



Policy Title: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
Policy Number: AD 2017-02
Policy Section: TBD
Authored by Department: Administration
Date of Council Approval: November 16, 2015
Date of Revision(s): October 23, 2017

PURPOSE

This Social Media Policy outlines for all employees of the Town of Lincoln and members of Council, the corporate standards and principles of communicating Town business through social media, including personal use.

The Town's intent is to use social media as an effective communication tool to encourage information sharing and dialogue. Like the website, social media is an extension of your brand and further demonstrates the organization's identity and values in the community. Social media channels may include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, blogs, review sites, forums, online communities, location-based networks like foursquare and any similar online platforms. The policy can be expanded to include new avenues of social media approved by the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO).

Additionally, the policy serves to:

- Protect the Town's reputation and ensure consistency and professionalism in how the Town and its employees communicate about Town business with our public stakeholders via all social media/networking sites
- Provide employees and members of Council with an understanding of the acceptable corporate and personal use of social media sites and/or personal websites as they relate to discussing Town business
- To establish protocols, criteria and courses of action for:
 - Appropriate monitoring and administration of corporate social media tools
 - Providing timely, effective and accurate information and responses
 - Ensuring a mechanism to address controversial or sensitive matters relating to online content about the Town of Lincoln, its business or its employees
 - Ensuring appropriate protection of privacy of the public who engage or interact with the Town via social media/networking tools
 - Support and adhere to the following policies and legislated acts:
 - Town of Lincoln Employee Code of Conduct
 - Town of Lincoln Council Code of Conduct



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- Town of Lincoln Workplace Violence & Harassment Policy
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Canadian Anti-Spam Legislation

OPERATING STRUCTURE

Official Town social media channels are administered and monitored by the Senior Communications Advisor or designate, in alignment with organization’s overall communication strategies. Where other social media platforms are identified for specific corporate business (e.g., Lincoln Fire and Rescue), the Senior Communications Advisor will designate an administrator to oversee that account and establish monitoring and response protocol that aligns with the management and guideline principles within this policy.

MANGAGEMENT (GUIDELINES AND PRINCIPLES)

Engaging in social media is understood to be a daily process. The Senior Communications Advisor updates and responds actively in a professional manner. Staff are encouraged to send content suggestions to the Senior Communications Advisor.

The Senior Communications Advisor or designate follows the guidelines below for content, comments or links.

| Acceptable |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Messages and posts should be simple and engaging • Messages and posts should link the reader to further information on the Town’s website or other external credible resources • Messages and posts positively promote the business of the Town • Content should be relevant and provide value to the online community audience • Messages and posts should reflect direct delivered programs, events and services • The Town of Lincoln must have written consent to use or publish photographs featuring program participant or event attendees |



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Unacceptable (but not limited to)

- Comments not topically related to the particular site
- Content in violation of the Town’s workplace Violence and Harassment Policy
- Profane language or content
- Personal attacks on individuals or specific groups
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation
- Sexual content or links to sexual content
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
- Content related to non-Town related sales, advertising or promotions
- Content for the purposes of promoting a candidate for municipal, provincial or federal election or a political party or platform.
- Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems
- Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party
- Content cannot contain personal opinions
- Use of copyrighted photos or personal photos without written consent.

Employees and members of Council representing the Town via social media are expected to conduct themselves professionally as representatives of the Town at all times and in accordance with the Code of Conduct and the Workplace Violence/Harassment Policy.

Any employee, who has contravened the policy, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. An employee under investigation may be suspended with or without pay, pending completion of the investigation.



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CONTROVERSIAL OR SENSITIVE MATTERS

Town of Lincoln social networking sites will include an introductory statement, including a disclaimer and posting guidelines that clearly specifies what content is unacceptable and will be subject to removal without notification.

The Town of Lincoln strives for a balanced online dialogue. However, if the content is in violation of this policy or is offensive, denigrating and out of context, the content will be rejected and/or removed. All open forums/walls/comment section will be monitored and a disclaimer posted where it can be seen and referenced easily.

The discovery of inappropriate contents or dialogue on Town social media channels should be reported to the Senior Communications Advisor immediately. Printing document proof or taking a screen shot should be made prior to deleting the post or message. The Senior Communications Advisor advise the CAO of any infractions and further direction from the CAO may be required.

PRIVACY

Communication in social media sites or accounts should always be considered public and permanent. Online communities are not private; posts may be accessed by a wider audience than intended or copied by others and published elsewhere without permission or knowledge.

The Town monitors content posted on social media sites and may modify or remove any posts that conflict with Town policies or guidelines or relevant Provincial and Federal legislation.

The Town will ensure appropriate protection of privacy of the public who engage or interact with the Town via social media/networking by being in compliance with the MFIPPA, <http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m56>. However, the Town cannot be held responsible for the policies specific to a particular third-party site.



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PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

Employees and members of Council, in their private capacity as a citizen, may want to use social media to share information and communicate with friends, family and co-workers. While conducting Town business, employees must use social media accounts for work purposes only. Employees and members of Council using social media for personal purposes should consider that they may be identified as a Town employee or representing the Town by the posting of their name, place of work, a photograph or by the content of a post.

Employees should not:

- Discuss Town related matters
- Reveal confidential or privileged Town information
- Reveal anyone's personal information gained through work, such as client or employee information
- Identify or comment about other Town employees or citizens without their consent
- Use, modify or post materials that are owned/copyrighted by the Town of Lincoln, including images, screenshots, video or information.
- Comment on behalf of the Town of Lincoln or as an employee of the Town

Any employee, who has contravened the policy, shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. An employee under investigation may be suspended with or without pay, pending completion of the investigation