

Next (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/1-role-council-councillor-and-staff>)

The Ontario municipal councillor's guide

Use this guide during your term of office to help you meet your responsibilities to the people in your community.

This guide and is intended to give a summary of complex matters. It does not include all details and does not take into account local facts and circumstances. For example, it includes references to specific sections in legislation, but other provisions of legislation are often relevant. The guide refers to or

reflects laws and practices that are subject to change. Municipalities and councillors are responsible for making local decisions that are in compliance with the law such as applicable statutes and regulations. The guide, as well as any links or information from other sources, is not a substitute for specialized legal or professional advice. The user is solely responsible for any use or application of this guide.

Introduction

Your role as a councillor is intricate and involved. You will find yourself dealing with complex and sometimes contentious issues. Even the most seasoned councillor will encounter new questions.

Knowing where to go for information on the roles, requirements and relationships of local government will help you to fulfil your role.

This guide covers topics that are important to know throughout your term of office as a municipal councillor or head of council. It covers the role of council and the councillor, accountability and transparency, governance and law-making in the municipal setting, the fiscal context, land use planning and housing. It can help you meet your responsibilities and the municipality's goals and objectives, and provide continued high-quality service to the residents of your community. The guide also outlines where you can access more information about municipal governance, and gives you tips to help you fulfil your role as a councillor. The guide includes references to specific sections in legislation that can be a helpful starting point when you are considering a particular matter. Keep in mind that other provisions of legislation are often important.

For more information about your particular municipality and your role, consult with staff in your municipality.

City of Toronto councillors

The *Municipal Act, 2001* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/01m25>) does not generally apply to the City of Toronto; the City of Toronto is subject to the *City of Toronto Act, 2006* (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/06c11>). All references in this guide are to the *Municipal Act, 2001*; the guide does not reference the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*. As many of the issues are similar in both pieces of legislation, the guide should help provide City of Toronto councillors with an understanding of many of their duties and responsibilities. However, please be aware that the legislative sections are numbered differently and, in some cases, there are differences in legal powers or duties.

Strong mayor powers and duties

In strong mayor municipalities, the head of council has additional powers and duties. Read the strong mayor powers and duties (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/10-strong-mayor-powers-and-duties>) section of this guide for more information, including which municipalities are impacted.

Next (<https://www.ontario.ca/document/ontario-municipal-councillors-guide/1-role-council-councillor-and-staff>)

Updated: July 07, 2023
Published: November 19, 2018