



board orientation

review of key sections of the

Municipal Conflicts of Interest Act

Rosa Stall, Solicitor, Legal Services Division, City of Toronto

TPL Board Education
February 27, 2023

who does the act apply to?

- The Municipal Conflict of Interest Act (“the Act”) applies to members of council of a municipality and members of local boards
- A public library board is defined as a local board for the purposes of the Act
- All Toronto Public Library Board Members are responsible for reviewing the Act and for abiding by the requirements
- It is the responsibility of each Toronto Public Library Board member to determine for themselves whether they have a conflict of interest as defined under the Act
- If a Toronto Public Library Board member has a question about whether or not they have a conflict of interest, it is their responsibility to seek out their own advice

principles of the act

1.1 The Province of Ontario endorses the following principles in relation to the duties of members of councils and of local boards under this Act:

1. The importance of integrity, independence and accountability in local government decision-making.
2. The importance of certainty in reconciling the public duties and pecuniary interests of members.
3. Members are expected to perform their duties of office with integrity and impartiality in a manner that will bear the closest scrutiny.
4. There is a benefit to municipalities and local boards when members have a broad range of knowledge and continue to be active in their own communities, whether in business, in the practice of a profession, in community associations, and otherwise.

When present at meeting at which matter considered

5 (1) Where a member, either on his or her own behalf or while acting for, by, with or through another, has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in any matter and is present at a meeting of the council or local board at which the matter is the subject of consideration, the member,

- a) shall, prior to any consideration of the matter at the meeting, disclose the interest and the general nature thereof;
- b) shall not take part in the discussion of, or vote on any question in respect of the matter; and
- c) shall not attempt in any way whether before, during or after the meeting to influence the voting on any such question. R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50, s. 5 (1).

Where member to leave closed meeting

(2) Where the meeting referred to in subsection (1) is not open to the public, in addition to complying with the requirements of that subsection, the member shall forthwith leave the meeting or the part of the meeting during which the matter is under consideration. R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50, s. 5 (2).

When absent from meeting at which matter considered

5(3) Where the interest of a member has not been disclosed as required by subsection (1) by reason of the member's absence from the meeting referred to therein, the member shall disclose the interest and otherwise comply with subsection (1) at the first meeting of the council or local board, as the case may be, attended by the member after the meeting referred to in subsection (1). R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50, s. 5 (3).

Written statement re disclosure

5.1 At a meeting at which a member discloses an interest under section 5, or as soon as possible afterwards, the member shall file a written statement of the interest and its general nature with the clerk of the municipality or the secretary of the committee or local board, as the case may be. 2017, c. 10, Sched. 3, s. 4.

declaration of interest form

Toronto Public Library Board



Declaration of Interest

Toronto Public Library Board

Meeting Date	Member's Name
Item Number	Agenda Item Title

I declare a direct or indirect pecuniary interest in the agenda item noted above in accordance with section 5 of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

The nature of my interest is as follows:

Declaration Date	Signature of Member
------------------	---------------------

City Librarian's Office Use Only:

Received (Date and Time)	Received by
--------------------------	-------------

Influence

5.2 (1) Where a member, either on his or her own behalf or while acting for, by, with or through another, has any pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, in any matter that is being considered by an officer or employee of the municipality or local board, or by a person or body to which the municipality or local board has delegated a power or duty, the member shall not use his or her office in any way to attempt to influence any decision or recommendation that results from consideration of the matter. 2017, c. 10, Sched. 3, s. 4.

conflict of interest under the act

Indirect pecuniary interest

2 For the purposes of this Act, a member has an indirect pecuniary interest in any matter in which the council or local board, as the case may be, is concerned, if,

(a) the member or his or her nominee,

(i) is a shareholder in, or a director or senior officer of, a corporation that does not offer its securities to the public,

(ii) has a controlling interest in or is a director or senior officer of, a corporation that offers its securities to the public, or

(iii) is a member of a body,

that has a pecuniary interest in the matter; or

(b) the member is a partner of a person or is in the employment of a person or body that has a pecuniary interest in the matter. R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50, s. 2.

conflict of interest under the act cont'd

Interest of certain persons deemed that of member

3 For the purposes of this Act, the pecuniary interest, direct or indirect, of a parent or the spouse or any child of the member shall, if known to the member, be deemed to be also the pecuniary interest of the member.

Sections 5, 5.2 and 5.3 do not apply to a pecuniary interest in any matter that a member may have,

- a) as a user of any public utility service supplied to the member by the municipality or local board in like manner and subject to the like conditions as are applicable in the case of persons who are not members;
- b) by reason of the member being entitled to receive on terms common to other persons any service or commodity or any subsidy, loan or other such benefit offered by the municipality or local board;
- c) by reason of the member purchasing or owning a debenture of the municipality or local board;
- d) by reason of the member having made a deposit with the municipality or local board, the whole or part of which is or may be returnable to the member in like manner as such a deposit is or may be returnable to all other electors;
- e) by reason of having an interest in any property affected by a work under the *Drainage Act* or by a work under a regulation made under Part XII of the *Municipal Act, 2001* or Part IX of the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, as the case may be, relating to local improvements;

- f) by reason of having an interest in farm lands that are exempted from taxation for certain expenditures under the Assessment Act;
- g) by reason of the member being eligible for election or appointment to fill a vacancy, office or position in the council or local board when the council or local board is empowered or required by any general or special Act to fill such vacancy, office or position;
- h) by reason only of the member being a director or senior officer of a corporation incorporated for the purpose of carrying on business for and on behalf of the municipality or local board or by reason only of the member being a member of a board, commission, or other body as an appointee of a council or local board;
- i) in respect of an allowance for attendance at meetings, or any other allowance, honorarium, remuneration, salary or benefit to which the member may be entitled by reason of being a member or as a member of a volunteer fire brigade, as the case may be;

- j) by reason of the member having a pecuniary interest which is an interest in common with electors generally; or
- k) by reason only of an interest of the member which is so remote or insignificant in its nature that it cannot reasonably be regarded as likely to influence the member. R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50, s. 4; 2002, c. 17, Sched. F, Table; 2006, c. 32, Sched. C, s. 33 (1).

Disclosure to be recorded in minutes

6 (1) Every declaration of interest and the general nature thereof made under section 5 shall, where the meeting is open to the public, be recorded in the minutes of the meeting by the clerk of the municipality or secretary of the committee or local board, as the case may be. R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50, s. 6 (1).

Idem

(2) Every declaration of interest made under section 5, but not the general nature of that interest, shall, where the meeting is not open to the public, be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting that is open to the public. R.S.O. 1990, c. M.50, s. 6 (2).

Requirement to establish registry

6.1 (1) Every municipality and local board shall establish and maintain a registry in which shall be kept,

- (a) a copy of each statement filed under section 5.1; and
- (b) a copy of each declaration recorded under section 6. 2017, c. 10, Sched. 3, s. 5.

Access to registry

(2) The registry shall be available for public inspection in the manner and during the time that the municipality or local board, as the case may be, may determine. 2017, c. 10, Sched. 3, s. 5.

9 (1) If the judge determines that the member or former member contravened section 5, 5.1, 5.2 or 5.3, the judge may do any or all of the following:

1. Reprimand the member or former member.
2. Suspend the remuneration paid to the member for a period of up to 90 days.
3. Declare the member's seat vacant.
4. Disqualify the member or former member from being a member during a period of not more than seven years after the date of the order.
5. If the contravention has resulted in personal financial gain, require the member or former member to make restitution to the party suffering the loss, or, if the party's identity is not readily ascertainable, to the municipality or local board, as the case may be. 2017, c. 10, Sched. 3, s. 7; 2022, c. 18, Sched. 3, s. 4.

Same

(2) In exercising his or her discretion under subsection (1) the judge may consider, among other matters, whether the member or former member,

a) took reasonable measures to prevent the contravention;

...

c) committed the contravention through inadvertence or by reason of an error in judgment made in good faith. 2017, c. 10, Sched. 3, s. 7.

- Seek your own independent advice about whether you have a conflict of interest



Toronto Public Library Board

Code of Conduct

- Applies to all members of the Toronto Public Library Board
- Includes a definition of conflict of interest which is broader than the definition of the *Municipal Conflicts of Interest Act*:

7. Conflict of Interest

Members are committed to performing their roles with integrity.

Members will act in the public interest and not engage in conflicts of interest, both apparent and real. Their private interests, financial or otherwise, and the interests of their family, friends or organizations with which Members are associated, should never compete with their duties and responsibilities to the Library. Their private interests include the prospect or promise of a future benefit or advantage.

Members will not accept payments or any other personal benefit:

- a) to make referrals to a person, partnership or corporation, or
- b) to act as a paid agent before the Board or a Committee of the Board.

	Municipal Conflicts of Interest Act	Toronto Public Library Board Code of Conduct
Conflict of interest pertains to monetary interests	Yes	Yes
Conflict of interest pertains to non-monetary interests	No	Yes
Obligation to disclose	Yes (required by law)	Yes (obligated by code)
Conflict of interest noted in the meeting minutes	Yes	Yes
Requirement to complete written Declaration of Interest form	Yes	No
Declarations included in online registry	Yes	No