

## RZone Policy & Procedure

### Purpose Statement

1. The Municipality of Middlesex Centre (“the Municipality”) is committed to ensuring the safety of users and staff when accessing or providing municipal services and in municipal buildings, facilities, programs, parks and trails. The Municipality fosters an environment where there is Respect for others and where people take Responsibility for their actions.
2. All users and staff have the right to be safe and to feel safe while accessing and providing services, or attending buildings, facilities, programs, parks and trails. With this right comes the responsibility to be accountable for one’s actions and behaviours that may put at risk the safety of others.
3. The Municipality has zero tolerance for any form of violence, vandalism or inappropriate behaviour occurring in municipal buildings, facilities, programs, parks and trails, or in municipal workplaces which may include locations not owned or managed by the Municipality.
4. This procedure outlines the measures and enforcement steps to be taken by staff, volunteers and users to address inappropriate behaviour or violence which occurs in municipal owned or operated buildings, facilities, programs, parks and trails, and during interactions with municipal staff.
5. The goal of this procedure is to promote a positive, safe, enjoyable and supportive environment for all. In addition, this procedure will establish closer and continued relationships between the Municipality and organizations to support this procedure.

### Scope

1. The policy applies to all community organizations and individuals using Municipality of Middlesex Centre facilities, including municipal offices, community centres, parks and recreational facilities.
2. The policy applies to interactions with municipal staff, committee members and/or elected officials of Middlesex Centre.
3. The policy applies to all staff and users of Municipal buildings, facilities, programs, parks and trails including but not limited to patrons, guests, spectators, fans, coaches, players,

participants, parents, volunteers and staff. It covers structured (i.e., permit issued) and unstructured (i.e., no permit issued) activities.

4. Inappropriate behaviour and violence for the purpose of this procedure includes, but not limited to, the following behaviours:
  - a) Verbal assaults directed at municipal staff, program participants, officials, members of the public or members of Council deemed to be aggressive or intimidating or having the potential of inciting violence;
  - b) Threats and/or attempts to intimidate;
  - c) Throwing of articles in a deliberate or aggressive manner;
  - d) Aggressive approaches to another individual (physical/verbal assault);
  - e) Physical striking of another individual;
  - f) Attempts to goad or incite violence in others;
  - g) Theft of property;
  - h) Possession of weapons;
  - i) Vandalism to a municipal building or property owned or leased;
  - j) Refusal to follow the rules outlined by the Municipality of Middlesex Centre;
  - k) Racial or ethnic slurs;
  - l) Illegal consumption of alcohol or drugs;
  - m) Harassment;
  - n) Contravention of Municipal by-laws or policies.

## **Definitions**

**“Appeal Body”** means the group established to hear appeals on formal complaint decisions and which has the authority to render a final decision on behalf of the Municipality. The appeal body is composed of the members of the Municipality’s Senior Management Team.

**“Harassment”** means engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

**“Municipality”** means the Municipality of Middlesex Centre.

**“Municipal Workplace”** refers to any place in, on or near where Middlesex Centre staff and/or volunteers work, as per the definition in the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

**“Trespassed”** means to suspend or ban an individual from entry to municipal facilities for a period of time.

**“Vandalism”** is defined as the malicious, willful, and deliberate destruction, damage or defacing of property owned or permitted through the Municipality of Middlesex Centre.

## **Responsibilities**

1. Municipal staff are the key personnel responsible for the implementation of this procedure.
2. Municipal department directors are responsible for ensuring that preventative measures are in place so that incidents of violence, vandalism and inappropriate behaviour do not occur in its programs, properties or facilities.
3. Visitors to the Municipality of Middlesex Centre’s buildings, facilities, programs, parks and trails 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.
4. Organizations, users or visitors of municipal buildings, facilities, programs, parks and trails are primarily responsible for the behaviour of everyone associated with them including participants, visitors, officials, spectators, patrons, parents, guests, etc.
5. Major User Groups, by virtue of their signed agreements for use of Municipal facilities, programs and properties, are expected to promote, support and endorse the RZone program within their organizations. In addition, it is the responsibility of the signatory to sign a code of conduct and to ensure all those involved with the group (including out-of-town groups) are aware of the RZone program.
6. Casual users (non-permitted) are expected to abide by, support and endorse the RZone program.

## **Procedure**

### **Education**

1. The Municipality of Middlesex Centre will promote the RZone program to raise awareness among parents, visitors, participants, volunteers, officials, spectators and patrons of the RZone operating procedures and, in particular, the importance of their role in creating a positive atmosphere.
2. The Municipality will provide training and education to staff and volunteers to support the implementation of this procedure.

## **Duty to Report**

1. The Municipality's primary concern is the safety of the service users and its staff. If at any time users or staff feel personally threatened, they are to call the Police immediately. It is NOT the expectation that staff or users put themselves at risk or jeopardize their safety in dealing with any perceived or real situation.
2. Municipal staff are to report acts of violence, vandalism or inappropriate behaviours to their immediate supervisor. The department director or their delegate will convey a report to the appropriate association(s) within 24 hours.
3. Patrons of municipal facilities are to report acts of violence, vandalism or inappropriate behaviours to a Municipal staff member and/or a designated person of the appropriate organization within 24 hours.
4. All incidents of violence and/or vandalism or threatening situations must be reported to the Police.
5. Organizations dealing directly with incidents are required to inform the Municipality of a resolution within 30 days.

## **Enforcement Options/Steps**

1. The Municipality will take appropriate actions when incidents pertaining to this procedure occur in municipal workplaces, buildings, facilities, programs, parks and trails or involve municipal staff, volunteers or members of Council. Municipal staff are authorized to act if inappropriate behavior or violence are observed or reported in the following instances:
  - a) Observation (or potential) of any physical violence or vandalism.
  - b) Observation of verbal abuse or (potential) threat.
  - c) The request of a community group representative (e.g., coaches), who acting reasonably is unable to get co-operation from parents, visitors, participants, coaches, officials, or spectators.
  - d) The request of a community group or individual who, as part of their operations, are threatened, intimidated, or persistently disrupted for the purposes of inciting negative activity.
2. Upon witnessing, suspecting or receiving notice of physical violence, abuse, vandalism or any other actions in the scope of this policy listed above, staff will enact the following operating procedure:
  - a) As appropriate, contact the Police.

- b) Without jeopardizing one's safety, advise the individual(s) to stop the activity immediately, and if appropriate, indicate that they will be asked to leave municipal property if the action does not stop.
  - c) If the individual(s) does not co-operate, inform them that the Police have been called (if not called at first, Police should be called when the individual(s) does not stop the behaviour upon request from staff). Do not engage in argument or physical confrontation but wait for Police to arrive.
  - d) Advise staff supervisor or on-call supervisory personnel immediately.
  - e) Prepare an RZone Incident Report.
  - f) Depending on the situation, request a full written report from a community group/representative.
  - g) Review the incident with staff and supervisors.
  - h) Throughout this process, cooperate and support Police during any investigation and prosecution process resulting from any charges laid.
3. Requirements of user groups and volunteers:
- a) A representative for each group or team must be on site at all times.
  - b) Representatives are required to understand the RZone procedures.
  - c) If a situation occurs and municipal staff are not available, a representative from the group should, without jeopardizing one's safety, advise the individual(s) that they are contravening the RZone procedures and contact the Police if necessary.
  - d) Notify Municipal personnel and provide a full written report related to the incident within the required time frame.

## **Consequences of Non-Compliance**

1. Individuals who engage in any unacceptable behaviour, as defined in this procedure, may, depending on the severity, be barred immediately from the premises and if necessary, suspended from entry for a period of time ("trespassed"). The suspension may apply to all municipal buildings, facilities, programs, parks and trails, if warranted. The length of suspension will be determined by the Chief Administrative Officer ("CAO") in consultation with the appropriate department staff, senior staff, legal counsel, etc. (will vary with each situation), and will depend on the severity of the situation. Please see attached Enforcement Guidelines Chart for further details.
2. All incidents that result in a suspension or barring from programs, facilities and properties will be followed up in writing by the CAO outlining the details of the suspension. The final decision related to the details of the suspension or barring will be made by the CAO or

their designate. All correspondence related to discipline will be written under the signature of the CAO or their designate.

3. Appropriate staff in facility sections and/or geographic areas will be notified of individuals who are trespassed from municipal properties and facilities. Appropriate organizations may be notified of the situation where appropriate.
4. Incidents may be reported to the Police and charges may follow.
5. In addition to any other measures taken, where vandalism or theft has been perpetrated, the individual(s) responsible will be required to reimburse the Municipality for all costs associated with any repairs as well as any lost revenues or where appropriate be asked to repair the damage.

### **Appeal Process**

1. Individual(s) wishing to appeal any disciplinary measure may present their case in writing, accompanied with a mandatory \$200 fee to the Appeal Body within 14 days of the decision. The fee will be refunded if the appeal is successful.
2. The Appeal Body, in consultation with the appropriate staff or organization, shall review the merits of the appeal within 30 days of receipt and shall render their decision.
3. Once the Municipality has communicated a decision regarding an appeal, there is no further appeal process at the municipal level.

### **Policy Review**

1. This policy will be reviewed once every four (4) years, or as necessary.

### **Appendices**

1. Appendix A – RZone Enforcement Guidelines

### **Additional Notes**

1. **Logo:** The RZone logo is used with permission from the Town of Oakville.
2. **Reporting Forms:** A simplified intake form is available on the municipal website. There is also a dedicated phone extension for RZone reporting. Full incident reporting forms are available from the Community Services Department and/ the Office of the Clerk

## **Appendix A – RZone Enforcement Guidelines**

The following chart represents guidelines and outlines the consequences for acts of inappropriate behaviour at all municipally owned facilities, properties, municipally sponsored events or programs, municipal workplaces, or in written and verbal communication (including electronic and telephone) .

It is understood that these guidelines do not include all types of behaviour, that each incident will be reviewed based on information available and that consequences outlined below are guidelines that may be adjusted to reflect conduct/actions. **Consequences may be more severe or escalated depending on the circumstances of the inappropriate conduct.**

Time banned is from all municipal facilities, properties, municipally sponsored events, programs or any other municipal workplace.

Incident	1 <sup>st</sup> Occurrence	2 <sup>nd</sup> Occurrence	Subsequent Occurrences
Aggressive or intimidating approaches to another individual (verbal assaults) Attempts to goad or incite anger in others Refusal to follow Middlesex Centre rules or a breach of policy, procedure, by-law, etc.	Letter of Warning	Minimum of 3-month ban and review to determine if further consequences are warranted	Minimum 1-year ban and review to determine if further consequences are warranted
Threats Harassment / bullying	Minimum of 3-month ban	Minimum 6-month ban and review to determine if further consequences are warranted	Minimum 3-year ban and review to determine if further consequences are warranted
Throwing of articles in a deliberate aggressive manner Physically striking of another individual Illegal consumption of alcohol or drugs Possession of weapons	Minimum of 6-month ban	Minimum 1-year ban and review to determine if further consequences are warranted	Minimum 3-year ban and review to determine if further consequences are warranted

Incident	1 <sup>st</sup> Occurrence	2 <sup>nd</sup> Occurrence	Subsequent Occurrences
Vandalism to building or property Theft	Minimum of 1-month ban plus payment of repair costs and 20% administration fee	Minimum 6-month ban plus payment of repair costs and 20% administration fee and review to determine if further consequences are warranted.	Minimum 3-year ban plus payment of repair costs and 20% administration fee and review to determine if further consequences are warranted