

Next Step to Active Living (NSTAL) Ethical Practices and Guidelines Staff, Volunteers and Committee Members

The City of Mississauga is guided by the ethics of Trust, Quality and Excellence. These values provide guiding principles and practices to each other as employees and speak to our commitment to the citizens of Mississauga with all programs and services. Our corporate report to council, dated May 23, 2007, outlines and defines our values and identify how we communicate them now and in the future.

Trust

Upholding public trust is a critical responsibility for staff and is the transparent and responsible practice in which the City is governed. The foundation of trust the City of Mississauga clearly holds allows us to effectively work with our citizens, mayor and council to achieve our goals. All staff has an understanding of this priority of trust to our continued success.

Quality

We deliver services and programs which enhance the quality of life of our residents.

Delivering the right services that add value to our citizens' lives is critical because our services have outcomes that impact our citizens' everyday lives. It is critical to question and review anything that does not improve or maintain our participant's quality of life.

For staff, the quality of service that we provide is key to how we are judged by the public. It is critical to stay focused on our employees' quality of work in everything we do. By attracting and retaining the most qualified staff we will build a quality workforce that can achieve the goals and objectives set out in the strategic vision.

Excellence

Serving as a model of Excellence in Public Administration is Mississauga's reputation and responsibility. We continually need to deliver the right services in a superior way at a reasonable cost. For staff, the ability to deliver our services in an efficient and effective manner ensures that the citizens of Mississauga receive value for money.

Code of Ethics for Staff, Volunteers, Participants and Committee

The City of Mississauga's vision and mission is to help more people get more active and more connected more often in the city. As a program within the Recreation Division, it is expected that the NSTAL staff and committee make decisions and conduct programs and services consistent with that vision and mission.

NSTAL staff, volunteers and committee members are committed to continuously developing, improving and facilitating the personal, social, and physical independence of all participants.

There is recognition that both action and inaction can be facilitating or debilitating. It is essential that all individuals involved in the program demonstrate the mission and visions described above. Understanding and adherence to the code of ethics ensures a safe, respectful and trustworthy environment for all. The purpose of this summary is to promote the public knowledge of expected ethical behaviour for anyone associated with NSTAL. The enforceable standards within this document summarize the City of Mississauga policies that will serve as the basis and guiding factors for:

- the non-retaliatory processing of complaints.(i.e. whistle blower program)
- development of positive, professional, supportive working relationships with participants, staff, volunteers, committee members and others involved with the program
- Empowering participants to identify challenging behaviours and take measures to change their own behaviours working towards de-escalation of situations and socially acceptable behaviours

Staff, volunteers, participants and committee members who violate the code of ethics are subject to disciplinary action. Individuals disclosing wrongdoings in an honest non-malicious intent will be safeguarded from reprisals as per City of Mississauga Whistle Blower Policy.

Next Step to Active Living embraces the City of Mississauga values and incorporates these additional values:

- learning new independence,
- growth and development of the individual,
- respect for individual choice and privacy

When faced with issues these decision-making steps will be followed with the goal of providing the best possible outcome:

- recognize the issue;
- identify the problem and all potential stakeholders affected;
- determine a sequence of reasonable, concrete actions;
- anticipate and work out barriers that may arise;
- implement; take action(s)
- document the process,
- Evaluate and report the outcome.

The overriding spirit of the Code of Ethics is based on 5 principals:

- Honor the right of the individual to make choices
- Be respectful of others
- Do no harm
- Personal growth through education and independence
- Integration into the community through physical, mental and social participation

Rights of Participants and Enforceable Standards of Ethical Practice

Participants are entitled to and should expect that:

- Primary obligation of NSTAL staff is to their participants. A participant is defined as an individual with an acquired physical disability 21 years and over who is receiving services from NSTAL program.
- Staff work with participants in developing and revising Individual Service Plans that contain realistic and mutually agreed upon goals and are consistent with the abilities and circumstances of the participant. Tools and processes used to establish goals include, but are not limited to, program intake process, functional measures program, and informal conversations with participants throughout program participation. Staff will neither place nor participate in placing participants in positions that will result in damaging the interest and welfare of the participants or public.
- If termination of participation in the program is required staff will, whenever possible, secure the participant's agreement. If required a caregiver may be included in the conversations/decisions but always with respect for the participant. Termination of participation can occur when:
 - it is clear that the participant is no longer benefiting,
 - when services are no longer required,
 - when the program no longer meets the participants needs or interests
 - when there is failure to pay fees,
 - when potential for harm to themselves or others is identified.
 - violation(s) of the Code of Conduct, Activity Etiquette, and Bill of Rights.
- If an applicant is deemed not suitable for the program or termination of participation is required NSTAL staff will be knowledgeable about other opportunities/resources/activities and suggest appropriate alternatives.
- Participants will be advised that staff share information amongst each other, the committee and volunteers in a professional manner when required.

Respecting Diversity:

All staff, volunteers and participants will demonstrate a respect for each person's cultural background and will not condone or engage in discrimination based on age, colour, culture, disability, ethnic group, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital status or socioeconomic status.

Positive Treatment of Participants:

The following will serve as principles which will guide the actions of staff and volunteers while working with participants in NSTAL programs.

- Do actions:
 - Promote self-esteem and independence in participants;

- Demonstrate empathy and a desire to use knowledge, understanding and good judgement in a way to improve situations;
- Encourage participant involvement, growth, and sense of worth in a respectful and safe manner;
- Always consider barriers that may exist for participants and consider and communicate ways in which to reduce or eliminate them.
- Participants must always be treated with respect and dignity.
- Participant input into their program schedule is not only important it is vital. Input should always be accepted in a respectful way and this is completed as part of the Individual Service Plan process.
- Participants in NSTAL programs want to integrate fully into physical and social activities in the community. Therefore we would provide options that would assist with community integration and respect the choice of the individual and encourage independence in participation.
- All participants can expect a safe and comfortable atmosphere of learning and development.

Staff Members and Volunteers are committed to:

- Do their best to ensure that NSTAL program meets the needs of our participants.
- Respect, value and maintain the dignity of all individuals
- Create and maintain a climate of loyalty, trust and mutual respect.
- Support and help to maintain a work atmosphere where the work of each individual is respected and recognized for its importance.
- Recognize excellent work and accomplishments of co-workers, supervisors and participants.
- Treat others with respect, and courtesy in a positive professional manner
- Support and maintain a work atmosphere that is open, honest and transparent while being mindful of the need for confidentiality.
- State their position, opinions and rationale for changing/maintaining in an honest, respectful, sensitive way. Ultimately following the decisions of management as final decisions and implement them out to the best of their ability in a positive, supportive manner.
- Refrain from doing anything that might bring discredit to NSTAL program or participants.
- Recognizing that timeliness, enthusiasm, positive attitude and adaptation to change make for a better work place.
- Upholding all applicable legislation, standards, policies and procedures to enhance NSTAL program's ability to meet its mission.
- Being responsible and respectful of the resources and facilities.
- Using only City owned approved equipment in the operation of the program.
- Make every effort to identify and communicate areas for personal and professional growth and development that that will enhance NSTAL program and mission.
- Carefully consider the public perception of personal and professional actions and the effect these actions could have on staff, participants and NSTAL reputation.
- Taking no actions that would be considered or identified as conflict of interest and ensuring that those actions would not personally benefit the staff as a result of their involvement with NSTAL program

Committee members are committed to:

- Ensuring that NSTAL is operated in adherence to regulations and standards, with integrity and excellence in public administration earning and maintaining public trust.
- Uphold all applicable legislation, standards, policies and procedures to enhance NSTAL program's ability to meet its mission.
- Treat others with respect, sensitivity, and courtesy
- Manage NSTAL resources responsibly.
- Taking no actions that would be considered or identified as conflict of interest and ensuring that those actions would not personally benefit the staff as a result of their involvement with NSTAL program
- Carefully consider the public perception of personal and professional actions and the effect those actions could have on staff, participants and NSTAL reputation.
- Strive for personal and professional growth to improve effectiveness as a NSTAL committee member.
- Coach staff and volunteers when warranted and requested and fulfill NSTAL daily operational management to the best of my ability.

Fundraising:

Fundraising for NSTAL program does not occur.

Fundraising activities that staff /volunteers or participants are engaged in; for other not for profit, charitable, or sporting organizations/agencies can be brought to the program for sale. The seller may provide one introduction of the product and why it is being sold. The product or a sign for the fundraising event can be left out for view for a mutually acceptable period of time (as determined by the Program Coordinator and Fitness Supervisor). No further encouragement of participation or pressure to purchase is acceptable.

Staff/participants/volunteers interested in purchasing/supporting the fundraiser will do so as they see fit and will approach the seller. The seller may not approach other staff/volunteers/participants. NSTAL staff, volunteers or participants are not responsible for any lost or stolen fundraising items.

Solicitation of business/services or for profit items (i.e. Avon, Income tax services, etc.) are not permitted by staff, volunteers or participants. Participants may share information regarding goods and services they have been pleased with as part of general conversation.

Role of a witness for document(s):

The Program Coordinator or leadership staff can witness internal documents such as (confidentiality, ethics, hiring forms etc.) Staff and Volunteers are not permitted to witness any legal documents or external documents.

Use of Personal Equipment:

Staff do not use personal equipment for programming (ie: a stability ball or portable stereo) Staff are able to use a personal device as outlined in the Bring your own device policy (03-05-06).

Scope of Practice:

Each employee and volunteer is expected to work within the role and scope for which they were hired. Developing and fostering personal relationships between staff and participants outside of program service delivery should be communicated to the direct supervisor to determine if any conflicts/concerns may arise from such a relationship.

The following City of Mississauga policies are included in the Code of Ethics:

Conflict of Interest	Respectful Workplace	Standard of Behaviour
Workplace Violence	Access to Acceptable use of IT	Fraud and Theft
Accessibility	Acceptable use of IT resources	Whistleblower Program
Employment of Relatives	Public Complaints Procedure	Recreation Guidelines: Hiring and Placement of Siblings
Hiring Retired City of Mississauga Employees	Employee Complaints review procedure	Attendance Support and Management Program