



POLICY No. ADMIN 05: PHONE POLICY

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 14, 2025

RESOLUTION# 2025-229

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear standards for staff conduct when handling incoming telephone calls, particularly those involving aggressive, disrespectful, or inappropriate behavior from callers. This ensures a respectful and professional working environment and provides guidance for managing difficult interactions.

Scope

This policy applies to all municipal staff who receive or respond to telephone calls in the course of their duties within the Municipality of Grassland.

General Telephone Conduct

All staff are expected to:

- Answer calls in a professional, courteous manner.
- Identify themselves when answering the phone.
- Listen actively and respectfully to all callers.
- Provide accurate and timely information or refer the caller to the appropriate contact when necessary.

Inappropriate Caller Behavior

Municipal staff are not expected to tolerate the following behaviors from callers:

- Swearing or use of offensive language.
- Verbal abuse, shouting, or yelling.
- Threatening comments or hostile tone.
- Disrespectful or harassing behavior.

Staff Response to Inappropriate Behavior

If a caller engages in inappropriate behavior as outlined above, staff will:

1. Issue a Verbal Warning:
Calmly and clearly inform the caller that the behavior is unacceptable.

Suggested script:

"I'm here to help you, but I will not continue this conversation if you continue to speak to me in that way."

2. End the Call if Necessary:

If the behavior continues after a warning, staff may end the call.

Suggested script:

"As I've asked, we expect respectful communication. I'm ending this call now."

3. Handle Repeat Offenses:

- If the same individual calls back, staff will answer the call and again remind them that respectful communication is required.
- If the inappropriate behavior continues during the second call, staff will hang up again.
- After a second incident within the same day, staff are not required to answer any additional calls from that caller for the remainder of the day.

Reporting and Documentation

Following an incident involving inappropriate caller behavior, staff must:

- Inform the CAO of the interaction.
- Document the incident, including the caller's name (if known), time and date of the call, and a summary of what occurred and what actions were taken.

Support and Training

The Municipality of Grassland is committed to supporting staff in handling difficult interactions. Training and guidance will be provided to ensure staff are equipped with the tools needed to de-escalate situations when possible and to protect their well-being when not.

Review and Amendments

This policy will be reviewed annually by administration and updated as necessary to reflect changes in best practices, legislation, or organizational needs.