



County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 Municipal Policy

Department:

Policy No.

12.0 Corporate Services

12.0.14

Title Social Media Policy

1. Policy Statement:

- 1.1. The County of Wetaskiwin considers social media to be an important and integral part of marketing and communication for the County of Wetaskiwin. Social media will be used to augment traditional communications methods and drive traffic to the County of Wetaskiwin website, which is the main source for information regarding County of Wetaskiwin programs and services.
- 1.2. This policy will be administered by the Manager of Communications and Strategic Initiative, within the office of the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 1.3. This policy applies to all County staff and specifically to County staff who have been authorized to post information on behalf of the County on designated social media sites and on the Official County website.

2. Responsibilities:

- 2.1. Chief Administrative Officer:
 - a. Shall assess and approve the social media site(s) available for use by County Departments.
- 2.2. Manager of Communications and Strategic Initiative:
 - a. Shall review and approve content submitted by each department for upload to the social media site(s) and County website.
- 2.3. Departmental Leaders:
 - a. Shall determine who is authorized to create and send in social media and website content for approval on behalf of the department.

3. Social Media Moderation

- 3.1. County social media sites shall be created and maintained in accordance with County style conventions, including the official County logo. All official County sites shall include accurate contact information for the County Administrative Office.
- 3.2. When using County social media site(s), equal consideration must be given to the following:
 - a. The County's Vision, Mission and Core Values and alignment with County policies.
 - b. Administrative Directive, Social Media Best Practices.
 - c. The reputation and ability for the social media site to reach the intended audience.

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- d. The approach to be used in content moderation and the moderator tools provided by the social media platform.
- e. That County content, including images and videos, will likely be downloaded, shared, re-posted and/or altered on the same or other sites.

3.3. The County will post, monitor, and/or respond to social media conversations in a manner that is identifiable to being made by or on behalf of the County by an authorized spokesperson. County social media sites will be monitored during regular administration office hours as set out in the Office Hours Policy and during County emergency situations as determined by Administration.

3.4. The County of Wetaskiwin reserves the right to remove comments, posts, or content that contains any of the following:

- a. Content not related to the County of Wetaskiwin, its programs or affiliates.
- b. Profane language or content.
- c. Discriminatory or hateful language.
- d. Explicit content or links to explicit content.
- e. Unsolicited advertisement of services, products or political organizations.
- f. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
- g. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
- h. Comments relating to specific election candidate campaigns, platforms or opinions.
- i. Defamatory comments regarding staff or Council.
- j. Spam, advertising or links to other sites.
- k. Clearly off topic, and/or disruptive.
- l. Infringe on copyrights or trademarks.
- m. Violate any County of Wetaskiwin policies.
- n. Personnel information.

4. Personal Social Media:

4.1. County staff have the same rights of free speech as citizens. However, staff members are still bound by the official County policies and procedures, and the Protection of Privacy Act (POPA).

4.2. Posts involving the following may subject the individual to the Incremental Discipline Policy.

- a. Disclose County information or content that they are not specifically authorized to disclose.

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- b. Post discriminatory or defamatory statements regarding the County and County staff.
 - c. Spend time on social media sites during working hours unless work related.
- 4.3. Official County statements can only be issued by the official County social media site(s) and website. County staff members cannot issue official County statements via their personal social media accounts, only personal opinions.
- 5. **Legal Liability:**
 - 5.1. Sharing or posting content owned by others will be performed in accordance with copyright, fair use and established laws pertaining to materials owned by others. This includes, but is not limited to, quotes, images, documents, links, and other forms of intellectual property, whether digital form or otherwise.
 - 5.2. Electronic information posted to a social media site by someone authorized by the County, or a member of the public, will be considered a public document or statement.
 - 5.3. Content on the County social media sites will be transitory in nature.
 - 5.4. Information and comments shared through social media channels will comply with the County's Policies and Procedures and shall not disclose confidential or proprietary information.
- 6. **Record Retention:**
 - 6.1. Any content removed based on the guidelines in Section 3.5 must be retained, including the time, date and identity of poster when available.
- 7. **Related Documents:**
 - 7.1. Administrative Directive: Social Media Best Practices
- 8. **Definitions:** are created and maintained in the Definition Index.

Previously Signed
Scott MacDougall, CAO

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Council Resolution



County of Wetaskiwin No. 10 Policy Directive

Social Media Best Practice

1. BEST PRACTICES

- a. Social Media Sites are an ever-changing environment, open to everyone in the world to use. As such, it is important for the County to have a Best Practices procedure to ensure the correct usage of these networks, and to maintain the municipality's reputation and integrity.

2. CONTENT GUIDELINES

- a. Posting guidelines for followers:

The County strives for a balanced, fair and honest online dialogue. Regardless of whether the comment is favorable to the County or not, fair comments, as determined by administrators of the Social Media Network, will stand. However, if comments are in contradiction to the Guidelines as set out in the Social Media Policy, they may be removed by administrators of the Social Media Network (Manager of Communications and Strategic Initiative and/or Information Services staff). Continuous attacks that are in contradiction to the Guidelines by the same user will lead to that user being banned from the County's Social Media site.

- b. Posting guidelines for general staff:

The Manager of Communications and Strategic Initiative and/or Information Services Staff monitor all County Social Media Sites and Platforms. Any posts made by any County staff on the County platforms which contain offensive, libelous or malicious content will be noted, recorded and then deleted from said platform. The record will then be given to the CAO and may result in disciplinary action.

- c. Posting guidelines for Communications and Information Services Staff:

Conversations on Social Media Platforms are often informal. Responses to conversations on Social Media Platforms may be informal as well. However, it is important to remain professional in dealing with the public in this online environment. As it is a public forum, this means all comments can be reposted by users, including the media. The following should be kept in mind when making or responding to posts on Social Media Sites:

- i. Maintain a respectful, constructive tone.
- ii. Refrain from using Internet slang.
- iii. Stick to the facts. Do not engage in debate.
- iv. Do not launch personal attacks against followers.
- v. Do not make partisan or political comments.
- vi. Do not criticize County procedures, policies or business practices.
- vii. Do not post anything not meant for public consumption. Adhere to confidentiality standards.
- viii. Do not link to material that would be in contravention of the Guidelines as outlined in the County Social Media Policy.
- ix. If a staff member is unsure how to answer or handle a situation, seek advice from the CAO or the Director of the department of which the situation relates to.