



## **Fee Policy**

**Section 21.2 of the Conservation Authorities Act,  
R.S.O. 1990, c. C.27**

Effective Date: January 1, 2023

Adopted:

October 27, 2022

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the process for determining and implementing the fees the Rideau Valley Conservation Authority (RVCA) charges for the delivery of programs and services.

This policy has been prepared in conformity with Section 21.2 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the Minister's Fee Classes Policy.

## **Fees**

Section 21.2 of the *Conservation Authorities Act* and the Minister's Fee Classes Policy enables RVCA to set rates, charge fees, and collect for the delivery of programs and services.

RVCA applies the user-pay principle to further the objective of recovering program and service costs and reducing municipal levy reliance.

The fee schedules are designed to recover costs associated with administering and delivering programs and services. Fee schedules for planning and permitting are designed to not exceed the costs associated with delivering those programs and services.

Costs used for the calculation of the fee schedules include, but are not limited to:

- Staff salaries and related expenses
- Consultants
- Compliance costs
- Office space
- Vehicle costs
- Equipment and software
- Materials
- Legal expenses
- Insurance
- Administrative costs

Fees collected are based on the approved fee schedule in effect on the date the application was accepted as complete or when the program or service commenced.

## **Non-Payment**

RVCA may withhold services or programs until payment is received.

Non-payment may result in an application being deemed incomplete.

## **Refunds**

RVCA does not issue refunds for services or products once the application or order is submitted, the work is substantially completed, and payment is processed unless otherwise specified in a fee schedule.

## **Reconsideration of Fees Charged**

Any person who considers that RVCA has charged a fee that is contrary to the fees set out in the fee schedules, or that the fee set out in the fee schedules is excessive in relation to the service or program for which it is charged, may apply to RVCA in accordance with the procedures set out in this policy and request that it reconsider the fee that was charged.

Requests for administrative review of a fee are made to the General Manager or their designate.

A person requesting an administrative review of a fee shall specify in writing the fee being reconsidered and provide written reasons.

Upon reconsideration of a fee that was charged, the General Manager or their designate may:

- Order the person to pay the amount originally charged;
- Vary the amount of the fee originally charged, as the General Manager or their designate considers appropriate; or
- Order that no fee be charged for the program or service.

The General Manager or their designate shall provide a decision on the reconsideration of a fee that was charged within ten (10) business days of the date the written request for the administrative review of a fee was submitted.

For Fee Schedules A, B and C, a person who is dissatisfied with the decision from the General Manager or their designate, may request a fee reconsideration by the RVCA's Executive Committee.

A person requesting a fee reconsideration by the Executive Committee shall specify in writing the fee being reconsidered and provide written reasons.

Upon reconsideration of a fee that was charged, the Executive Committee may:

- Order the person to pay the amount originally charged;
- Vary the amount of the fee originally charged; or
- Order that no fee be charged for the program or service.

Once heard, the Executive Committee shall provide a decision on the reconsideration of a fee that was charged within ten (10) business days.

## **Review**

Fee schedules and this policy shall be reviewed annually by RVCA staff in conjunction with the annual budget process. Individual schedules may be reviewed on separate timelines to fulfill the needs of specific programs and services.

Changes to the fee schedules and this policy are subject to RVCA Board of Directors approval.

RVCA will consider the following when developing or reviewing its fee schedules:

- Legislative and regulatory requirements;
- The level of fees charged by neighbouring conservation authorities, local municipalities, provincial ministries, and other local agencies that charge for similar services; and
- The complexity of the program or service and the cost and level of effort required to administer the program or service.

RVCA will consult with the following stakeholders, when developing or reviewing its fee schedules for planning and permitting programs beyond routine annual cost of living adjustments:

- Participating municipalities;
- Neighbouring conservation authorities; and
- Primary user groups who represent interests of applicants, participants, customers, or other program or service stakeholders.

### **Notice of Fee Changes**

RVCA shall provide notice to the public, participating municipalities and neighbouring conservation authorities of proposed changes to the fee schedules via publicly available RVCA Board of Directors meeting agendas.

The public and common users of the services shall be notified via postings on the RVCA website at least thirty (30) days before the changes to the fee schedules take effect.

For planning and permitting fees, notice to participating municipalities and neighbouring conservation authorities shall be delivered via email or standard mail at least thirty (30) days before changes to those fee schedules take effect.

Written comments will be accepted any time prior to the changes to the fee schedules taking effect.

### **Public Availability**

The fee schedules and this policy shall be made available to the public on the RVCA website.

RVCA shall provide the fee schedules and this policy in alternative formats by request in accordance with accessibility for *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*.

### **Transition**

The establishment of this policy supersedes and replaces all previous RVCA fee policies.