

Rural Municipality of Meota No. 468
Saskatchewan

BYLAW NO. 16-2025

A BYLAW TO PROVIDE FOR A CODE OF ETHICS FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS

The Council for the Rural Municipality of Meota No. 468 in the Province of Saskatchewan enacts as follows:

PART I **GENERAL**

SHORT TITLE

1. This Bylaw shall be known as "*The Code of Ethics Bylaw*".

PREAMBLE

2. The members of council of the Rural Municipality of Meota No. 468 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 Rural Municipality of Meota No. 468, as well as the reputation and integrity, depends 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 Rural Municipality of Meota No. 468, the common law and the policies and bylaws of the Rural Municipality of Meota No. 468.

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 or 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 Rural Municipality of Meota No. 468 and includes the Reeve and each Councillor.

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MANDATORY COUNCIL GOVERNANCE ORIENTATION

5. The RM will provide governance orientation for all members of council after every general election and by-election.

Under the direction of the Chief Administration officer, the orientation is mandatory and shall occur within 90 days of when the elected official takes their oath of office. Special consideration may be made to attend if the member is not available under extenuating circumstances under discussion with the Reeve.

Orientation is provided to assist members of council in their governance roles and provide elected officials with information that may be useful for their reference. To establish a guideline, but not limited to, and to ensure members have an overview of what governance orientation shall include is defined below.

Orientation:

- Roles, responsibilities and duties under *The Municipalities Act*
- Roles, responsibilities and duties und the R.M of Meota Council Procedures Bylaw
- Roles, responsibilities and duties of the Administrator under *The Municipalities Act* and bylaws of the R.M.
- Working relationships with Administration and the R.M.'s governance structure
- Financial and infrastructure stewardship
- Risk management
- Mitigating decision biases
- Conflict resolution
- Conducting effective meetings
- Liability and conflict of interest

PART II **STANDARDS AND VALUES**

6. 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 community 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

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- 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 or 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 Rural Municipality of Meota;
- 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 \$250.00 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 following the policies and procedures of the Rural Municipality of Meota 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 conflict of interest.

h) Council Meeting Conduct

- i. Members will prepare for meetings by reviewing materials in advance, if possible, and will be respectful and attentive to, and ask informed questions of, the public and RM staff providing information at a Council meeting.
- ii. Members will not provide information contained in records or documents at a meeting unless those records or documents have been provided to all of Council in advance.
- iii. Members will make all reasonable efforts to attend and participate in diligently, all Council meetings.
- iv. Members shall not:
 1. Speak on any subject other than the subject in debate;
 2. Disclose the content of confidential matters or the substance of the deliberations of the in-camera meeting;
 3. Engage in personal attacks or outbursts of an emotional or frustrated nature;
 4. Engage in sidebar conversations unless relevant to the topic of discussion during a meeting or seeking clarification on an issue. Such conversations must be kept quiet with little or no public display.

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PART III

COMPLAINT PROCESS

INFORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

7. 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 them to stop.

FORMAL COMPLAINT PROCESS

8. 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, or courier.
9. 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 or courier.
10. Within 7 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.
11. After review of the complaint, the designated officer shall within 14 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.
12. 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.
13. 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.
14. Where the complainant is:
 - a) a member of council or an employee, a third party shall conduct the investigation;
 - b) an individual or organization, council shall conduct the investigation.

INVESTIGATION WHERE COUNCIL IS THE INVESTIGATOR

15. Council shall establish a committee to investigate, report and to make recommendations based on the findings of the complaint to council.
16. The council member(s) who the complaint is made against shall not participate in conducting the investigation.
17. If the complainant is a council member, that council member shall not participate in conducting the investigation.
18. The investigation shall be done in a confidential, objective and impartial way.

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19. The investigation must, as is reasonably possible, protect the names of all parties involved.
20. The investigative committee shall review the complaint and clarify any information with the complainant, if required.
21. The investigative committee shall serve a copy of the complaint and supporting documents to the alleged council member(s) and request a written response to the claim within 7 days of receiving the complaint.
22. If the alleged council member(s) provide a written response, that response is to be provided to the complainant with a request for a written response within 7 days.
23. The investigation committee must verify the information provided from all parties, which may include speaking to anyone relevant to the complaint.
24. The investigation committee must determine what section(s), if any, of this bylaw was contravened.
25. When the investigative committee is satisfied that all the relevant information has been provided, they will prepare a written report summarizing the allegations, the findings and their recommendation as to whether or not the complaint is substantiated.
26. The complaint and alleged council member(s) shall be provided a copy of the written report.
27. The investigating committee will provide the report to council in a closed meeting.
28. The council member(s) who the complaint is made against shall not participate in the closed meeting.
29. If the complainant is a council member, that council member shall not participate in the closed meeting.
30. If council is satisfied with the report of the investigation committee, in an open meeting, council shall pass a resolution stating that the complaint is either unsubstantiated or substantiated.
31. 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.
32. If the complaint is substantiated, council shall provide all parties involved the following:
 - a) The reasons for the substantiation;
 - b) What remedial action(s), if any, will be imposed per Section 41; and
 - c) Information about the ability to contact Ombudsman Saskatchewan if they feel they have been treated unfairly in the handling of the complaint.

INVESTIGATION WHERE THIRD PARTY IS THE INVESTIGATOR

33. The investigation must, as is reasonably possible, protect the names of all parties involved.
34. The investigation shall be done in a confidential, objective and unbiased way.
35. 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;

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- d) Determine what section(s), if any, of this bylaw was contravened; and
 - e) Summarize the results of the investigation into a written report.
36. The investigator will provide the report to council in a closed meeting.
 37. The council member(s) who the complaint is made against shall not participate in the closed meeting.
 38. If the complainant is a council member, that council member shall not participate in the closed meeting.
 39. Upon the report from the investigator, in an open meeting, council shall pass a resolution stating that the complaint is either unsubstantiated or substantiated.
 40. If the complaint is unsubstantiated, it is deemed dismissed and council shall notify all parties involved 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.
 41. If the complaint is substantiated, council shall provide all parties involved the following:
 - a) The reasons for the substantiation;
 - b) What remedial action(s), if any, will be imposed per section 42; and
 - c) Information about the ability to contact Ombudsman Saskatchewan if they feel they have been treated unfairly in the handling of the complaint.
 42. If Council is of the opinion that a member has violated the code of ethics during a council meeting, council may require the member to remove themselves for the remainder of the council meeting. Council may apply additional penalties based on the severity of the contravention as referenced in Section 42.

REMEDIAL ACTION

43. 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.
44. 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:
 - An apology, either written and/or verbal, by the member of council to the impacted individual(s), council and/or the general public.
 - Educational training on ethical and respectful conduct.
 - Repayment of moneys/gifts received.
 - Removal of the member from council committees and/or bodies.
 - Dismissal of the member from a position of chairperson of a committee.
 - Reprimand.
 - Reduction in remuneration and/or benefits and/or expenses.
 - Request by Council to the Minister for a formal review of the member's actions and possible removal from office, and other measures as may be deemed appropriate by the Minister.
45. 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

46. If council believes it to be desirable, council may offer the parties to a complaint an opportunity to mediate the complaint.
47. Mediation must be agreed upon by all parties.

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

PART IV
COMING INTO FORCE

- 50. This bylaw shall come into effect on the day of its final passing.
- 51. Bylaw No. 14-2018 is hereby repealed.

(seal)




Reeve


Chief Administrative Officer

Certified a true copy of
BYLAW NO. 16-2025
adopted by resolution of council
on the 3 day of SEPT. 2025
Dated this 3 day of Sept. 2025

Administrator



SCHEDULE A
Bylaw No. 16-2025

COMPLAINT FORM

Complainant Name: _____

Complainant Address: _____

Complainant Phone Number(s): _____

Complainant Email: _____

I have reasonable and probably 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 or all people:

5. Number of exhibits attached (if applicable): _____

6. If more space is required, please attached 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

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SCHEDULE B
Bylaw No. 16-2025

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

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