



The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Policy Manual

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Subject: Social Media

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to:
 - 1.0.1 Establish guidelines that govern the use of Social Media to further the business of the Town of Tecumseh ("**Town**").
 - 1.0.2 Mitigate risk and protect the image of the Town at all times when using Social Media tools, including interactions and follow up with Social Media users.
 - 1.0.3 Ensure Town employees and Members of Council are aware of the responsibilities and boundaries of using Social Media in the Workplace.
- 1.2 The primary goals for the Town's use of Social Media are to:
 - 1.0.1 Increase resident access to and engagement with their local government.
 - 1.0.2 Build stronger relationships with local organizations and other municipal governments.
 - 1.0.3 Facilitate enhanced customer service.
 - 1.0.4 Increase resident trust in their local government.
 - 1.0.5 Tailor communications to specific audiences.
 - 1.0.6 Enhance the Town's image and reputation.
 - 1.0.7 Manage and clarify information.
 - 1.0.8 Provide responsive communication to the public, in case of emergencies.
 - 1.0.9 To serve as an education medium for Town departments to increase resident awareness of, and access to information and services.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to:

- 2.1 employees of the Town authorized to post information on Town Social Media platforms in an official capacity.

- 2.2 Members of Council who utilize Social Media in their official capacity as a representative of the Town.
- 2.3 Social Media users who interact with the Town on its official Social Media platforms.
- 2.4 Employees of the Town who identify themselves as employees of the Town on their personal social media.
- 2.5 Employees of the Town who otherwise utilize their personal Social Media to interact with the Town or who are otherwise identifiable as a Town employee while utilizing such personal Social Media.
- 2.6 Town appointed Committee or Board members and volunteers who utilize Social Media in their position of service to the Town.

3. Definitions

- 3.1 **"Comment"** means a form of engagement in which a Social Media user responds to content posted on the Town's Social Media platforms.
- 3.2 **"Communications Officer"** means an employee of the Town responsible for the communication of information to all employees, Council, and the general public.
- 3.3 **"Council"** means the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh.
- 3.4 **"Committee Member"** or **"Board Member"** means the persons appointed by Council to serve on a Town committee or board.
- 3.5 **"Employee"** means any person employed by the Town on a full-time, part-time, seasonal, student and/or casual basis, as well as volunteers, contract workers and Committee Members who communicate with the public and/or represent the Town.
- 3.6 **"Engagement"** means a Social Media metric referring to any form of interaction with the Town on its Social Media platforms, including likes, comments, and retweets.
- 3.7 **"Followers"** means any Social Media user who subscribes to see all of the content posted on Town Social Media platforms.
- 3.8 **"Like"** means a form of engagement in which a Social Media user gives positive feedback to content posted on the Town's Social Media platforms by pressing a "Like" button.

- 3.9 **"Post"** means any content uploaded by the Town to its Social Media platforms.
- 3.10 **"Reach"** means a Social Media metric that refers to the total number of people who have been exposed to content posted on the Town's Social Media platforms.
- 3.11 **"Retweet"** means a feature on Twitter that allows for the Town to re-share another account's Tweet with its followers.
- 3.12 **"Social Media"** means a digital technology that facilitates the sharing of Town communications through virtual platforms. The Town only has official accounts on the following platforms: Instagram, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube.
- 3.13 **"Town"** means The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh.
- 3.14 **"Town Moderator"** means Tecumseh Town Hall employees who are authorized to monitor Town Social Media. The Communications Officer serves as the main Town Moderator and has the authority to assign the position to approved designates.
- 3.15 **"Volunteer"** means an individual who willingly, and without monetary compensation, offers their time, skills, and efforts to support and contribute to various community-oriented activities and initiatives.

4. Existing Social Media Accounts

The Town has Social Media accounts that are listed on the Town website at <https://www.tecumseh.ca/en/town-hall/social-media.aspx>. The main Town accounts, managed by the Communications Officer include, but are not limited to:

- Instagram ([@TownofTecumseh](#))
- Twitter ([@TownofTecumseh](#))
- Facebook ([Facebook.com/TownofTecumseh/](#))
- LinkedIn ([LinkedIn.com/company/Town-of-Tecumseh](#))
- YouTube ([YouTube.com/user/TownofTecumseh2918](#))

Additional Town of Tecumseh social media accounts include:

4.1 Tecumseh Recreation Services

- Instagram ([@TecumsehRec](#))
- Facebook ([Facebook.com/TecumsehRec/](#))
- Twitter ([@TecumsehRec](#))

4.2 Tecumseh Fire and Rescue

- Instagram ([@TecumsehFire](#))
- Twitter ([@TECFD](#))
- Facebook ([Facebook.com/TecumsehFire/](#))

5. Use of Social Media

The Town website, www.tecumseh.ca, will remain the Town's primary online resource for information. Social Media will be used to complement information found on the website to broaden the reach of Town messages through multiple Social Networks, pursuant to the Town's Accountability and Transparency Policy No. 61.

A Social Media presence administered by the Town will clearly identify that it is maintained by the Town and will include the appropriate contact information.

Use of the Town's Social Media by any department of the Town must be approved by the Communications Officer.

Authorized Employees will always post to Town Social Media channels as Employees of the Town.

5.1 Responding to Comments from the Public:

- 5.1.1 The public may use the Town's Social Media to voice their concerns and inquiries.
- 5.1.2 Authorized Employees will be responsible for moderating and monitoring the submission of Comments received by members of the public.
- 5.1.3 Comments posted by members of the public must be directly related to Town matters and a disclaimer specifying what content is appropriate and permissible will be displayed.
- 5.1.4 The Town reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Policy or any applicable law.
- 5.1.5 Prohibited content that is removed shall be retained along with a description of the reason the specific content was deemed not suitable in accordance with Section 4.1.9.
- 5.1.6 Per Section 8.2 of the Customer Service Policy, the Town will respond to online inquiries during regular business hours; Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Questions or Comments will be

acknowledged or answered within one (1) business day. If further research and information is required before a proper response can be given, the Employee will advise the poster that this is being undertaken and a response will be provided as soon as the information is known.

- 5.1.7 The Town may pre-schedule messages promoting events or Town initiatives to be released after business hours and on weekends.
- 5.1.8 No confidential information will be posted to any Social Media site under any circumstances.
- 5.1.9 For the purpose of this Policy, the following definitions provide the scope of what is considered unsuitable content. The Town reserves the right to remove any content posted to the Town's Social Media channels by authorized Employees or members of the public that meets any of these definitions:
 - a. **"Commercial endorsement or solicitation"** being the endorsement of one product or service over another, as well as statements requiring or requesting receipt of any product, service, or asset for personal gain or use.
 - b. **"Personal political content"** being the support of, or opposition to, political campaigns, personal Comments, or opinions about Town Employees and/or Members of Council.
 - c. **"Confidential information"** being information classified as confidential or proprietary records in the possession of the Town, as well as information about members of the public, Town Employees and Council.
- 5.1.10 Profane or obscene language or content, including language or content deemed as being in the nature of personal attacks, insults, or threatening language.
- 5.1.11 Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, culture, colour, creed, age, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, socioeconomic status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, or physical or mental disability.
- 5.1.12 Sexual content or links to sexual content.

- 5.1.13 Comments or content that are deemed to be in potential violation of privacy, libel, human rights, and copyright laws.
- 5.1.14 Information that compromises or threatens to compromise the safety or security of any individual or the public at large.
- 5.1.15 Content that contradicts any Town Policy.
- 5.1.16 Comments or content that is considered inaccurate, misleading and which fosters the dissemination of misinformation or disinformation regarding Town services, Employees, or Members of Council.
- 5.1.17 Content that is otherwise deemed inappropriate by the Town Moderator, within reason.

5.2 Submitting Content for Publishing or Re-Sharing:

- 5.2.1 Anyone who wishes to submit content to be posted on Town Social Media must make a request with the Communications Officer via the [Communications Form](#).
- 5.2.2 Permission from the Communications Officer is required to re-share content from other organizations on Town Social Media. In most cases, content will only be re-shared if the Town is directly involved and if there is space to do so.

5.3 Social Media in an Emergency:

- 5.3.1 In the event of an emergency, the Town Moderator (or designate) will be the sole employee authorized to post on Town Social Media.
- 5.3.2 The Town will only post content pertaining to the emergency at hand – all other Town messaging will be temporarily paused.

5.4 Requesting a New Town Social Media Account:

- 5.4.1 If an authorized employee wishes to create a new Social Media account, they must first put in a request to the Communications Officer and confer with any applicable staff who will assist with running the new account:
- 5.4.2 The Communications Officer, in consultation with the Manager Customer Service and any other Manager relevant to the request, will determine whether a new Town Social Media account is appropriate, and be responsible for delivering any decisions made.

5.5 Authorized Employees:

- 5.5.1 Access to Town Social Media channels shall only be provided to authorized employees.
- 5.5.2 Authorization to post on Town Social Media channels shall be designated by the Communications Officer.
- 5.5.3 A review of those currently authorized to have access to Town Social Media channels must occur every calendar year and every time a previously authorized employee leaves the Town.
- 5.5.4 The Town Moderator, in consultation with the Manager Customer Service, has the authority to revoke an Employee's access to Town Social Media channels.
- 5.5.5 All records or personal information collected through Social Media are protected under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. M.56 ("**MFIPPA**"), as amended and other privacy legislation.
- 5.5.6 Documents and records generated as a result of this Policy will be maintained in accordance with the Town's Records Retention By-law, No. 2018-39.

6. Use of Social Media by Members of Town Council

- 6.1 Council Members' use of Social Media, whether on personal devices or otherwise, is a representation of their elected position and Town Council as a whole.
- 6.2 Using a Member's title on Social Media (i.e., @CouncillorJaneDoe) - or any other similar form thereof that is likely to identify with the Member's official letterhead - conveys legitimacy and authority. Members are advised to use rigorous judgment before they post and consult with this Policy when determining content that is appropriate to post.
- 6.3 Council Members are expected to act professionally and respect the opinions of others when using Social Media. Council Members shall be guided by Council's Code of Conduct when posting to Social Media and seek clarification from the Director of Legislative Services & Clerk if they are unsure about content prior to posting.
- 6.4 Council Members must not post content that is offensive, discriminatory, harassing, or defamatory or in any way meets the criteria for unsuitable content in Section 5.1.9 of this Policy.

- 6.5 Members cannot use any Town affiliated account (i.e., @CouncillorJaneDoe) or any Town resources (i.e., Town provided device) to promote, or appear to promote, content that is offensive, discriminatory, harassing, or defamatory.
- 6.6 Members cannot use any Town affiliated account (i.e., @CouncillorJaneDoe) or any Town resources (i.e., Town provided device) to promote, or appear to promote, any election or campaign content.
- 6.7 Accepting a gift, fee, or personal benefit in exchange for Social Media activity or interaction (e.g., accepting tickets to an event in exchange for a retweet or Facebook share) is an unacceptable use of Social Media and violates Section 6.11 of the Council Code of Conduct, except for those gifts and benefits deemed acceptable under Section 6.11.2.
- 6.8 Members must seek permission to use Town logos or trademarks on Social Media.

7. Personal Use of Social Media by Employees

- 7.1 Employees are free to use Social Media as private citizens but are not authorized to comment on Social Media sites on behalf of the Town unless they have been authorized to do so by the Communications Officer or designate.
- 7.2 Employees are expected to act in accordance with the Employee Code of Conduct even if the Town is not identified as an employer on personal websites, blogs, or Social Media profiles.
- 7.3 Employees should be mindful that the use of online communication is never private. Social Media posts and/or comments made by private use of Social Media could result in disciplinary action if determined to be disparaging, inflammatory, or to negatively affect the public's perception of the Town or its Employees, Council Members, Committees Members, and/or Volunteers.
- 7.4 Opinions expressed on an Employee's personal website, blog, and/or Social Media account do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Town.
- 7.5 The use of Employees' personal accounts to respond to questions or comments about Town programs, services, decisions, or policies on media websites, blogs, community-run Social Media pages or groups, or other public forums is not condoned or encouraged by the Town.
- 7.6 Employees must seek permission to use Town logos or trademarks.

8. Personal Use of Social Media by Committee & Board Members & Volunteers

- 8.1 Members of Town Committees or Boards and Volunteers appointed or assigned by the Town are expected to conduct themselves appropriately on Social Media while they are in their role as a Committee/Board Member or Volunteer, even if the Town is not identified on their personal websites, blogs, or Social Media profiles.
- 8.2 Committee/Board Members and Volunteers should refrain from posting content to their personal Social Media accounts that goes against the business purposes of the Town while holding their position as a Committee/Board Member or Volunteer.
- 8.3 Opinions expressed on a Committee/Board Member or Volunteer's personal website, blog and/or Social Media account do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Town.
- 8.4 The use of Committee/Board Members' or Volunteers' personal accounts to respond to questions or comments about Town programs, services, decisions or policies on media website, blogs, community-run Social Media groups or pages, or other public forums is not condoned or encouraged by the Town.
- 8.5 Tecumseh Committee/Board Members and Volunteers must seek permission to use Town logos or trademarks.

9. IT & Security

- 9.1 Login credentials for all Town Social Media accounts will be managed and maintained by the Communications Officer.
- 9.2 Passwords to all Town Social Media accounts must be changed by the Communications Officer every calendar year and every time a previously authorized Employee leaves the Town.
- 9.3 If an authorized Employee wishes to change the password to the Social Media account they manage, they must make a request to the Communications Officer.
- 9.4 Only the Director Technology & Client Services, Manager Customer Service, and Communications Officer have the authority to change the login credentials on any Town Social Media accounts.

10. Relevant Legislation and Policies

- [006 – Harassment Policy](#)
- [007 – Healthy and Safety Policy](#)
- [009 – Technology and Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- [057 – Confidentiality of Information Policy](#)
- [061 – Accountability and Transparency Policy](#)
- [063 – Council Code of Conduct](#)
- [066 – Accessible Customer Service](#)
- [076 – Corporate Communications Policy](#)
- [097 – Customer Service Policy](#)
- [Privacy Policy](#)
- [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [Occupational Health & Safety Act](#)
- [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 1](#)
- [Municipal Act](#)
- [Municipal Elections Act](#)
- [Criminal Code of Canada](#)
- [Corporation's Records Retention By-law No. 2018-39](#)