



## RZone Policy – Respect and Responsibility

### Office of the CAO

Approval Date: May 23, 2024  
Approval Authority: Senior Leadership Team  
Effective Date: November 12, 2024  
Revision Date/s:

#### 1. Purpose:

- 1.1 Norfolk County has created a code of conduct policy to be upheld in all Norfolk County operated areas and worksites with the goal of fostering a safe and positive environment, where there is **respect for others and responsibility taken** for all inappropriate behaviour towards those in which we share community space with, such as our staff members, users, patrons, contractors, members of the public, volunteers, coaches, and fellow spectators.
- 1.2 These facilities and community spaces are in place to provide services, promote learning and leisure for residents. All users and staff have the right to feel safe while attending a worksite, County office, a program or using a facility or property. With this right comes the responsibility to be accountable for actions or behaviours that puts others at risk or affects the enjoyment of others.

#### 2. Policy Statement and Commitment:

- 2.1 Norfolk County properties and worksites (for example: corporate offices, council chambers, customer service centres, museums, marinas, swimming pools, parks, trails, community centres, arenas, sports fields, roads and public parking lots). These properties provide residents with opportunities to interact with County staff for business purposes and to enjoy social and recreational activities in a safe and positive environment. Norfolk County operates programs and properties that encourage public participation and is committed to ensuring the safety of all participants, spectators, volunteers and staff in accordance with *the Occupiers' Liability Act, the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Trespass to Property Act, the Criminal Code*, Municipal by-laws and policies as well as other provincial legislation.

#### 3. Scope:

- 3.1 This policy applies to all staff, members of the public and anyone interacting with Norfolk County staff in County offices, worksites, parks, facilities, and recreation programs including but not limited to: staff, patrons, contractors, guests, spectators, coaches, players, parents, members of the public and volunteers. It covers structured (i.e. permit issued) and unstructured (i.e. no permit issued) activities. This includes interactions with staff and volunteers on the phone, via email and virtually.

The policy applies to all employees involved in delivering services on behalf of Norfolk County, including but not limited to those in building, planning, economic development, by-law enforcement, and other departments engaged in similar activities. It encompasses all aspects of professional conduct, safety protocols, and procedures for dealing with emergencies or threats encountered during the course of their duties.

This policy applies not only to interactions within Norfolk County-operated areas but also extends to any professional interactions where employees deliver services on behalf of Norfolk County

- 3.2 Inappropriate behaviour and violence for the purpose of this policy includes, but is not limited to the following behaviours:
- Loud verbal assaults including swearing and name calling, directed at participants, officials, members of the public or County staff deemed to be aggressive or intimidating or having the potential of inciting violence.
  - Threats and/or attempts to intimidate.
  - Throwing articles in a deliberate or aggressive manner.
  - Aggressive approaches to another individual (physical/verbal assault).
  - Physical striking of another individual.
  - Attempts to incite violence in others.
  - Theft of property.
  - Possession of weapons.
  - Vandalism to building(s) or property owned or leased by Norfolk County.
  - Refusal to follow the rules outlined by Norfolk County.
  - Any slurs or actions that show discrimination based on any of the prohibited grounds under the Ontario Human Rights Code.
  - Illegal consumption of alcohol or drugs.
  - Harassment ("engaging in a course of 'vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome" as defined by the Ontario Human Rights Code).
  - Contravention of County by-laws or policies.
  - Any other actions that hinder usual business practices.

#### **4. Definitions:**

- 4.1 Vandalism: is defined as the malicious, willful, and deliberate destruction, damage or defacing of property owned by Norfolk County.
- 4.2 Notice: Where there has been a violation of this procedure, a letter may be issued to the identified individual providing details of the specific behaviour that is not tolerated and any action to be taken.

- 4.3 Worksite: a place or location where staff perform tasks, jobs and projects for Norfolk County.

## **Implementation Procedure:**

### **5.1 Education**

- 5.1.1 Norfolk County, will undertake a promotional and educational campaign aimed at raising awareness of residents, customers, participants, volunteers, contractors, officials, spectators, members of the public and patrons. Signage will be installed at County facilities to communicate the expectations and consequences for patrons and staff.
- 5.1.2 In addition, necessary and required ongoing training and education will be provided to staff and volunteers (i.e. Rzone orientation, non-violence crisis intervention training, conflict resolution, mental health first aid), to support the implementation of this procedure.

### **5.2 Duty to Report**

- 5.2.1 The County's primary concern is the safety of the public and its staff. If members of the public or staff feel personally threatened, they are to call 911 or Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) immediately. It is NOT the expectation that staff or users put themselves at risk or jeopardize one's safety in dealing with any perceived or real situation.
- 5.2.2 County staff are to report acts of violence, vandalism or inappropriate behaviour to their immediate supervisor and will complete the applicable Incident Report (Employee/Non-Employee Incident Report Form)". County staff will also convey a report to the appropriate individual or association(s) within 24 hours. i.e. a property owner, minor sports organization or developer etc.
- 5.2.3 All staff shall cooperate and support Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) during any investigation and the prosecution process resulting from any charges laid.
- 5.2.4 Patrons of County facilities are to report acts of violence, vandalism or inappropriate behaviours to a County staff member and/or a designated person within 24 hours.
- 5.2.5 All incidents of violence and/or vandalism or threatening situations must be reported to the OPP.
- 5.2.6 Organizations or external workplaces dealing directly with incidents are required to inform the applicable County department of a resolution within 30 days.

### **5.3 Enforcement**

- 5.3.1 The County will take appropriate actions when incidents pertaining to this policy occurs in County facilities, worksites or properties; County staff are authorized to act if inappropriate behaviour or violence is observed or reported in the following instances:
- Observation of any physical violence or vandalism.

- Observation of verbal abuse or threat.
- At the request of a community group or individual who, as part of their operation, are threatened, intimidated, or persistently disrupted for the purposes of inciting negative activity.

## **6. Procedures**

### **6.1 Reporting an incident:**

*where staff has witnessed an incident*

- Report acts of inappropriate behaviour to the most senior staff person present at the incident.
- Without jeopardizing one's safety, advise the individual(s) to stop the activity immediately or they will be asked to leave ("verbal warning").
- If the individual (s) does not co-operate, inform the individual(s) that they are now trespassing, and the police will be called.
- If the individual(s) refuses to leave, do not engage in an argument or physical confrontation, call the police, and wait for them to arrive, while ensuring that you and any others in jeopardy are in a safe location; advise immediate supervisor or designated supervisor immediately.
- Where staff are on a worksite, advise the individual to stop the activity immediately ("verbal warning") or staff will leave the worksite immediately.
- If the individual(s) does not cooperate, inform the individual(s) staff will leave the worksite and the police may be called.
- If staff are told to leave the worksite (owned by someone other than the County), staff are to leave the worksite and advise their immediate supervisor as soon as possible.
- Complete the applicable Incident Report Form (Employee or Non-Employee Incident Report Form) Incident(s) to be reviewed by staff and recommendations made to prevent/discourage future incidents.

### **6.2 Reporting an incident:**

*where staff has received inappropriate written or verbal communication*

- Report acts of inappropriate behaviour to the immediate supervisor or designate within 24 hours of inappropriate written or verbal communication.
- Advise the individual to stop the inappropriate activity immediately, or you will end the communication.
- If the individual does not co-operate, end the communication.
- Complete the applicable Incident Report Form (Employee or Non-Employee Incident Report Form).
- Director/Supervisor to request full written report from community group/representative (if applicable).
- Incident(s) to be reviewed by staff and recommendations made to prevent/discourage future incidents.

### **6.3 Reporting an incident**

*where staff has not witnessed an incident being reported*

- Complete the applicable Incident Report Form (Employee or Non-Employee Incident Report Form)

- Report any act(s) of inappropriate behaviour to the immediate supervisor or designate within 24 hours of the incident being reported.

#### **6.4 Members of the public are to report acts of inappropriate behaviour to a County staff member within 24 hours of the incident.**

- 6.4.1 The County's primary concern is the safety of staff and members of the public. If at any time staff or members of the public feel personally threatened, they are to call the police immediately. It is NOT the expectation that staff or members of the public put themselves at risk or jeopardize anyone's safety when dealing with any perceived or real situation.

Norfolk County OPP

Non-Emergency Contact: 519-426-3434 or 1-888-310-1122

Emergency Contact: 911

#### **6.5 Consequences of Non - Compliance**

- 6.5.1 Individuals who engage in any inappropriate behaviour, as defined in this procedure, may, depending on the severity, be removed immediately from the premises and if necessary, be suspended for a period of time. The suspension may apply to all programs, facilities and properties, if warranted. A "Letter of Warning" may be sent to an individual advising them of their inappropriate behaviour. If necessary, a "Letter of Trespass" will be sent to the individual(s). The length of the ban will be determined by the supervisor/director or designate and will depend on the severity of the situation.
- 6.5.2 In addition to any other measures taken, where any damage to County property has occurred, the individual(s) responsible will be required to reimburse the County for all costs associated with any repairs; an administration fee, as well as any lost revenues or where appropriate, be required to repair the damage
- 6.5.3 All incidents that result in a suspension or banning from corporate offices, programs, facilities and properties will be followed up in writing by the applicable Department, outlining the details of the suspension. The final decision related to the details of the suspension or ban will be made in consultation with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), or their designate. All correspondence related to suspension or banning will be written under the signature of the CAO or designate.
- 6.5.4 Appropriate staff in facility sections and/or geographic areas will be notified of individuals who are banned or individuals who received a letter of trespass from County properties and facilities. Appropriate organizations may be notified of the situation, where appropriate. Incidents may be reported to the Ontario Provincial Police and charges may follow.
- 6.5.5 Norfolk County has the right to issue longer bans to individuals that violate this policy on multiple occasions and/or during interactions with various departments. The list of individuals who are banned from Norfolk County properties will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership Team on a quarterly basis to determine whether the ban needs to remain in place.

### **7. Responsibilities**

- 7.1 Staff are the key personnel responsible for the implementation of this procedure.
- 7.2 Divisions are responsible for ensuring that preventative measures are in place so that incidents of violence, vandalism and inappropriate behaviour do not occur.
- 7.3 Departments of Norfolk County may implement additional processes and procedures linked to this policy applicable to the specific workplaces.
- 7.4 Visitors to Norfolk County's offices, parks, facilities or properties, and recreation programs are responsible for behaving and acting in a manner that respects the rights of others in order for the services to be used and enjoyed by all.
- 7.5 Organizations and Users or Recipients of parks, facilities or properties, and recreation programs are primarily responsible for the behaviour of everyone associated with them including participants, officials, spectators, patrons, parents, guests, etc.
- 7.6 Major User Groups by virtue of their signed agreements for use of County offices, parks, facilities and recreation programs are expected to promote, support and endorse the division operating procedures within their organizations. In addition, it is the responsibility of the signator to sign a code of conduct and to ensure all those involved with the group (including out of County groups) are aware of the division operating procedures.
- 7.7 Individuals are responsible for behaving and acting in a manner that respects the rights of staff and others in order for services to be provided while attending a work site.

## **8.0 Attachments**