

Notifications

Non-urgent government operations are closed December 26 to January 2, re-opening January 3. [See the list of services available during this time.](#)



[Home](#) → [Housing and community](#) → [Municipalities and communities](#) → [Municipal government](#) → [Local government support](#)

Roles and responsibilities of municipal officials

Learn about the duties that each municipal official has to fulfil.

On this page:

- [Council roles and responsibilities](#)
- [Councillors](#)
- [Chief Elected Official \(CEO\)](#)
- [Chief Administrative Officer \(CAO\)](#)

Council roles and responsibilities

The council is the governing body of the municipal corporation and the custodian of its powers, both legislative and administrative.

The *Municipal Government Act* (MGA) provides that councils can only exercise the powers of the municipal corporation in the proper form, either by bylaw or resolution.

Councillors

Under the MGA, councillors have the duty to:

- consider the welfare and interests of the municipality as a whole and, to bring to council's attention anything that would promote the welfare or interests of the municipality
- participate generally in developing and evaluating the policies and programs of the municipality
- participate in council meetings and council committee meetings and meetings of other bodies they are appointed to by the council
- obtain information about the operation or administration of the municipality from the chief administrative officer
- keep in confidence matters discussed in private at a council meeting until discussed at a meeting held in public
- perform any other duty or function imposed on councillors by this or any other enactment or by the council.

Chief Elected Official (CEO)

The CEO can be a mayor, reeve or I.D. chairperson.

The CEO, in addition to performing a councillor's duties, must preside when attending a council meeting, unless a bylaw provides otherwise.

The CEO must also perform any other duty imposed under the MGA or any other enactment. In practice, the CEO is also generally the main spokesperson for the municipality, unless that duty is delegated to another councillor.

The CEO of a city or town is elected by a vote of a municipality's electors, unless the council passes a bylaw requiring council to appoint the CEO from among the councillors.

In a village, summer village, or municipal district, council appoints the CEO from among the councillors unless it passes a bylaw providing that the official is to be elected by a vote of the municipality's electors.

The CEO role, unless a bylaw says otherwise, includes:

- chairperson of council
- consensus seeker amongst members of council
- liaison with senior elected officials
- key representative with regard to ceremonial responsibilities
- liaison with other levels of government
- advice with regard to policy development

A deputy CEO will assume this role if the CEO is not available.

To learn more about elected officials visit these websites:

- [Alberta Urban Municipalities Association \(AUMA\)](#)
 - deals with issues and services for urban municipalities
- [Rural Municipalities of Alberta \(RMA\)](#)
 - deals with issues and services for rural municipalities

Interests of the municipality

A councillor is elected to look after the interests of the entire municipality.

A councillor who is in a municipality that has wards must be careful not to place the interest of the ward or electoral district above the interest of the whole municipality.

Council's effectiveness depends on councillors providing input on their areas while thinking and voting for the whole municipality.

Councillors also have to make certain that they do not put themselves in a conflict of interest situation.

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Every council must establish, by bylaw, a position of CAO. The council may give the position an appropriate title, such as Town Manager or Administrator.

The CAO is the administrative head of the municipality.

The CAO's responsibilities include:

- ensuring that the municipality's policies and programs are implemented
- advising and informing the council on the operation of the municipality
- performing other duties assigned by the council
- ensuring appropriate staffing is in place

Councillors work with the CAO to keep informed on what the municipality is doing and will depend on the administration to provide information so they can make sound decisions.

A performance appraisal system for the CAO is a key building block for a lasting and positive relationship between council and the CAO.

Designated officers

A CAO may delegate any of his or her powers, duties, or functions to a designated officer or to another employee.

Designated officer positions are established by bylaw and are subject to the CAO's supervision, unless otherwise provided by bylaw.

A designated officer may also further delegate to an employee of the municipality any of those powers, duties or functions.

To learn more about municipal administrators in Alberta, visit these websites:

- [Society for Local Government Managers of Alberta](#)
 - The professional regulatory body that grants the Certified Local Government Manager designation in Alberta.
- [Alberta Rural Municipal Administrator's Association](#)
 - Represents rural municipal administrators in Alberta.
- [Local Government Administrators Association](#)
 - Represents municipal administrators in Alberta.