

**TO: Mayors/Wardens, Councillors, All Units**

**CC: Chief Administrative Officers/Clerk-Treasurers, All Units**

**FR: Betty MacDonald, Executive Director**

**RE: JANUARY 8<sup>TH</sup>, 2018 PARENTAL ACCOMMODATIONS COMMITTEE SESSION**

In December 2017, the PAC (Parental Accommodations Committee) was established. Committee members include representatives from the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM), the Association of Municipal Administrators Nova Scotia (AMANS) and the Department of Municipal Affairs (DMA) and the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women. The Committee's work is to develop a model policy and/or recommend legislative changes with respect to parental accommodations for municipal elected officials by January 31, 2018.

The Committee would like your feedback on suggestions and possible recommendations. A webinar will be held on the following date:

**January 8, 12:00 – 1:00 p.m.**

The webinar can be accessed on the above date and time at the following link:

<https://unsm.adobeconnect.com/parental-accomodations/>

The teleconference information for the webinar is below:

Dial in # - **1-888-289-4573**

Access Code: **7123705**

The slides that will be presented during the webinar have been included as an attachment for those who wish to join by telephone only.

**In addition to the webinar, you can also provide written comments to Municipal Affairs for consideration by the Committee. Emails can be forwarded until January 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m. to Nancy Bray, Acting Municipal Advisor, Department of Municipal Affairs at**

**[nancy.bray@novascotia.ca](mailto:nancy.bray@novascotia.ca).**



Phone: (902) 423-8331

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[www.unsm.ca](http://www.unsm.ca)

**PLEASE NOTE: If you do not want to receive communications from UNSM, please e-mail Tracy Verbeke at [tverbeke@unsm.ca](mailto:tverbeke@unsm.ca), and you will be removed from the mailing list.**



# Parental Accommodations Committee

Draft Recommendations and Discussion  
January 2017

# PAC Committee Members

## **Two members of the Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities (UNSM)**

Chair of the Committee, Emily Lutz, Deputy Mayor, Municipality of the County of Kings  
Timothy Habinski, Warden, Municipality of the County of Annapolis

## **One member of the Association of Nova Scotia Villages**

Don Holmesdale, Chair, Kingston Village Commission

## **Two members of the Association of Municipal Administrators of Nova Scotia (AMANS)**

Vicki Brooke, Policy Analyst, Municipality of the County of Kings  
Julie Gibson, Policy and Business Initiatives Coordinator with Human Resources, HRM

## **One staff representative from the Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women**

Stephanie MacInnis-Langley, Executive Director

## **Two staff representatives from the Department of Municipal Affairs**

Shannon Bennett, Director of Advisory Services  
Nancy Bray, Acting Municipal Advisor (Senior Policy Analyst)

## **Ex-officio members:**

The Executive Director of AMANS and the Executive Director of UNSM both serve as nonvoting ex-officio members.  
One staff representative from the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Alison MacDonald, Policy Analyst

# PAC Guiding Principles

## **Decision criteria include:**

- Parental accommodations policies and/or legislation for municipal elected officials in Nova Scotia support the decision-making process to run for local office
- Provide consistency and certainty for municipal elected officials regarding parental accommodations
- Consider the administrative and financial impacts of parental accommodations on municipalities as a body corporate
- Balance the needs of citizens for continuous democratic representation and support from their local councillors

# Issue Identification

- Why is this a current issue?
- Currently a councillor must ask council to grant parental leave via a resolution of council. It is at the discretion of council
- May be a barrier that prevents people from pursuing elected office in Nova Scotia

**Committee focused on answering the question:**

*“How can Councils support elected officials who are new parents?”*

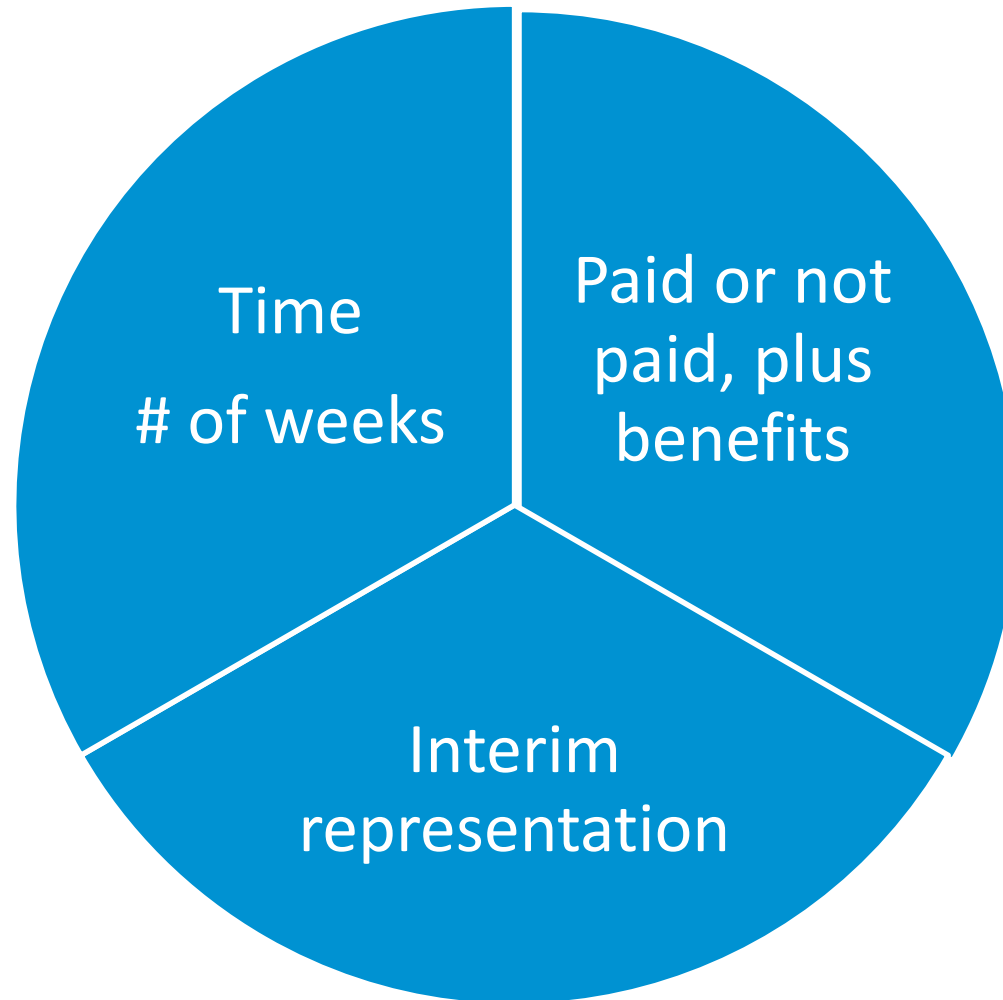
# Review of Research

- Concept of parental leave for elected officials is fairly new
- Elected officials are not employees, rather office holders
- Ontario is the only province with active legislation, Council must have a policy, maximum 20 weeks leave, rest of the details are up to Council including compensation
- Alberta waiting for proclamation. Must have policy, plan for interim representation
- NS Labour Standards Code: 17 weeks, unpaid, for employees with one year tenure
- Some municipalities in NS provide for leave without legislative requirement, as per motion of Council or other informal arrangements

# Options Considered

1. **No legislation change.** Education on current ability to provide leave via motion of Council and/or develop a model policy
2. **Amend legislation to include minimum standards** with respect to parental leave. Require all municipalities in Nova Scotia to offer the same minimum parental leave and related accommodations to councilors
3. **Amend legislation to require councils have a parental leave policy.** Leave all details up to individual Councils.

# Parental Leave Programs for Municipalities, Three Key Elements





# Draft Committee Recommendation

**1. Each municipality and village must adopt, by resolution of Council, a parental leave policy. Policies must include the following elements:**

- **Minimum number of weeks leave:** same as minimum number of weeks leave granted to employees under the Nova Scotia Labour Code Standards, which is currently 17 weeks;
- **Compensation:** the minimum number of weeks of parental leave must be accompanied by full compensation they would otherwise receive;
- **Interim Representation:** Must have plan to address how the municipality will continue to ensure constituents are represented during leave;
- An elected official must be permitted to return to any boards, commissions or committees served on prior to their leave, with exception of boards, commissions and committees that have held nominating meetings during that time. For example, if an annual general meeting is held while an individual is on parental leave to nominate new board members, and the individual is not nominated they would not be returning to their previously held position;
- Parental leave policies must comply with regulations.

**2. That the Parental Accommodations Committee develop a model Parental Leave Policy for Elected Officials that municipalities can use as a guide when developing their own policies.**

# Discussion

- What are your thoughts on the committee's recommendation?
- What do you see as the strengths of the recommendation?
- Do you have any proposed changes?
- Any further comments on parental leave for municipal elected officials?