



234-2023-2100

June 15, 2023

## 5.2

Your Worship  
Mayor Andrea Horwath  
City of Hamilton  
[Tamara.Bates@hamilton.ca](mailto:Tamara.Bates@hamilton.ca)

Dear Mayor Horwath:

Thank you for your letter dated April 25 regarding the need for safe and respectful workplaces within municipal governments. I appreciate the time you have taken to write.

Councillors and heads of council must carry out their duties as elected officials in an ethical and responsible manner and must comply with the local code of conduct rules. Under Ontario's municipal accountability framework, every municipality must have a code of conduct and provide access to an Integrity Commissioner who functions to provide education, advice, and investigate complaints. If the Commissioner reports that, in their opinion, a member of the council has contravened the code of conduct, the municipal council may impose a penalty in the form of a reprimand or a suspension of pay for a period of up to 90 days.

It is up to the municipal council to decide how to proceed after an Integrity Commissioner's report. Some municipal councils have considered measures that may be outside a code of conduct process, such as requesting an apology and/or removing the member from committees. These issues are best handled at the local level, and ultimately elected members of council must face the consequences of their actions and decisions at the ballot box.

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing offers council orientation training sessions, which includes information on code of conduct and integrity commissioner legislative requirements under the Municipal Act. The last session was held on April 26, 2023. Training is available upon request to your local Municipal Services Office.

Additional information on Code of Conduct requirements and many other topics in the Ontario Municipal Councillor's Guide found here: [The Ontario municipal councillor's guide | ontario.ca](#)

Our government continues to monitor local implementation of the code of conduct framework to help ensure that municipal workplaces are safe and respectful.

Once again, thank you for taking the time to write. Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve Clark". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "S" and "C".

Steve Clark  
Minister