

Social Media Policy

Title

1. This policy is entitled "Social Media Policy".

Purpose

2. The purpose of this Policy is to maintain the integrity of the Municipality of the County of Cumberland's presence in social media and to ensure social media is used appropriately and within its guidelines and policies.
3. The Municipality may use social media tools in order to reach a broader audience and improve communication with the public. While the Municipality's website (cumberlandcounty.ns.ca) is the Municipality's primary Internet presence, the Municipality recognizes that, when used appropriately, social media can be useful in furthering the goals of the Municipality and the missions of its departments and can serve to build a more robust relationship with the public.
4. This Policy will create guidelines for the creation of a new communication tool that will allow the Municipality to improve citizen engagement and relations with its residents.

Definitions

5. In this Policy, unless the context otherwise requires:
 - (1) "Municipality" means the Municipality of the County of Cumberland;
 - (2) "employee" means full-time, part-time, causal, temporary, and summer students;
 - (3) "social media" means the online technologies and practices that are used to share stories, information, opinions, host conversations, and build relationships. It can involve a variety of formats, including texts, pictures, video, audio, and real-time dialogues. It includes but is not exclusive to social networks, discussion forums, blogs, wikis, and podcasts. Examples of current social media channels include Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube;

- (4) “moderated” means regular technical and monitoring measures that prevent or ensure the timely removal of any defamatory or objectionable submissions, including information that jeopardizes the privacy of others;
- (5) “official use” means use for municipal purposes such as communication, service delivery, collaboration, and other purposes within the scope of the Municipality’s/department’s mandate as a designated spokesperson;
- (6) “personal use” means use by an employee for purposes unrelated to official use.
- (7) “designated spokesperson” means an employee appointed by the Chief Administrative Officer with authority to use social media on behalf of the Municipality/department. The designated spokesperson has a responsibility to ensure the appropriateness of content and policy compliance. Only a designated spokesperson has permission to create, publish, or comment on behalf of the Municipality/department.

Overview

- 6. This Policy applies to all employees when working with social media tools for official use.
- 7. This Policy does not apply to social media sites of the Municipality’s elected officials used solely for campaign and personal use.

Municipal Values and Objectives

- 8. This Policy supports the Municipality’s mission, “*Strong, vibrant communities through support and leadership*” by providing additional tools that will serve to empower citizens. This Policy also supports the Citizen Engagement and Public Relations Strategic Plan by:

Getting information OUT

Creating an informed citizenry, staff, and Council.

Taking information IN

Ensuring the Municipality receives input from a broad section of the public on a regular and issue specific basis by providing and encouraging the use of a variety of communication tools.

USING this information

Collaborating with and empowering citizens by ensuring their feedback is taken into serious consideration when decisions are made and by acknowledging their input.



Policy Objectives

9. The objectives of this Policy are to:
 - (1) Support social media use in communicating overall municipal themes and policies, providing citizens with better access to municipal programs and services, and more choice about how, when, and where to access those services;
 - (2) enable the Municipality to be more active in its relationships with citizens, partners, and stakeholders;
 - (3) encourage the appropriate, creative, and effective official use of social media by employees for municipal purposes;
 - (4) provide a framework for the application of the policies and guidelines that oversee social media use; and
 - (5) ensure the use of social media by employees for official use complies with all applicable laws, and all municipal policies and procedures, including those related to the protection of privacy, capture and retention of records, security, respectful workplaces, employee code of conduct, conflict of interest, and Internet/email use.

Policy Directives

10. All employees using social media for official use shall follow this Policy.
11. Personal social media accounts shall not be used to conduct official municipal business.
12. The decision to create or initiate new municipal social media accounts must be approved by the Chief Administrative Officer. Approval shall be based on appropriate level of risk, particularly with respect to privacy and network security.
13. Privacy breaches that may occur are the responsibility of the departments in which they originate and must be reported in accordance with legislation and policy.
14. Blogs, discussion forums, or other social media initiated and/or created by, and within the control of, the Municipality must be moderated by a designated spokesperson.

15. Municipal-hosted social media services must include a Terms of Use Guidelines for users.
16. Employees using social media for official use shall be governed by all applicable laws, and all municipal policies and procedures.
17. As per the Personnel Policy, disciplinary action up to and including dismissal could result from a failure to follow these requirements.

<u>Clerk's Annotation for Official Policy Book</u>	
Date of Notice to Council of Intent to Consider (7 days minimum)	<u>March 16, 2016</u>
Date of Passage of Current Policy	<u>April 6, 2016</u>
I certify that this Policy was adopted by Council as indicated above.	
 Municipal Clerk	 Date