



ROUTINE DISCLOSURE / ACTIVE DISSEMINATION (RD/AD) POLICY

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

A foundational pillar of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) is that “information should be available to the public”.

In keeping with the Municipality's commitment to accountable and transparent governance, the overarching principle in this Policy is to advance the view that information held by the municipality should be made available to the public, and any exceptions to this principle should be limited and specific.

The practice of Routine Disclosure and Active Dissemination (RD/AD) is a cost-effective and friendly way of providing information to the public by routinely making certain records available in response to informal requests for access or periodically releasing certain records. These RD/AD processes do not require the submission of formal access to information requests under MFIPPA.

2.0 PURPOSE

This Policy requires departments to routinely review plans for releasing or automatically making certain records available to the public. Departments will adhere to the requirements of MFIPPA to ensure an appropriate balance between ease of access to information and protection of privacy and confidential information.

MFIPPA provides the public a formal right of access to records that are in the Municipality's custody and control, subject to limited and specific exemptions to disclosure. While occasionally the municipality may legitimately require that a formal access request be submitted in respect of certain types of records, a practice of providing RD/AD for “everyday”, non-confidential records is beneficial as it allows the municipality to:

- Make more records available to the public and ensure that information is easily accessible;
- Proactively streamline the access to information process;
- Reduce staff time in responding to formal requests for information, resulting in greater cost efficiencies;
- Assist in reducing administrative costs;

- Provide greater accountability and transparency in its day-to-day operations; and
- Ensure a balance between providing greater access to municipal information while at the same time protecting personal and confidential information.

RD/AD should be the first avenue for the public to access municipal information and records. Formal access to information requests are only required when records are subject to the exemption provisions set out under MFIPPA. Where exemptions will not be applied, the request is to be handled at the operational level in accordance with this Policy.

RD/AD is consistent with the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario's Access by Design principles and existing municipal practices to make certain information available to the public.

3.0 Definitions

Active Dissemination (AD) means the periodic release or publication of municipal records and information.

Confidential Information means any information that is of a personal nature to Municipal employees or clients on information that is not available to the public and that, if disclosed, could result in loss or damage to the Corporation.

Department means the department that holds custody and control of the original records for the length of time required under the adopted Records Retention By-law.

Document Retrieval means the retrieval of relevant records within the custody and control of the department.

Freedom of Information (FOI) means a formal written request made under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).

Record means any information that's recorded in any format, including printed, electronic, or on film.

Routine Disclosure (RD) means the routine or automatic release of certain records and information in response to informal requests.

Senior Management means staff within the municipality that are part of the Senior Management Team.

4.0 APPLICATION

This Policy applies to all municipal staff and to all records in the custody, or under the control of the Municipality of Mississippi Mills. Personal and constituency

records of elected representatives are not considered to be in the custody or control of the municipality and, therefore, are not subject to this Policy.

5.0 POLICY REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Every department shall establish an RD/AD Plan that identifies:

- 5.1.1 Records that are to be disclosed without a requirement for submission of a formal access to information request;
- 5.1.2 The method by which the department will make the records available to the public, either in response to an informal request from the public or a periodic release, as the case may be; and
- 5.1.3 All department RD/AD Plans shall be approved by the Clerk's department

The following underlying principles shall guide the development of the RD/AD Plan by each department:

- 5.2** Where documents are not subject to the MFIPPA disclosure provisions, they should be part of the department's RD/AD Plan and handled accordingly under this Policy.
- 5.3** The RD/AD Plans are not an exhaustive list of records that are available informally, but provide a baseline of what information can be obtained without filing a formal access to information request.
- 5.4** Staff should not consider the identity of the requester (s) when determining which records are to be subject to RD/AD.
- 5.5** Transparency and accountability should always be considered when developing RD/AD Plans, and the method by which the records are disseminated ought to provide the public with as much ease of access as possible.
- 5.6** Each department shall review and update the RD/AD Plan(s) at least once a year.

As described in Appendix A, some records or information within a record are unsuitable for RD/AD, and specific types of information must be excluded (severed) from records before disclosure.

When the Clerk's Office receives a request under MFIPPA that should be released as routine disclosure, staff will direct the requester to the responsible department and, where necessary, assist staff in understanding their obligations to release the information.

6.0 SUBMISSION PROCESS

- 6.1** Requests may be verbal or in writing. The Municipality reserves the right to require that a request be submitted in writing where it is unclear or where the information being requested is personal, detailed, or sizeable.

- 6.2** Requests for records made under this policy should be directed to the appropriate department. Notwithstanding, the Municipality reserves the right to require requestors to make their requests through a single point of contact, the Municipal Clerk, at any time.

7.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

- 7.1** All municipal staff must comply with the RD/AD Policy and the applicable department's RD/AD Plan(s).
- 7.2** Senior Management is responsible for promoting compliance with this Policy and ensuring RD/AD Plans are developed and maintained in consultation with the Clerk's Office. Senior Management shall also ensure that the RD/AD Plan as it relates to their respective area is reviewed annually upon the request of the Clerk's Office.
- 7.3** The Clerk's Office shall work with all departments to identify types of records suitable for routine and automatic disclosure and be responsible for approving all RD/AD Plans to ensure compliance with MFIPPA.
- 7.4** The Clerk's Office shall also be responsible for developing and updating the RD/AD Policy.

8.0 Legislative Authority

- 8.1** Legislative Authority The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA), Municipal Act, and related Municipal by-laws and policies.

9.0 Fees

- 9.1** Departments may choose to charge fees in association with document retrieval. These fees are subject to change and are approved by Council through the passing of the fees and charges bylaw

APPENDIX A

**EXEMPTIONS OF THE MUNICIPAL FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF
PRIVACY ACT (MFIPPA), R.S.O., 1990 c.M. 56**

- s.6 Draft By-laws, records of closed meetings
- s.7 Advice or recommendations
- s.8 Law enforcement
- s.9 Relations with other government
- s.10 Third-Party information
- s.11 Economic and other interests
- s.12 Solicitor-client privilege
- s.13 Danger to safety or health
- s.14 Personal privacy information
- s.15 Published information

APPENDIX B

EXAMPLE OF AN RD/AD PLAN

Department Name: Clerk's Department

Type of Record	Description of Record	How to Access Information
Council and Committees – Agendas, reports, videos	<p>Meeting notices, agendas, reports, and videos for Council and Committees</p> <p>Exceptions: Some confidential reports, closed sessions, and in camera items</p>	<p>Online:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Calendar, Agendas and Minutes <p>Contact: Clerks Department</p>
Council and Committees – Minutes and Resolutions	<p>Minutes and resolutions for Council and Committees Minutes include decisions, motions, votes, and attendance.</p> <p>Exceptions: Minutes of closed sessions remain confidential where permitted or required by the Municipal Act, 2001 and the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.</p>	<p>Online:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Calendar, Agendas and Minutes <p>Contact: Clerks Department</p>
Council and Committees – Public Appointments	<p>Public appointments to Committees are made in open session at Council meetings. This information can be located in Council minutes.</p> <p>Information on how to join a committee or committee vacancies can be found on the municipal website.</p> <p>Exceptions: Actual applications and personal information are not released.</p>	<p>Online:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Calendar, Agendas and Minutes • Join a Committee/Vacancies <p>Contact: Clerks Department</p>

Department Director/Manager Sign Off _____