

NATIONAL COUNCIL COMMUNICATIONS PROTOCOL



Adopted by National Council on March 20th, 2022

Background

The Conservative Party of Canada's Constitution (see Appendix A) states that one of the governance objectives the Party must adhere to is ***"direct regular communication from National Council, Conservative Fund Canada, and the Leader to Electoral District Associations and members to ensure accountability."***

The Code of Conduct for National Council – which also applies to Committees of National Council and non-Council members of such committees – sets out how Councillors and Council Committee members are to treat information discussed at National Council (see Appendix A).

Although it stresses the importance of confidentiality, it allows for disclosure of information by Councillors ***"in the course of the performance of their duties to the Party."***

The Code also notes that Councillors ***"should assume that information given to the Council is confidential until management in the ordinary course of business discloses it. If in doubt, councillors should consult with the President for clarification."***

The Code states that it is the President's responsibility to ***"ordinarily make disclosure of confidential information to the membership or Party staff."***

Objectives

- Ensure Councillors understand their obligations on maintaining confidentiality, while meeting the Constitutionally mandated governance objective of direct regular communication to electoral district associations (EDAs) and Party members;
- Create protocols and procedures about what the President discloses on behalf of National Council; and
- Establish guidelines about what Councillors need to disclose in the course of the performance of their duties to the Party.

Section 1 - Media

The President is the official Party spokesperson for National Council business. The President may refer media enquiries to another member of National Council or appropriate staff (Leader's Office or Headquarters) depending on the subject of the enquiry.

In the event a National Councillor is contacted by a member of the media, the National Councillor shall notify the President (or designate: eg. Director of Communications) prior to any interview taking place.

Section 2 – Social Media

Any social media post by a National Councillor related to confidential National Council business must be reviewed and approved by the President or designate.

This does not apply to sharing official information already issued by the Conservative Party President, Leader's Office, Caucus, Campaign or Headquarters.

In the event of no response from the President or designate within 24 hours of receipt of a request from a National Councillor, the National Councillor's post shall be deemed approved.

Section 3 – National Council Meetings

The President shall provide a written report to the membership after each quarterly meeting of the National Council.

No information or report pertaining to National Council or any of its Committees will be released outside of National Council, without National Council first receiving a copy of that information.

This does not apply to the Articles 8.9 and 8.10 of the Constitution (distribution and recording of National Council Meeting Minutes).

National Council shall receive a copy of the Minutes sent to EDAs in accordance with Article 8.9.

Section 4 – National Councillor Reports to EDAs and Members

Any written report from a National Councillor related to confidential National Council business must be reviewed and approved by the President or designate.

The President or designate shall respond to a request for approval from a National Councillor within 24 hours.

In the event of no response from the President or designate within 24 hours of receipt of a request from a National Councillor, the National Councillor's report shall be deemed approved.

Section 5 - Governance

The Membership, Communications, and Technology Committee will be responsible for reviewing and considering any changes to the protocol it may wish to recommend to National Council at least once during a term of National Council.

Appendix A

Excerpt from the Constitution

6. GOVERNANCE OBJECTIVES

6.1 The governance of the Party shall adhere to the following objectives:

- 6.1.1 full representation of the interests and views of members;
- 6.1.2 direct regular communication from National Council, Conservative Fund Canada and the Leader to electoral district associations and members to ensure accountability.

Appendix B

Excerpt from National Council Code of Conduct

Confidentiality

The duty of Councillors to act in the best interests of the Party requires them to maintain the confidentiality of all confidential information and records of the Party and to not use or disclose the information or records, except in the course of the performance of their duties to the Party.

Councillors should assume that information given to the Council is confidential until management in the ordinary course of business discloses it. If in doubt, Councillors should consult with the President for clarification.

The President in accordance with established protocols and reporting procedures that have been approved by the National Council should ordinarily make disclosure of confidential information to the membership or Party staff.

Councillors may discuss confidential information or share confidential records with other Councillors, and staff, but they must not disclose such information or records to any person outside the Party, unless such disclosure is made by a Councillor in the course of performing his or her duties to the council.

Councillors must not use or disclose confidential information obtained from the Party to further their private interests or the interests of their friends, relatives, or employers, or any other person or organization.
