

LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING

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New Legislation Related to Local Government Elected Officials

On April 2, 2026, the BC Government introduced two new pieces of legislation relating to Local Government Elected Officials as follows:

Mandatory Code of Conduct for Municipal and Regional District Elected Officials

On April 2, 2026, the [BC Government](#) introduced [Bill 17 - Housing and Municipal Affairs Statutes \(Code of Conduct\) Amendment Act, 2026](#) (Bill 17) to amend the [Community Charter](#), [Local Government Act](#), [Vancouver Charter](#), [Islands Trust Act](#), and [The Cultus Lake Park Act](#). If passed, Bill 17 would allow for a mandatory, province-wide code of conduct for all local elected officials in B.C.

Currently, approximately 68% of all municipalities and 81% of all regional districts have adopted a code of conduct; 29% of local governments do not have an enforcement mechanism for their code.

Key Points of the Proposed Legislation

Under the proposed legislation:

- A single provincially established code would set a standard of behaviour for all local elected officials in B.C.
- All municipalities and regional districts in B.C. would follow the same complaint and investigation steps, supported by independent investigators.
- A defined range of sanctions would be available for the councils and regional boards, including a maximum 90-day suspension without pay, with clear reporting requirements for the public to ensure transparency.

What's Next?

As of April 2, 2026, Bill 17 has gone through first reading and will now move to second reading. If passed, the amendments will allow a provincewide code of conduct to be set by a regulation, expected to be in place for the new councils and boards following the [October 17, 2026, general local elections](#). RES will continue to monitor the progress of this bill and provide subsequent updates as they arise.



Parental Leave for Local Elected Officials

Also on April 2, 2026, the [BC Government](#) proposed [Bill 18 – Housing and Municipal Affairs Statutes \(Parental Leave\) Amendment Act, 2026](#) (Bill 18). Bill 18 proposes an amendment to establish minimum parental leave entitlements for local elected officials.

Key Points of the Proposed Legislation

The amendments will apply to municipal councils, regional districts, Island Trust and Cultus Lake Park Board. The proposed legislation creates minimum standards that every local government must follow, such as:

- a clear definition of parental leave for all parents or parents to be for pregnancy, birth or adoption;
- a minimum of 26 weeks of leave and flexible start dates that can start as many as 4 weeks before the expected birth/adoption or as many as 26 weeks afterward;
- local elected officials to continue receiving their pay during leave, but they can choose not to receive;
- local elected officials not disqualified from office for missing council or board meetings during parental leave; and
- ability of the Province to make regulations, if needed, to support the new leave rules.

What's Next?

As of April 2, 2026, Bill 18 has gone through first reading and will now move to second reading. RES will continue to monitor the progress of this bill and provide subsequent updates as they arise.

Questions?

If you have any comments or questions about either of these updates, please e-mail RES360@metrovancover.org or call 604-451-6558.

Sources

“Improving conduct standards for local governments” - April 2, 2026

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2026HMA0033-000349>

“Introducing parental leave for local elected officials” - April 2, 2026

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2026HMA0036-000366>