

Whistleblower Policy Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Whistleblower Policy?

The Whistleblower Policy is one of several ways City employees can report cases of waste, fraud or inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. It offers the option to anonymously report these issues when employees feel uncomfortable using other reporting channels for fear of reprisal. (Reprisal means: any measures taken against an employee who, in this case, has made a report of workplace misconduct.)

Why did the City of Mississauga introduce this policy?

We are committed to creating a safe, responsible and respectful workplace for all employees at the City of Mississauga. The policy complements the City's existing Respectful Workplace, Workplace Violence and Standard of Behaviour policies.

What types of issues can be reported through the policy?

Some examples of issues that can be reported through the Whistleblower Policy include, but are not limited to:

- crime or suspected criminal activity
- fraud and theft
- wrongful or unauthorized use or disposal of City assets, including money, information, data, materials, labour or equipment (including furniture and fixtures)
- unauthorized changes, untruths or manipulation to corporate documents, records or computer files
- the violation of public trust or duty
- danger to public health or safety
- the misuse of position for personal gain
- financial wrongdoings, including but not limited to: forgery or alteration of cheques, drafts, promissory notes and securities; misuse or mishandling of funds or securities
- any fraudulent claim for reimbursement of expenses by the City.

When did the policy come into effect?

The Whistleblower Policy was approved by Council on July 2, 2014. The program is in effect as of February 9, 2015.

Is the policy open to all employees?

The Whistleblower Policy is open to all City of Mississauga part-time, full-time, union, non-union employees.

How can I be sure I will remain anonymous?

The Whistleblower Policy's reporting system is supported by ClearView Connects™, an independent Canadian-based company, to ensure employee confidentiality and anonymity. Employees using the system are not required to provide their name or any other personal information when submitting a complaint. However, in some cases, investigation may not be possible unless the reporter is identifiable or if insufficient information has been provided.

ClearView won't release any information to the City that would identify you without your consent (you may consent by including your name in your report). If you do provide identifying information, ClearView will forward it to the City and may also be compelled by law to disclose it to legal or regulatory authorities. As you complete your report, be careful not to include any personal details that could identify you to the City unless you want to be identified.

When is it appropriate to use the policy?

All City employees are expected to report workplace misconduct, breaches of City policies, procedures and by-laws as well as wasteful, fraudulent or inappropriate behaviour in the workplace. If you witness or experience such an incident, you are encouraged to report it to your supervisor through the Respectful Workplace, Workplace Violence and Standard of Behaviour policies.

In the case that you feel uncomfortable reporting through these channels, the Whistleblower Policy allows you to anonymously report through a third-party system. It is an alternative channel to be used only when there is fear of reprisal when using the existing procedures.

How does the reporting system actually work?

The Whistleblower reporting system is available 24/7/365. You can anonymously submit reports:

- Online through ClearView's secure website. The site can be accessed at www.mississauga.ca/whistleblower.
- Over the phone through the dedicated toll-free number 1.844.420.0261.
- By mail through the confidential post office box at: P.O. Box 11017, Toronto, Ontario, M1E 1N0.

Once you report an incident online or by phone with a ClearView agent, you will receive a unique username and password. This information will allow you to check on the status of the report online.

Note: If you submit a report via voicemail or mail, you will not receive a login and password and cannot check the status of your report online.

Once the report has been received by ClearView, the system will immediately notify the City's Reviewers. Reviewers, who are City employees, are chosen because they are best qualified to investigate and resolve reports. For reports submitted online, ClearView Connects™ allows you to communicate with the City's Reviewers while remaining anonymous.

A Reviewer will respond to you to either gather more information or to provide an update on the investigation. The Reviewer will communicate with you until the report is closed.

For step-by-step instructions on how to use the policy, read the [User Guide](#).

Who investigates Whistleblower reports?

Reports will be investigated by subject matter experts, including City employees and when necessary, independent, impartial third-party investigators.

How will my Director/Manager/Supervisor use the policy?

Directors are accountable for ensuring their managers and supervisors are aware of the policy. Managers and supervisors are accountable for ensuring their employees are aware of the policy.

All City leaders are responsible for complying with the policy and cooperating with Whistleblower investigations.

Do other organizations have a Whistleblower Policy?

Whistleblower policies are legal requirements for all publicly traded companies in North America and are becoming more common in the municipal sector. The cities of Calgary and Toronto and the Town of Oakville have whistleblower policies in place.

Where can I find the policy?

The policy can be found online at www.mississauga.ca/whistleblower.