action and possibly to suspension.

Dispute Resolution

25. If council believes it to be desirable, council may offer the parties to a complaint an opportunity to mediate the complaint.

26. Mediation must be agreed upon by all parties.

27. Mediation shall be handled by a neutral third-party who has experience in the mediation process.

28. Mediation shall be confidential.

PART IV

MISCELLANEOUS

29. This bylaw shall also apply to members of committees, boards, controlled corporations, and other bodies established by council who are not members of council.

PART V

COMING INTO FORCE

30. Bylaw 6 of 2019 is hereby repealed.

31. This bylaw shall come into effect on the day of its final passing.

Given all three readings and adopted this 8th day of September, 2025.

[redacted]

JASON [redacted]KI ~~Larry Eros, Reeve~~ DEPUTY REEVE

[redacted]

{seal}

[redacted]

Cori Sarginson, CAO

[redacted]

Schedule A

Complaint Form

Complainant Name: _____

Complainant Address: _____

Complainant Phone Number(s): _____

Complainant Email: _____

I have reasonable and probable grounds to believe that council member(s):

_____

has (have) contravened the Code of Ethics Bylaw by reason(s) of the following:

1. Insert date(s), time and location of conduct.

_____

_____

_____

2. Include the sections of the Code of Ethics Bylaw that have been contravened.

_____

_____

_____

3. Provide the particulars and names of all persons involved and of all witnesses.

_____

_____

_____

4. Provide contact information for all people.

_____

_____

_____

5. Number of exhibits attached (if applicable): _____
6. If more space is required, please attach additional pages if needed.

I declare that the information given by me with respect to the above statements is true in all respects. I understand that signing a false affidavit may expose me to prosecution under the Criminal Code of Canada.

Dated this _____ day of _____, 20 _____.

_____
(Signature of Complainant)

For Office Use Only

_____ _____
(Date received) *(Reference number)*

_____

Signature of _____
Designated Officer for the RM of Buckland No. 491

Schedule B

Receipt of Complaint

I acknowledge that I have received a completed Complaint Form as prescribed in the Code of Ethics Bylaw, Schedule A from

_____, dated on the _____.
(Name of complainant) (Date the complainant signed)

Dated at _____, on _____.
(Location) (Date of issuing the Receipt of Complaint)

_____
(Signature of Designated Officer)