



# Halton Children's Aid Society Code of Conduct

---

## *A Message from the Chair of the Board of Directors and the Executive Director*

The Halton Children's Aid Society (Halton CAS) is committed to advancing service to support better outcomes for children, youth and families. Our programs and services begin with a child or youth and extend to embrace families, caregivers and service providers. As a community, we are collectively responsible for ensuring that children and youth in Halton Region grow and realize their potential within safe and nurturing environments.

The Halton CASs Code of Conduct is built on the understanding our actions demonstrate that we are working to standards designed to enhance the quality of life for children, youth and families. The Code of Conduct assists us in applying the Halton CAS core values in the completion of our work. The Halton CAS expects individuals to lead by example and ensure the Code of Conduct is followed at all times. Violations of the Code of Conduct will not be tolerated, regardless of the position you hold with the Halton CAS.

The Code of Conduct does not provide an answer for every situation we may encounter; instead, it promotes ethical decision making and behaviour in carrying out everyday functions. If there is a question about whether something is a violation of the Code of Conduct, individuals are encouraged to discuss the situation with their Supervisor, Director, Board Chair or Human Resources.

We recognize that employees, members of the Board of Directors, volunteers, student interns and contractors of the Halton CAS strive to perform their duties in a manner that maintains and enhances the community's trust and confidence. We thank you for your ongoing commitment and dedication to the Halton CAS and the important work that we do.

Sincerely,

Emad Elsayed  
Chair, Board of Directors

Sincerely,

Janice Robinson  
Executive Director



## Purpose

The Code of Conduct is a statement of values and principles and provides general guidance on the standards of conduct expected of employees, members of the Board of Directors, volunteers, student interns and contractors of the Halton CAS. The Halton CAS has high expectations for integrity, accountability and ethical conduct in carrying out professional obligations as a child welfare agency.

The Halton CAS employees, members of the Board of Directors, volunteers, student interns and other contractors engaged by the Halton CAS must confirm they have read and understood this Code of Conduct and that as a condition of association with the Halton CAS, they will observe this Code of Conduct.

This Code of Conduct is intended to supplement requirements approved by legislation, professional standards, collective agreements and the Halton CASs Policies and Procedures.

### ***What Should I Do When Faced with an Ethical Dilemma?***

The Code of Conduct addresses the most common ethical issues we might encounter; however, it does not provide an answer for every situation you may encounter. When we are faced with an ethical dilemma, we should reference available resources such as the Halton CASs Policies and Procedures, legislation and professional standards.

The Code of Conduct is about making ethics and integrity part of the way we think about completing our work. When making decisions we ask ourselves the following questions:

- *Do I think my actions comply with legislated standards?*
- *Do I think my actions comply with the Halton CASs Policies and Procedures?*
- *Would I make the same decision if my colleagues, the public or the media were watching me?*
- *Do I feel confident that my actions are not advancing my own private interests?*
- *Does it feel like the right thing to do?*

If we cannot answer yes to all of the questions above, we should not proceed with the action in question. If we have additional questions, we should seek guidance from our Supervisor, Director, Human Resources Department, Board Chair or professional association. Questions may also be directed to the Human Resources email box at [hr@haltoncas.ca](mailto:hr@haltoncas.ca).

### ***What Do I Do if I Would Like to Report a Concern?***

The Halton CAS encourages employees, volunteers and student interns to share their questions, concerns, suggestions or complaints with someone who can address them properly. In most cases, this will be the individual's Supervisor or Manager. However, if the individual is not comfortable speaking with their Supervisor/Manager, they can bring forward complaints or concerns to the Director of Human Resources and Organizational Excellence, the Executive Director or the Board Chair at any time.

The Halton CAS will make all reasonable efforts to keep reports confidential in accordance with the **Confidentiality of Reports** provision below.

## Our Guiding Principles

The motivating force behind all the decisions of the Halton CAS is based on the Vision, Mission and Organizational Values outlined below.

**Vision**—Children, Youth and Families Thrive.

**Mission**—We protect children and youth, strengthen their well-being and support lifelong, enduring relationships.

### Organizational Values

- Wellness
- Empowerment
- Diversity and Equity
- Integrity
- Accountability

## Policy

We shall fulfill our duties, obligations and responsibilities in a conscientious and respectful manner while ensuring we are adhering to the Halton CAS Policies and Procedures and applicable legislation(s).

We shall treat with respect the findings, views and actions of our colleagues and use appropriate Halton CAS channels to express disagreement or concern. We must foster an atmosphere of collegiality and support colleagues in their work. The Halton CAS has no tolerance for individuals who engage in harassing or intimidating behaviour.

We recognize that we are the public face of the Halton CAS and must engage in ethical and responsible behaviour at all times. The following standards are intended to help us meet our obligations and make appropriate assessments of situations we may encounter.

### Confidential Information

In the course of our role, we may acquire detailed and confidential knowledge of the Halton CAS operations, its clients and other confidential documents and information. We will not, in any way, divulge, furnish or make accessible to any person, either during our association with the Halton CAS or any time thereafter, any confidential information relating to the business of the Halton CAS, or of its clients, unless legally or professionally required to release such information.

### Conflicts of Interest

We perform our duties conscientiously and do not put ourselves in a position in which our private interests and those of the Halton CAS might be, or are perceived to be, in conflict. Conflicting interests can make it difficult for us to fulfill our duties impartially.

An actual conflict of interest occurs when we are performing a duty or function and, through the performance of that duty or function, we have an opportunity to further our private interests.

A perceived conflict of interest occurs when a reasonable person could perceive that we are performing a duty or function that may further our private interests.

The Halton CAS relies on the integrity of all individuals to declare an actual or perceived conflict of interest.



- **Employment Process**—We shall not personally make any decision or participate in the process to hire, transfer, promote, demote, discipline or terminate any family members, friends or business associates.

The Halton CAS does not allow individuals to be supervised by family members or appointed to positions where job responsibilities are incompatible with that of family members.

- **Gifts and Benefits**—It is essential to efficient business practices that all those who access the services of the Halton CAS do so on equal terms. We may not solicit or accept any inappropriate gift, benefit, money, favours or other assistance from any person or business that is associated with the Halton CAS. Inappropriate gifts may be returned to the individual or donated to a charity and the donor notified. We may keep a gift where the gift is nominal (usually less than \$30), an infrequent occurrence and not an attempt to seek an unfair advantage. If we receive a gift, we should report the receipt of the gift to our Supervisor.
- **Outside Employment for Employees** —Employees may hold outside jobs or engage in self-employment activities on their own time, using their own resources and in a manner not adversely affecting their performance with the Halton CAS. Outside employment must not interfere with an individual’s regular duties or involve the use of Halton CAS supplies, equipment and resources. Employees shall not engage in outside employment that may be an actual or apparent conflict of interest.

### **Financial Integrity**

We are to maintain financial records, expense documents, invoices, vouchers, payroll records and other financial documents with accuracy and punctuality. We shall not manipulate, falsify, alter or amend documents, information or records for fraudulent purposes.

### **Health and Safety**

The Halton CAS is committed to ensuring safe and respectful work practices and conditions and to providing a safe, healthy workplace, free from harassment, violence and discrimination. We all have a personal responsibility to take reasonable precautions in every activity, not only to ensure our own personal safety, but also to avoid creating danger to others. All individuals covered by this Code of Conduct are required to act in accordance with the Halton CASs Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Policy.

### **Human Rights**

The Halton CAS holds the worth, dignity and individuality of every human being as important. Therefore, the Halton CAS and its individuals shall not discriminate against anyone on the basis of any of the prohibited grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, creed (religion), sex (including pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, marital or partnership status, family status, disability and pardoned criminal conviction, as set out in the *Ontario Human Rights Code*. We shall ensure that we prevent and eliminate discrimination in rendering service and in our duties.

### **Intellectual Property**

Any work produced by us in the course of our duties with the Halton CAS shall be considered the exclusive property of the Halton CAS, unless there is a written agreement stating otherwise between the Halton CAS and us.

## Public Representation

We shall not publicly speak in the media or otherwise, unless designated as the Halton CAS spokesperson. Responsible caution should be exercised in speaking in public and media communications. We shall not publicly disparage the Halton CAS or those associated with the Halton CAS.

- **Non-Profit and Professional Associations**—We are encouraged to participate in the community through involvement with non-profit/community organizations and professional associations. The Halton CAS time and resources shall only be utilized with the prior agreement of management.

We may reach positions in non-profit associations or professional associations where we may be viewed as spokespersons for the group; we must ensure that we are not acting as a spokesperson for the Halton CAS.

## Use of Society Property

We are entrusted with the care, management and cost-effective use of the Halton CASs property, funds, equipment, supplies or services. These items shall not be used for personal benefit. We shall ensure that equipment assigned to us is maintained in good condition and secured appropriately. Technological equipment shall be used in accordance with the Halton CAS Information Systems and Technology (IS/T) Policies and Procedures.

## Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all employees, directors, members of the Board of Directors, volunteers, student interns and contractors of the Halton CAS to abide by the Code of Conduct at all times.

If we become aware of a breach or possible breach of the Code of Conduct, we must take the following action:

- where the individual who may have breached the Code of Conduct is an employee, volunteer or student intern, report the circumstances to their Supervisor or the Director of Human Resources and Organizational Excellence;
- where the individual who may have breached the Code of Conduct is a contractor, report the circumstances to the Director of Human Resources and Organizational Excellence or the Executive Director;
- where the individual who may have breached the Code of Conduct is a Director, report the circumstances to the Executive Director;
- where the individual who may have breached the Code of Conduct is the Executive Director, report the circumstance to the Board Chair; or
- where the individual who may have breached the Code of Conduct is a member of the Board of Directors, report the circumstances to the Board Chair.

## Confidentiality of Reports

Reports of violations or suspected violations of the Code of Conduct will be kept confidential to the extent possible. Information obtained about in incident or a complaint under this Code of Conduct, including identifying information about any individuals involved, will not be disclosed unless the disclosure is necessary for the purpose of conducting an adequate investigation, e.g., disclosure to individuals involved in the concern, such as the complainant and respondent and under some circumstances, a witness, or is otherwise required by law.

The Halton CAS will not tolerate any attempts made to identify an individual who reports in good faith on a confidential or anonymous basis.



### **Concerns of Reprisal**

No individual shall be disciplined for making a report in good faith about a violation of this Code of Conduct. The Halton CAS will take all reasonable steps to ensure that individuals who bring forward complaints or assist in an investigation are not targets of reprisal.

The Halton CAS will not tolerate any reprisal against an individual who has made such a complaint or participated in an investigation. Reprisal is strictly prohibited and will result in appropriate disciplinary measures up to and including termination of employment.

### **Opportunity to Respond**

Where it has been alleged that an individual has breached, or may breach, the Code of Conduct, the individual in question will be given the opportunity to respond.

### **Discipline Discharge**

Where allegations have been substantiated, individuals may be subject to discipline or discharge, as outlined in the Halton CASs Policies and Procedures and collective agreement.

---

I, \_\_\_\_\_ understand and agree to abide by the Halton Children's Aid Society's Code of Conduct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Witness Name (please print)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Witness Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Date*