



**EXTRACT OF APRIL 11, 2018 MEETING MINUTES OF THE
COORDINATING COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCILLORS OFFICE (“CCCO”)**

Re: Interpretation of the *Assistants Severance Policy*

INTERPRETATION OF ASSISTANTS SEVERANCE POLICY (CCC18-089)

Ms. Orr commented to the Committee that several Ward Assistants have resigned and have met the criteria outlined in the *Assistants Severance Policy* (the “Policy”) (CC030).

Ms. Orr further noted that she was requested to confirm when a Ward Assistant could return to provide Ward office vacation coverage, without jeopardizing severance pay.

Ms. Orr commented to the Committee that, in reviewing the Policy, she was able to confirm the Ward Assistant met the criteria of 54 months of continuous service, which meant she is eligible for 16 weeks of severance.

Ms. Orr noted however though that the Policy does explicitly detail the criteria required to meet the severance criteria; how to calculate the severance payable; the amount of time severance can be deferred should an Assistant want to seek employment as a Ward Assistant; and specifically notes that an Assistant cannot earn severance pay at the same time as earning pay as an Assistant.

Ms. Orr noted that Section 8 of the Policy, in part, notes the following:

“8. In the event an individual commences employment as an Assistant during **the period covered by a severance payment** they received for work as an Assistant, they must repay the severance payment to The City for that period of time for which the severance payment and the subsequent employment as an Assistant overlap.”

Ms. Orr continued by noting the Policy does not clearly define “the period covered by a severance payment”. Ms. Orr was able to convey that in asking several Ward and Office members, it was mentioned that through the years, there has been an understanding and application that the number of weeks of severance payment as calculated in Sections 4 and 5 of the Policy equates to the period covered by a severance payment.

That is, if it is determined an Assistant is entitled to earn 4 weeks of severance pay then the period covered by a severance payment is also equal to 4 weeks. This interpretation would be the same for severance pay earned up to the maximum of 16 weeks, as based on the Policy.

Ms. Orr continued by noting to the Committee that Section 11 of the Policy notes that:

“11. Interpretation of this policy rests with the Coordinating Committee of the Councillors Office. Rulings of the Coordinating Committee of the Councillors Office on matters of interpretation may be appealed to the Priorities and Finance Committee.”

Ms. Orr requested the Committee confirm its interpretation of the Policy as it relates to determining “the period covered by a severance payment” is equal to the number of weeks of severance payment.

DECISION AND INSTRUCTION:

Upon discussion, the Committee confirmed its interpretation of the *Assistants Severance Policy* (the “Policy”) (CC030 as follows:

1. The “period covered by a severance payment” would be equal to the same number of weeks of severance payment as calculated in Sections 4 and 5 of the Policy; and
2. If a Ward Assistant were to be employed by a Ward office under a special project contract, meaning the employment was not a permanent position, which would be up to the end of the current election term, and did not have employee benefits as part of the employment contract, then the Ward Assistant would be free to enter into a special project contract without contravening the conditions of the Policy as it relates to the period covered by a severance payment, as outlined in Section 8 of the Policy.

The Committee directed Ms. Orr to ensure this interpretation was shared with the Ward Assistants.

The Committee also directed Ms. Orr to coordinate with City Clerk’s Office to ensure this interpretation was included as part of the Policy as it is shown in the Council Policy library.