



**CIPP
IPPM**

Civic Institute of
Professional Personnel

L'Institut professionnel
du personnel municipal

September 23, 2025

Ottawa City Council
City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Re: Council consideration of a Motion regarding a five-day return to office order

Dear Councillors,

I am writing on behalf of 2,800 CIPP members to ask you to send a clear message to Mayor Sutcliffe and City Manager Wendy Stephanson on hybrid work and the five-day return to office order.

CIPP members are the professionals who work for the City of Ottawa. Among others, they include engineers, planners, nurses, medics, and IT professionals.

For more than five years, many CIPP members and other City of Ottawa employees have been delivering high-quality public services to residents while working in a hybrid arrangement.

At the outset of the pandemic, anyone who could, worked from home. Since then, this has evolved so that 1,500 CIPP members and many others at the City have a hybrid work arrangement. For CIPP members, having a hybrid work arrangement means they can work from a variety of locations, including their homes, allowing them to better meet the operational requirements of their job while also creating opportunities for in-office collaboration.

Not everyone can, or should, have a hybrid work arrangement. Many City employees, including CIPP members, do work that requires them to be in their primary workplace five days a week, including our long-term care nurses and paramedics.

Having a hybrid work arrangement is not a job perk. It is a powerful and valuable tool to maximize productivity and efficiency in delivering results to residents. That is the case for the many CIPP professionals who are working in the community day-in and day-out supporting businesses, community organizations and residents, or who require focused time for writing, researching and planning.

CIPP members have proven the value of hybrid work over the past five years.

Hybrid work most certainly isn't a chip with which to play political games. But unfortunately, that is exactly what Mayor Sutcliffe has done causing unnecessary stress, chaos and confusion, which will inevitably impact residents.

And now, hundreds of CIPP members are considering submitting grievances as a result of these actions.

Furthermore, our union was not consulted before the implementation of this change, as our collective agreement requires. If we had been consulted, we would have reminded City of Ottawa leadership that our collective agreement requires that each member's situation be individually assessed. And, that requests for hybrid work should not be unreasonably denied.

No matter how it is managed, the implementation of a "five-day return to office standard" on January 1, 2026, will contravene our members' collective agreement rights on hybrid work and create further confusion across the City.

When you consider any motion before you tomorrow, I urge you to use this moment to ensure that City leadership changes course.

Please call on Mayor Sutcliffe, not to play politics with city services and the people who deliver them.

CIPP members' role in revitalizing the downtown core is not to purchase a \$15 lunch. Their role is to support you by developing and implementing forward-thinking policies and programs, as well as strong and sustainable infrastructure.

Please ask the City Manager to demonstrate respect for City employees and their collective agreements with the City of Ottawa ratified by this Council.

We share the City Manager's commitment to improving workplace culture, but we are deeply concerned that the steps being taken will have the opposite effect.

Councillors, thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Peter Bleyer
Executive Director
Civic Institute of Professional Personnel

cc. Mayor Mark Sutcliffe
Wendy Stephanson, City Manager
Caitlin Salter MacDonald, City Clerk