

TOWN OF LOCKEPORT
POLICY STATEMENT

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

GG~026

Effective Date: June 11, 2018

Revision Date:
March 7, 2024

General Statement of Policy

It shall be the policy of the Town of Lockeport (“Town”) to provide clarity and direction respecting the use of social media for employees, volunteers and elected officials.

Policy Objectives

1. To establish a policy that promotes municipal transparency and accountability to the public; and,
2. Provides clarity to employees, volunteers and elected officials with respect to their role representing the Town, and their interactions and representations on social media.

Policy Directions

Town’s Social Media Accounts and Postings

1. The creation and administration of social media sites, including but not limited to, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, representing the Town must be authorized in advance by the Town Clerk/Treasurer.
2. Administrative Access to the Town’s social media accounts and postings will be authorized by the Town Clerk/Treasurer. Only persons authorized per the Town Clerk/Treasurer shall post on behalf of the Town on any social media medium. Further, only content approved by the Town Clerk/Treasurer or their delegate shall be posted on behalf of the Town.
3. When the Town uses a social media site which allows public comments and posts, the following content will not be permitted:
 - ~ Comments/posts not related to a posted article/topic/information;
 - ~ Business solicitation;
 - ~ Profane or inappropriate language;
 - ~ Content considered to be defamatory, disparaging, disrespectful or insulting to individuals, including Town Council, staff or representatives;
 - ~ Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or any

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- ~ other prohibited ground of discrimination under the *Nova Scotia Human Rights Act*;
 - ~ Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 - ~ Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity; and
 - ~ Any content deemed inappropriate by the Town.

The Town reserves the right to monitor its social media sites and remove any content. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, if the Town finds any content on its social media site that offends section 3 herein, it will remove the content, or contact the appropriate administrator or network and request the content be removed.

4. User comments and messages posted to official social networking sites are considered transitory records and will not be kept as a permanent record by the Town.

Use of any Social Media

5. Social Media sites are public, regardless of the privacy settings. As such, any postings (content, statements, pictures or comments, etc.) by an employee, volunteer or elected official, regardless of whether posted on Town sites or otherwise, could negatively impact the Town, its reputation, workplace, other employees, partners/vendors or its customers/clients.

Employees, volunteers and elected officials are required to comply with the following guidelines when making posts or comments on **any** social media site, regardless of whether their social media interactions are during or outside of work hours:

- a. Conduct and represent themselves professionally;
- b. Posts, pictures, comments or any content involving the following will not be tolerated:
 - i. Proprietary and confidential Town information, including internal information and activities, confidential information of Town employees, businesses, partners, customers or clients;
 - ii. Inappropriate content, including harassing, bullying, intimidating and discriminatory content or sexual innuendoes; and
 - iii. Defamatory, derogatory or disparaging statements regarding the Town, its employees, management, volunteers, Council members or other elected officials, customers/clients, corresponding organizations, or vendors.

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- c. No employee, volunteer or Council member shall purport to speak or post on behalf of the Town, unless they have received the authorization to do so, as outlined in this policy (as amended from time to time).
 - d. Unless acting as the official or authorized spokesperson, the comments or postings of staff or elected officials do not represent the Town, however, all staff, volunteers and elected officials shall comply with this policy.
 - e. No employee, volunteer or Council member shall post their personal opinion regarding the Town, its employees, management, volunteers, Council members or other elected officials, customers/clients, corresponding organizations, or vendors.
6. The use of social media in the workplace must not have a negative impact on that employee's productivity or efficiency, or the productivity or efficiency of others in the workplace.
 7. Any communications sent over the Town's networks and computers are the Town's records. At any time without prior notice, the Town reserves the right to examine and analyze email, personal file directories, internet access logs, and any other information stored on the Town's computers. Such examinations support external and internal investigations, assure compliance with various policies, and assist in the management of information systems. Employees, volunteers and elected officials should have no expectation of privacy associated with the information they store in or send through these systems, whether encrypted or not. Employees, volunteers or elected officials using the Town's information systems and/or Internet access should realize that their communications are not automatically protected from viewing by third parties. Do not send information over the Internet or internally that is considered sensitive or private without encrypting the message.
 8. The Town will adhere to all applicable legislation regarding privacy and freedom of information, including but not limited to, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. In addition, the town's records may be subject to subpoena by a court of competent jurisdiction. As such, employees, volunteers and elected officials should be aware that personal and other information contained in electronic correspondence (or printed versions thereof) which are directed to the Town or other information contained on the Town's networks and computers may be required to be disclosed under legislation

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or pursuant to a subpoena from a court of competent jurisdiction. The anonymity or confidentiality of the sender or author of any information contained within the correspondence or otherwise contained on the Town's networks and computers cannot be presumed or relied upon.

Failure to Abide by Policy

9. Any employee who fails to follow this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Any volunteer who fails to follow this policy, may face a restriction or removal from volunteer roles, activities or opportunities.

Council members who fail to follow this policy may be subject to corrective action by Council in accordance with the Code of Conduct for members of Council.

Town Clerk/Treasurer's Annotation for Official Policy Book

Date of Passage of Current Policy: June 11, 2018

I certify that this Policy was adopted by Council as indicated above.


Town Clerk/Treasurer

June 11, 2018
Date

March 7, 2024
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