

Membership Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to address issues pertaining to membership within the Centre Wellington Chamber of Commerce (CWCC).

DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy is meant to work in conjunction with:

- The Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, which defines the powers of members common to all federally-incorporated not-for-profit corporations;
- Section 8 of the CWCC's bylaws, which addresses issues such as definitions of membership classes, admission of members and termination of membership;
- Other operating policies, procedures and Codes created by the CWCC.

For the purposes of this policy, membership / member is defined as those sole proprietors, corporations, firms, partnerships, joint ventures, associations, foundations, not for profit organizations, trade or professional organizations that meet the criteria defined in Section 8 of the CWCC's bylaws to belong to one of the classes of member within the CWCC. CWCC members renew on a rolling basis, based on when they joined, so the phrase "membership year" is defined as the year following them joining or renewing. The phrase "current member" is defined as those individuals or organizations that have paid the required fee for their membership year presently underway.

POLICY STATEMENT

The CWCC is committed to the continuing advancement of its membership through the provision of services and benefits that promote the growth and development of a strong business community in Centre Wellington.

As an organization that is voluntary to join, the CWCC exists to serve the interests of its members and relies completely upon their ongoing financial, volunteer, and moral support to accomplish its objectives.

The CWCC exists to serve the needs of legitimate businesses who are located within and/or serve the Centre Wellington community. While people often have confidence in using businesses that are members of the chamber and a chamber membership equates to business respectability in many customers' minds, we are not a governing body of businesses and do not have practices in place that guarantee or imply that chamber members have better business practices than non-members businesses.

In order to attract new and retain existing members, the CWCC strives to identify and implement benefits for members as a means of retaining and rewarding continued membership and enhancing the membership experience. Partnerships with the Ontario and Canadian Chambers enhances the ability of the CWCC to provide benefits such as large-scale loyalty programs.

Membership fees are based on each member's number of full-time employees.

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Membership is available to sole proprietors, corporations, firms, partnerships, joint ventures, associations, foundations, not for profit organizations, trade or professional organizations who are located within and/or serve the Centre Wellington community and who agree to support the Mission Statement, Visions and Objectives of the Centre Wellington Chamber of Commerce.

The Centre Wellington Chamber of Commerce (CWCC) will take reasonable steps to identify, respond to, and communicate material conflicts of interest in our member businesses best interests, including how the conflicts might impact member businesses and how the CWCC address them in your best interest. A conflict of interest can include several circumstances, such as:

- where interests are inconsistent with our interests or the interests of our member businesses;
- where member businesses may be influenced to put their interests ahead of the CWCC; or
- where there are advantages or disadvantages to the CWCC or member businesses that might compromise the trust you have in us. Our material conflicts of interest, both existing and reasonably foreseeable.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS

In order to achieve the goals of this policy, the CWCC will:

- Define, review and approve categories of membership within the membership classes defined in the Bylaw; and
- Define, review and approve benefits available solely to current members (Appendix 2).

ACCOUNTABILITIES

General Principles

CWCC members are bound by the Code of Conduct when participating in CWCC business. Employees and contractors of the CWCC are bound by the terms of their job descriptions or contracts regarding the handling of their duties; in the absence of any specific terms, this policy and the Code of Conduct will apply as best practices documents.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible for:

- Defining, reviewing, and approving categories of membership within the membership classes defined in Section 8 of the CWCC's bylaw;
- Reviewing proposed membership fees and approval of fees to be voted on by the Board; and
- Ensuring the CWCC's programs and services are meeting the needs of the members.

Membership Manager

The Membership Manager is responsible for day-to-day operations pertaining to membership, including renewal notices, processing payments, and renewal reminders. The Membership Manager also monitors the grace period (as defined in CWCC Bylaw Section 8.04) of three calendar months between the actual expiry of the previous year's membership and the final deadline to renew for the Membership following membership year so that renewal reminders can be issued to those members who have not yet renewed.

The CEO reviews membership fees every year and prepares a fee schedule for the Board's discussion and review, typically at the time of preparing the next fiscal year's budget. The CEO also assesses

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financial impact of new and existing membership benefits for presentation to and evaluation by the Board.

Member's Responsibilities

Members are encouraged to suggest to the Board any revisions to existing or the creation of new benefits, programs, services, or initiatives for members.

As part of their engagement with the work of the CWCC, each member is asked to, wherever possible:

- Maintain the accuracy of their member information and contact coordinates;
- Retrieve information through member emails, such as notices of meetings and briefing notes, that are required for active participation in the CWCC's activities;
- Monitor the CWCC's activities and reviewing Annual Reports;
- Convey suggestions and concerns to the Board pertaining to the operations of the CWCC;
- Express concerns to the Board regarding advocacy issues within the local business community;
- Respond to surveys directed to members and/or the CWCC community;
- Encourage colleagues to join and become involved in the CWCC; and
- Consider volunteering to serve as a member of the CWCC's Board, committees, task forces, and teams on a regular basis; and
- Participate in the annual general meeting of the CWCC.

Maintain Good Standing

All members shall at all times maintain their good standing with the CWCC. The requirements to maintain good standing are as follows:

- All members shall pay all required fees as determined by the CWCC Membership Policy
- All members shall abide by the purposes of the CWCC and comply with the organization's articles, By-laws, code of conduct, and terms and the conditions of the Membership Agreement.

A member may choose to cancel their membership at any point in their membership year; however, no portion of the annual membership dues are refundable.

Appendix 1: Membership Rates as of April 1, 2023

Membership rates are based on the number of full-time employees. All membership rates are subject to HST.

# of Full-time Employees	Annual membership fee
1-2	\$ 206
3-7	\$ 252
8-15	\$ 345
16-25	\$ 489
26-50	\$ 649
51+	\$ 834
Other	Annual membership fee
Not-for-Profit or Service Club	\$ 206
Business Association	\$ 448
Business Association Member Rate	50% off the regular rate based on # of full-time employees
Additional Business	\$ 130
Student Rate	\$ 64
Senior Rate	\$ 64
Joint Chamber Rate	50% off the regular rate based on # of full-time employees, for members of the Guelph or Erin Chamber; A member of the Guelph or Erin Chamber may join CWCC for 50% of the standard fee providing they do not have a physical location in Centre Wellington. The “home” Chamber is dictated by the physical location of their business. There are voting rights with a Joint Membership; however, affinity programs are available only if the “home” chamber does not offer them.

Appendix 2: Membership Benefits

Current members of the CWCC receive the following membership benefits:

- Stay & Support Local – membership allows you to get involved in the local community and to support, and be supported by, other local community members
- Be heard by a leading business advocate
- Build awareness of your brand and business with advertising opportunities
 - Exclusive access to the CWCC electronic sign
 - Exclusive listing on the CWCC business directory
 - Opportunity to advertise in email newsletters, on social media, and through sponsorships and other advertising programs
- Get leads and build meaningful relationships through our effective networking programs
- Stay informed through regular member-only newsletters
- Connect, learn, and engage at business-focused events, often with reduced rates for members
- Save money through a multitude of affinity programs and member2member discounts
- Access to boardroom and office rentals within the CWCC building
- Ability to serve on the CWCC's Board of Directors, Committees, teams, and task forces.
- Opportunity to attend (prior notice required, email chamber@cwchamber.ca) meetings of the CWCC's Board of Directors
- Ability to vote at the annual general meeting, which includes electing members to the CWCC's Board of Directors, receiving reports, and determining the CWCC's strategic directions.

Appendix 3: Centre Wellington Chamber of Commerce Member Code of Conduct

There is an expectation that all Chamber Members, Volunteers, Staff & Tenants will adhere to the following elements of the Code of Conduct.

Act with Honesty and Integrity

- Behave ethically. Ethical behaviour is characterized by honesty, fairness, and equity in professional relationships and Chamber activities, and respects the dignity, diversity and rights of individuals and groups of people.
- Don't abuse your position or authority
- Protect Confidentiality & Privacy of individuals & information

Treat Everyone with Respect

- Speak and Act with dignity
- Acknowledge differences in a respectful and professional manner
- Ensure the protection of others from discrimination and harassment
- Facilitate inclusion. Inclusion is a call to action that refers to actively involving the ideas, knowledge, perspectives, approaches, and styles of all involved.

Avoid Conflicts of Interest

- Understand, support and promote the Chamber's Mission, Vision & Objectives
- Ensure transparency in your motives and dealings
- Adhere to Chamber Policies
- Be Accountable for yourself in word and deed; hold others to the same standards

Protect the Chamber Brand

- Represent the Chamber in a reputable manner; be loyal and accountable
- Adhere to Chamber policies
- Ensure Full and Fair Disclosure
- Be mindful of our Environmental Responsibility

Report Contraventions of the Code

- Be accountable: when in doubt ask for clarification and report violations

Appendix 4: Centre Wellington Chamber of Commerce Membership Agreement

This Membership Agreement (“Agreement”) is entered into by the Centre Wellington Chamber of Commerce (“Organization”) and each member upon joining the Chamber of Commerce and/or renewal of their membership.

1. Member Benefits

Current members of the CWCC receive the following membership benefits:

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- Stay informed through regular member-only newsletters
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- Save money through a multitude of affinity programs and member2member discounts
- Access to boardroom and office rentals within the CWCC building
- Ability to serve on the CWCC’s Board of Directors, Committees, teams, and task forces.
- Opportunity to attend (prior notice required, email chamber@cwchamber.ca) meetings of the CWCC’s Board of Directors
- Ability to vote at the annual general meeting, which includes electing members to the CWCC’s Board of Directors, receiving reports, and determining the CWCC’s strategic directions.

2. Membership Dues

Membership Rates as of April 1, 2023 are in the table below. Membership rates are based on the number of full-time employees. All membership rates are subject to HST.

# of Full-time Employees	Annual membership fee
1-2	\$ 206
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Membership fees are to be paid in full at the time of joining or renewal. Currently, we accept the following payment methods: cash, cheque, etransfer (to chamber@cwchamber.ca), EFT (ask for details), debit, visa, or mastercard (in-person at 400 Tower St S, Fergus), and/or credit card online through the member portal.

Members shall be notified in writing of the membership dues at any time payable by them and, if any are not paid within three (3) calendar months of the membership renewal date the members in default shall automatically cease to be members of the Chamber.

3. Restrictions

The Member agrees that they will not:

- Share their login information with non-members
- Reproduce any of the information received as part of their membership and share it with non-members
- Act outside of the member code of conduct

4. Liability

The Member will not hold the Organization liable for any tangible or intangible damage that might happen to them while participating in the membership.

The Member agrees that the Organization cannot guarantee any results from their membership. Any negative or positive results that might occur during the membership are the result of the Member’s own personal choices.

The CWCC exists to serve the needs of legitimate businesses who are located within and/or serve the Centre Wellington community. While people often have confidence in using businesses that are members of the chamber and a chamber membership equates to business respectability in many customers’ minds, we are not a governing body of businesses and do not have practices in place that guarantee or imply that chamber members have better business practices than non-members businesses.

5. Privacy

The Organization will not share any contact or personal information about the Member with other members, non-members or any third parties without prior consent from the members.

6. Membership Termination

Upon 15 days' written notice to a Member, the Board may pass a resolution authorizing disciplinary action or the termination of membership for violating any provision of the articles, By-laws, code of conduct, or any of the terms and the conditions of this Agreement. The Member can terminate their membership at any point and for any reason and will not be charged for their next billing cycle. If a member chooses to terminate their membership during their membership year, no portion of the annual membership dues are refundable.

By paying the membership fee upon joining or renewal, the Member confirms that they have read, understood and agree to the terms and conditions outlined in this Agreement.