

A Path Forward for Responsible Conduct

Responsible Conduct in BC

Progress and Gaps



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

Ministry of
Housing and
Municipal Affairs



Responsible Conduct in BC

Why Are We Here



Responsible Conduct in BC: What We Have

Collaborative, proactive approach – Since 2016, provincial staff, UBCM, and LGMA have partnered to develop practical approaches to support local governments on responsible conduct.

Practical tools and resources – Developed guides (e.g., Model Code of Conduct, Forging the Path to Responsible Conduct), embedded responsible conduct principles into the oath of office, and launched an online education module for elected officials.

Legislative changes (2022) – Councils and boards are now required to consider adopting a code of conduct within 6 months of their inaugural meeting.

Increased uptake – Prior to 2022, about half of municipalities and two-thirds of regional districts had a code of conduct; now 68% of municipalities and 81% of regional districts do.

No mandatory standards – There is still no legal requirement to adopt a code of conduct, no prescribed standards for content, and no legislated sanctions for breaches.

Responsible Conduct in BC: What We Heard

Growing attention – Six UBCM resolutions on responsible conduct since 2016, with another under debate this year.

Key concerns (2024 discussion paper):

- ❖ Limited tools and inconsistent approaches across communities
- ❖ Staff placed in unfair or inappropriate roles
- ❖ Lack of resources for administration and enforcement
- ❖ Risk of codes being weaponized against minority voices



Responsible Conduct in BC: What We Are Proposing

Exploring changes – Province reviewing possible amendments to responsible conduct framework

Potential measures:

- ❖ Province-wide code of conduct with prescribed sanctions
- ❖ Mandatory third-party investigators for complaints and enforcement
- ❖ Limiting mayoral powers if found in breach of the code



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Write legibly (PLEASE)

Say What Matters

Keep It Brief, Keep It Real

We Need Your Presence,
Not Perfection



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QUESTION 1

Think of a time when the behavior of another elected official had a negative impact on the governing team, the staff or the community? What happened, and how did it affect you or those around you?

Without telling the whole story, give us the essence: what happened, and what was the impact.



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QUESTION 2

- a. How best do you think local governments can plan for or budget for potential code of conduct investigations (i.e. third-party investigator/integrity commissioner)?
- b. What are the success factors for a third-party investigator/integrity commissioner?



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QUESTION 3

What are your thoughts on how to minimize the possible weaponization of codes of conduct?



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QUESTION 4

If a Mayor is found in breach of the code of conduct – do you think there should be restrictions in their legislated authorities (e.g., chair meetings, ability to suspend the CAO, establish committees, or declare emergencies)?



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QUESTION 5

While codes of conduct and sanctions may be part of the solution - no code can create character. What practices or habits would make this culture self-correcting?



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QUESTION 6

How can a council or board approach working together after a code of conduct investigation and sanctions occur?



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My Commitment To You



THANK YOU

