

TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Subject: Training & Development Ref: Personnel and Human Resources Code: 18

Date Approved: June 14, 2022 Motion No: 253/14/06/22 Replaces: 068/08/02/22

The County of Northern Lights is committed to the structured and systematic training and development of all its employees on an ongoing basis to enable them to acquire skills, knowledge and suitable qualifications in order to develop their potential and enable them to perform their duties diligently, effectively and efficiently.

The County of Northern Lights Council recognizes that in order to support continued growth and development for municipal staff there needs to be a consistent and equitable method of addressing the training, development and professional needs of employees in accordance with our County's requirements.



Chief Elected Official



Chief Administrative Officer

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

- a. Ensure continuity of suitably trained staff in key posts for the future.
- b. To provide a consistent and equitable method of meeting the training, development and professional needs of employees in accordance with municipal requirements.
- c. To ensure that someone is always available to fulfill any particular job in the County, even in the event of illness, resignation or death.
- d. To ensure that training programs are undertaken in an orderly way and that staff do not simply attend training courses without a purpose. In this way training initiatives can be properly focused.
- e. To develop career paths for individual staff members to assist them in their careers and building individual skills to achieve the goals of both the department and the County.
- f. To assist the employee in meeting his/her performance goals as they aligned with the goals of the overall department and the organization.
- g. To establish a highly motivated work force, leading to a decrease in staff turnover.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

Council will

- a. Review, amend and adopt changes to this policy
- b. Approve employee participation in training and development programs for the CAO where appropriate

CAO (or designate) will

- a. Ensure that proper records are established and kept up to date with respect to participation in training/educational activities.
- b. Monitor the effectiveness of training, education, and professional development programs.
- c. Recommend changes to this policy where considered appropriate.
- d. Assist the Directors/Managers in the development and implementation of a planned approach to their department training and development activities.
- e. Approve and recommend the participation of Director(s)/Manager(s) in specific training and development activities.
- f. Ensure that County employees are kept up to date on technological changes and receive the required training in their professions.

Directors/Managers will:

- a. Ensure that funds are allocated in departmental budgets to ensure that municipal employees within their respective departments can take advantage of various training opportunities which will benefit the department and the organization in general.
- b. Ensure that programs provide employees with the necessary skills to meet the current and future job demands.
- c. Assist the CAO in monitoring the effectiveness of training, education and professional development programs participated in by employees.
- d. Ensure that all training and professional development courses taken are recorded in the employee's personnel file.
- e. Identify and emphasize the ongoing need for staff development and training.
- f. Recommend appropriate changes in this policy to the Chief Administrative Officer.
- g. Regularly discuss training and development opportunities with the other Directors/Managers and staff.
- h. Evaluate employee applications for training to determine if the desired course is job-related and either approved or not approved for funding and/or time off.

Employees will:

- a. Make productive use of the on-the-job training and staff development opportunities available.
- b. Take personal responsibility and initiative for their professional development.
- c. Obtain written approval (e-mail) from their supervisor two weeks prior to the registration commencement of the course desired.
- d. Provide recommendations to their respective supervisor of training that will assist them in performing their role.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- a. Supervisors will discuss and develop a training and development plan with their staff at the annual performance review.
 1. Priority will be given to training & development directly related to their current position.
 2. Staff will be given the opportunity to take training and development related to their career objectives and/or County succession needs.
- b. Staff will be allowed to attend training directly related to the skills requirements on an annual basis with prior approval from their supervisor. Any employee who attends any course, conference, seminar, workshop, or convention without obtaining prior approval from their supervisor will do so at their own expense and will not be reimbursed for costs they incurred.

In order to limit travel costs, etc, virtual training options will be considered where available and appropriate.

- c. The County will pay all registration, travel, hotel, meals, and related costs for the permanent employees to attend approved courses, conferences, seminars, workshops, or conventions, in accordance with the Travel Policy.
- d. All training and development initiatives will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure the job specific skills requirements are still appropriate on a bi-annual basis.
- e. Training and development shall commence with the initial appointment of the new employees and continue as long as the employee is employed by the County. Existing employees shall be drawn into the training process in accordance with priorities established.
- f. All training must be work related and the results evaluated against pre-determined objectives.
- g. At the CAO's discretion, courses towards professional designations or tickets might require staff to sign an additional agreement including, but not limited to the following: return services, repayment of funds as a result of non-completion or unsuccessful challenge of exam/test.
- h. Any employee wishing to attend a conference outside the province must obtain prior approval from the CAO. A request to attend a conference outside the Country must obtain Council's approval.
- i. All employees directly working with Boards and/or Committees may be authorized to attend conferences and/or conventions associated with that Board and/or Committee, subject to the approval of the Board or Committee, and the employee's supervisor.
- j. Employees may attend other conferences or conventions if approved by their supervisor.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

The procedure assumes that the overall responsibility for making the succession planning a success lies with the CAO and Executive.

1. Identification of key positions

- a. Executive shall identify key positions within the respective departments.
- b. The CAO shall ensure that the titles used are proper and correspond to those formally adopted by the County.
- c. The CAO shall be required to ensure that the job descriptions of the positions are current and up-to-date and that specifications are on file.

2. Replacement Plan for each position

- a. During the annual review employees will have the opportunity to express their interest for career development towards key positions.

- b. Executive will, considering the background required as well as the skills needed for the job, give careful consideration to the possible candidate.
- c. Based on the skill needs and candidate, executive can start working towards training and development opportunities in preparation for succession planning and/or temporary replacement due to illness or absence.

ORIENTATION

- a. Every new employee, regardless of function or department/section in which he or she is to be employed, shall receive orientation training including but not limited to:
 - Safety Manual Safety and Payroll Administrator
 - Collective Agreement Safety and Payroll Administrator
 - Workplace Orientation and Introduction Supervisor
 - Policies and Procedures Supervisor

IN-HOUSE TRAINING

- a. The objective of in-house training is to impart skills, knowledge and to modify the attitude of an employee in the workplace in order to improve his/her competency.
- b. A staff member, being trained at his/her workplace, shall not be entitled to compensation in respect of traveling and / or subsistence costs.
- c. Attendance of all courses, workshops and seminars shall be recommended by the Department Manager or delegated supervisor.
- d. Executive may, from time to time, require that an employee be subjected to training of short duration in a particular field of study in order to acquire specific skills. If such training is conducted by an institution other than the County the following conditions shall apply:
 - a. The County must undertake to pay for all costs incurred for registration, books or modules, tuition fees and accommodation.
 - b. Clause (1) above shall apply provided the following conditions are met:
 - i. The duration of the course does not exceed 1 (one) month;
 - ii. It is a result of a skills audit and/or Performance Management System;
 - iii. The Director/Manager of the Department concurs that the course would be to the advantage or benefit to the County and the employee concerned;
 - iv. The training is relevant to the employees' day-to-day functions;
 - v. The employee is not registered for other formal studies of a similar or extended duration.