



Name of Manual:	Human Resources	Policy # 23.0	Page 1 of 3
Policy Title:	EMPLOYEE/VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT IN CONTROVERSIAL MATTERS	Original Date:	October 2011
Prepared by:	Resources Committee	Reviewed Date:	January 2020
Approved by:	Board of Directors	Approved Date:	May 2020

1. **PURPOSE**

North Lambton CHC takes a comprehensive approach to promoting the health of the community it serves. Consequently, its activities range from direct service delivery to individuals, to education of groups, to advocating for public policy change. Given the broad nature of activities which the North Lambton CHC may initiate or partner on, there is the potential for staff and volunteers to become involved in community initiatives or actions that could be controversial or negatively affect the organization.

2. **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all North Lambton CHC employees, students, and volunteers.

3. **POLICY**

This policy refers to issues such as but not limited to these types of matters:

- Contact with the media
- Coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations
- Political (i.e. all candidates meetings, meetings with political candidates)
- Meetings with political stakeholders and senior staff (i.e. Ministers, Mayors, Council Members, government staff)
- Community initiatives or actions that could be controversial or negatively impact the organization, or
- Any agreement(s) involving contractual or financial obligations outside the organization's current commitments

At all times, staff and volunteers are expected to follow North Lambton CHC policy on staff and volunteer Conflict of Interest Guidelines (HR Policy 18.0). In addition, staff and volunteers will take the following steps when considering involvement in an initiative or activity that is, or may become, controversial:

- 3.1 If the matter suggests a clear potential for controversy, real or perceived, the staff or volunteer is to inform his/her Team Leader, and together arrange for a meeting with the Executive Director and possibly the Health Promotion Team Leader to discuss the activity/initiative.
- 3.2 The Staff or volunteer, his/her Team Leader and Executive Director will determine if and how the staff or volunteer may be involved with the activity/initiative. The Executive Director has the ultimate responsibility for deciding on the duration and nature of the staff or volunteer's involvement in the activity/initiative, as well as any conditions that would change that involvement.

- 3.3 The Executive Director will report to the Board in his/her monthly reports any controversial or potentially controversial activities/initiatives in which staff or volunteers may be involved.
- 3.4 If the controversy is urgent and "full-blown" i.e. involves patient/client safety, potentially litigious, highly negative media report, etc. and there is inadequate time for completion of previous steps, the staff or volunteer should contact the Executive Director directly. The Executive Director will then inform the Board Chair (or other member of the Executive Committee in the Chair's absence) and together determine the need for Board action (if extremely serious) or most appropriate process to inform the Board as a whole.
- 3.4 Depending on the nature of the activity/initiative, the staff could receive a disciplinary notice, up to and including termination, or, in the case of a volunteer, have their volunteer status revoked.

4. PROCEDURE

Before taking any action or making any statement that may affect or commit the organization, staff must consult their Team Leader who then must obtain approval from the Executive Director. Subject to the nature of the issue, the Executive Director will inform, consult and/or seek the approval of the Board of Directors.

Should a staff member be acting in a volunteer capacity in the community, they should ensure that it is understood that they are not a representative of the organization. If an employee's volunteer role has potential implications for North Lambton CHC, they have a duty to advise the Executive Director so that he/she can work collaboratively with the individual to avoid any conflict of interest.

The following procedures will be undertaken with respect to this policy:

- 4.1 North Lambton CHC staff, volunteers and Board shall be oriented to this policy.
- 4.2 When a North Lambton CHC staff member or volunteer is invited and/or requests to become involved in such matters they will put the request in writing for their Team Leader.
- 4.3 The Team Leader will then review the request and present it to the Executive Director.
- 4.4 The Executive Director will approve or deny the request based on a thorough assessment.
- 4.5 If approved, roles and responsibilities will be clarified, and the employee or volunteer will keep their Team Leader and the Executive Director informed of any potential implications on the organization.

The decision regarding an employee’s participation will be assessed based on the following:

- Fit with the organization’s vision, mission and values
- North Lambton CHC Strategic Direction
- Impact on and for the community served
- Advantages and disadvantages of involvement for the organization
- Budgetary requirements
- Existing workload and time commitments

5. Political Activities

North Lambton CHC is a registered charity. Under the Income Tax Act, a registered charity can be involved in non-partisan political activities as long as it devotes substantially all of its resources to charitable activities. Any political activities have to help accomplish the charity’s purpose and remain incidental in scope. A charity may not take part in an illegal activity or a partisan activity. A partisan activity is one that involves direct or indirect support of, or opposition to, any political party or candidate for public office.

Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Resources Committee:

Date: 12 May 2020 Resources Representative: [Signature]

Policy Reviewed and Adopted by Board of Directors:

Date: 26 May 2020 Board of Directors Representative: [Signature]

Policy Approved by:	Signature:	Date:
Executive Director	<u>Katy A. Bees</u>	7-13-20
Quality & Chronic Disease Team Lead	<u>L. Linn</u>	7-3-20
Data Management Team Lead	<u>Kennie Maxfield</u>	June 30/20
Finance Team Lead	<u>[Signature]</u>	June 25/20
Health Promotion Team Lead	<u>[Signature]</u>	July 8/20
Risk Management Team Lead	<u>[Signature]</u>	July 17/20
Primary Care Team Lead – North	<u>[Signature]</u>	July 15, 2020
Primary Care Team Lead - West	<u>B. Kelly</u>	July 24, 2020