

MLP Unit 3 Course Outline (Municipal Contracts)

Last Updated

July 29, 2026

Course Description

MLP Unit 3 focuses on contract law and its application to municipalities. It covers subjects such as the elements of a contract, the capacity to contract, the formation of contracts, and the principles surrounding contract enforcement and termination. The unit will develop your ability to analyze basic components in different types of contracts that are commonly used in municipalities. You will also learn about purchasing and tendering processes.

By the end of this unit you will be able to:

- Determine whether a contract contains the elements of a valid and legally enforceable contract, and satisfies applicable execution requirements
- Apply principles of offer, acceptance, and consideration when reviewing the terms of an agreement
- Identify different types of parties to a contract, their rights and responsibilities, and factors affecting their capacity and authority to contract
- Recognize key terms and provisions commonly found in municipal contracts, including construction, service, land-related, and procurement agreements
- Consider relevant legislation, municipal authority, and delegated authority when entering into or administering municipal contracts
- Analyze agency relationships and the authority of individuals acting on behalf of municipalities, corporations, partnerships, and other organizations
- Identify factors that may affect the validity, performance, enforcement, discharge, or termination of contracts, including frustration, breach, and good faith obligations
- Assess remedies available for contractual disputes, including damages, liquidated damages, specific performance, and other enforcement mechanisms

The MLP certificate of completion will be issued upon completion of four units within three years:

- Unit 1: Introduction to Municipal Law
- Unit 2: Municipal Torts
- Unit 3: Municipal Contracts
- Unit 4: Municipal Land-related Law

MLP can be taken on its own or as part of AMCTO's [Diploma in Municipal Administration \(DMA\)](#).

Course Delivery Formats

AMCTO offers MLP in two formats: correspondence format and Zoom format.

- If you are taking the course in **correspondence format**, you will complete the assigned readings and submit assessments according to a given schedule. There are no classes to attend. Your work is graded by a marker.
- If you are taking the course in **Zoom format**, you will attend interactive online classes led by an instructor in addition to completing readings and assessments. Attendance and participation in discussions are important in the Zoom format.

All course materials and assessments are provided through AMCTO's online learning platform, AMCTO Connect.

A syllabus with assessment due dates is provided when the course opens each term.

Grading Scheme (Correspondence Format)

Assessment	Weight
Assignment 1	17.5%
Assignment 2	17.5%
Assignment 3	17.5%
Assignment 4	17.5%
Final Assignment	30%

Grading Scheme (Zoom Format)

Assessment	Weight
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Assignment 1	17.5%
Assignment 2	17.5%
Assignment 3	17.5%
Participation	17.5%
Final Assignment	30%

Course Grade Policy

To successfully complete the unit, students must earn a minimum grade of 51% on the final assignment and an overall average grade of 60% or higher for the entire unit.

Students who do not achieve 51% but score at least 35% on the final assignment will be given the opportunity for a re-write. This re-write must take place on the date(s) chosen by AMCTO.

Students who score less than 35% on the initial final assignment or under 51% on the re-write will be required to re-register to take the course in its entirety.

Assignment Expectations

All assignments are written assignments. They require you to analyze laws and hypothetical cases or problems related to the course topics to demonstrate your understanding of the legal provisions, concepts, and principles discussed in the textbook.

Time Commitment

The amount of time required to read the course materials and complete the assessments varies widely between individuals because they bring different levels of prior knowledge, reading/research/writing skills, and professional experience. This makes it difficult to provide a precise amount of time that will be required to complete the course work. However, we recommend preparing to spend a minimum of 35 to 40 hours over the course of the term for each MLP unit.

Due Dates

There will be a schedule of assessment deadlines in the course. It is the student's responsibility to keep track of the deadlines and understand the penalties for late submissions under Section 3 of the Education Programs Policy. The policy will be provided in the course syllabus.

Academic Integrity

Students in AMCTO's education programs are expected to abide by the association's policy on academic integrity (section 4 of the Education Programs Policy). Academic misconduct discovered in an assessment submission will result in a zero on the entire assessment. Severe and/or repeated instances of misconduct will result in more significant penalties such as failure, suspension, and expulsion.

Sources used in assessments must be properly cited according to the instructions and policies in the course. Using artificial intelligence (AI)- or large language model (LLM)-based tools or other automated tools to rewrite, paraphrase, or generate content (including but not limited to text, images, audio, and video) and representing it as one's own work is not permitted.

It is the student's responsibility to be informed about the definitions and consequences of academic misconduct. The full policy will be provided in the course syllabus.

MLP Unit 3 Topic Outline

Chapter 1: Introduction to Contract Law

- Key elements of a contract and other requirements for a contract to be valid
- The importance of basic contract terms and approvals used by municipalities
- Key rules of interpretation, developed through case law, that apply to contracts
- Key rules and considerations for the interpretation of contracts entered into by municipalities

Chapter 2: Elements Necessary to Form a Legally Enforceable Contract

- What constitutes an offer and an acceptance under contract law

- What is not a contract
- Contracts' provisions and terms
- Statutes affecting contracts
- Key contract considerations that are unique to municipalities

Chapter 3: Parties, Execution, and Agency

- Which parties have the legal capacity to enter into a binding contract
- The rights and responsibilities of municipalities boards, agencies, or commissions in a contract
- Contractual dealings involving business corporations, clubs, associations, sporting groups, and charitable and religious organizations
- The various ways that agency may be created and how this applies to municipal contracting

Chapter 4: Special Contracts Relevant to Municipalities

- Special kinds of contracts municipalities often enter into, including construction contracts, consultant's contracts, computer contracts, and real property-related contracts
- The different kinds of shared risk agreements
- Provisions relating to *Sale of Goods* and *Planning Act* contracts
- Nuances in municipal contracts that may affect enforceability
- Limitations on municipal contracting (the bonusing prohibition)

Chapter 5: Contract Termination and Enforcement

- Factors and principles that constitute the termination of a contract
- Vitiating factors in a contract
- The various methods by which a contract is discharged
- How a contract may be enforced after it is breached

Chapter 6: Purchasing and Tendering

- How the *Municipal Act, 2001* relates to municipal procurement
- The most commonly used procurement models in municipalities and how they work
- The significance and implications of judicial inquiries to municipal procurement
- Significant principles identified by the courts related to municipal procurement

- Requirements for procurement by-laws
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The Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario

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