

**Town of Annapolis Royal  
POLICY**

TITLE: <b>Social Media Policy</b>	
POLICY NO.: <b>2020-05</b>	SUPERSEDES:
EFFECTIVE DATE: <b>November 16, 2020</b>	APPROVED BY COUNCIL MOTION NO.: <b>MOTION #C2020-11-16-09</b>

**1. POLICY**

- 1.1. The Town of Annapolis Royal is committed to open and transparent communication. The Town will communicate to its residents using a variety of accepted tools (conforming to the Municipal Government Act (MGA)), including social media.
- 1.2. The Town will authorize specific individuals to utilize social media in an official capacity to ensure that, as with all communications activities, communications through social media channels are accurate, consistent, and professional.

**2. DEFINITIONS**

- 2.1. Follow means to subscribe to a social media account of another user and receive their posts as updates.
- 2.2. Political material means comments or posts made by politicians, supporters or otherwise, for the purpose of political gain or to drive a political agenda.
- 2.3. Social media means the web-based technologies and sites and includes, but is not limited to, blogging, microblogging (Twitter), photo-sharing (Flickr, Instagram, Snapchat), video sharing or webcasting (YouTube, Facebook Live), and social networking (LinkedIn, Facebook, blogs, discussion boards) which allow users to interact with each other by sharing information, opinions, knowledge, photographs and interests.
- 2.4. Social Media Moderator means Town staff tasked with posting and reviewing content on Town Social Media sites.
- 2.5. Town Social Media Sites means social media sites created and managed by Town staff.

**3. PURPOSE**

- 3.1. This policy governs the use of Town Social Media Sites to further the business purposes of the Town of Annapolis Royal, while protecting and promoting the image of the Town.
- 3.2. The primary goals of the Town's use of social media are as follows:
  - 3.2.1. Increase awareness of municipal services
  - 3.2.2. Augment existing Town communication methods and processes
  - 3.2.3. Provide an additional mechanism through which the Town keeps abreast of stakeholder comments and perceptions regarding the municipality
  - 3.2.4. Disseminate time-sensitive information quickly
  - 3.2.5. Provide communication through the use of social media's cost-effective tools.
  - 3.2.6. Correct misinformation, remedy mistakes, or alter services to build stronger relationships Develop trust and humanize the Town
  - 3.2.7. Utilize social media analytical tools to help monitor, track, and evaluate the Town's communications and marketing efforts
  - 3.2.8. Provide another method by which stakeholders can engage with the Town.

- 3.2.9. Utilize social media as an additional way to collaborate with the public and other municipalities on mutually beneficial programs and initiatives

#### **4. SCOPE**

- 4.1. This policy applies to social media use for official and authorized Town purposes.
- 4.2. This policy shall apply to all Town Staff and any others who are authorized to post information on Town social media sites in an official capacity on behalf of the Town. It also applies to personal use of social media conducted on personal equipment in a limited manner as noted in section 7.
- 4.3. Social media sites representing the Mayor and Town Council are exempt from this policy as they are governed by the Code of Conduct for Members of Council.
- 4.4. Social Media sites representing the Annapolis Royal Police (ARP) are exempt from this policy as they are governed by the Nova Scotia Police Act and Regulations.
- 4.5. Communication through social media and the use of associated technology must comply with all other relevant Town policies, procedures, and guidelines as well as provincial and federal legislation.

#### **5. RESPONSIBILITY**

##### **5.1. Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)**

- 5.1.1. Directs compliance with the Social Media Policy and directs that a review of the policy and related procedures and guidelines occurs as noted below.
- 5.1.2. Designates Staff or volunteers (Social Media Moderators) to utilize social media in an official capacity as required.

##### **5.2. Community Development Coordinator (CDC)**

- 5.2.1. Monitors the policy and accompanying procedure, provides training and ongoing guidance to municipal staff, and suggests revisions for Council's consideration.
- 5.2.2. Reviews policy one year from the date it becomes effective, or sooner at the direction of the CAO.
- 5.2.3. Approves and oversees social media sites and tools for official Town use.
- 5.2.4. Ensures consistent messaging and imaging for all Town social media sites.
- 5.2.5. Responds to requests for new social media sites and/or administrative changes to existing sites.
- 5.2.6. Generates, monitors, updates, edits, responds to and/or removes content within Town social media sites to ensure accuracy and adherence to this policy.
- 5.2.7. Provides access to official users.
- 5.2.8. Oversees all Town social media accounts including their creation and destruction.
- 5.2.9. Maintains a list of site domain names and social media accounts, including login and password information.
- 5.2.10. Ensures Town social media sites comply with applicable policies.

##### **5.3. Social Media Moderators and other authorized users**

- 5.3.1. Ensure that their use of social media is in accordance with this policy and other related policies, procedures, guidelines, and legislation.

## **6. GOVERNING RULES AND REGULATIONS**

- 6.1. The Town’s website, [www.annapolisroyal.com](http://www.annapolisroyal.com) will remain the Town’s primary online source for information. Social media will be used to complement the website’s information and broaden the reach of Town messages through multiple channels.
- 6.2. Where possible, social networking accounts will clearly indicate they are maintained by the Town and will contain appropriate contact information.
- 6.3. The authority to post to official Town of Annapolis Royal social media sites will only be granted to staff specifically authorized to do so by the CAO.
- 6.4. If residents make references to the Mayor or Town Council or ask questions related to these officeholders, authorized users will acknowledge the comment and forward the message to the appropriate contact.
- 6.5. No confidential information will be posted to any social media under any circumstances.
- 6.6. Comments containing any of the following shall not be allowed on Town social media sites and may be removed:
  - 6.6.1. Comments not topically related to the particular site or article being commented on.
  - 6.6.2. Profane language or content.
  - 6.6.3. 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, or sexual orientation.
  - 6.6.4. Sexual content or links to sexual content.
  - 6.6.5. Illegal conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
  - 6.6.6. Comments determined by the Town to be a specific attack on groups or individuals or to be inherently political in nature or cause.
  - 6.6.7. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
  - 6.6.8. Content that reveals personal or private information about any particular person or is otherwise protected by any other relevant privacy legislation.
  - 6.6.9. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
  - 6.6.10. Content that violates any Town policy. Staff are responsible to be aware of all Town policies that may impact their posts.
  - 6.6.11. Content that is deemed to be inappropriate by the CAO.
- 6.7. As part of the Town’s social responsibility, or to promote local businesses and develop tourism to the area, the Town may:
  - 6.7.1. Promote a whole class or type of business. For example, “restaurants” or “museums” referring to all members of these categories in a general manner, citing none specifically.
  - 6.7.2. Promote registered Non-for-profit Entities, Charities, or Fund-raising that is not in support of an individual, but rather supports a large group of unrelated persons which are united by situation or medical condition.
- 6.8. At the start of the nomination period for any municipal election or by-election, all accounts owned by Members of Council will be un-followed, and no further material will be shared on Town Social Media sites.


## **7. EMPLOYEE PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

- 7.1. Town Staff, including part-time, in their private capacity as citizens, may want to use social media to share information and communicate with friends, family and co-workers. Even though they are using social media for personal purposes, some Town policies apply to the use of social

- media by employees when they are off-duty including but not limited to the Town's Anti-Violence in the Workplace Policy.
- 7.2. Staff who identify themselves as Town employees or who are identifiable as Town employees in their personal social media use should adhere to the following guidelines:
- 7.2.1. Always conduct themselves in a manner that conforms to all relevant policies including Health and Safety policies and Human Rights policies.
  - 7.2.2. Staff are discouraged from discussing Town business through personal social media accounts, websites, or networks.
  - 7.2.3. Staff should make it clear that their position does not officially represent the Town's position. Use phrases such as "in my personal opinion" or "Personally..." to communicate that you are expressing your personal views.
  - 7.2.4. Staff must ensure that they do not reveal anyone's personal information gained through their work performance.
  - 7.2.5. Never identify or comment about other Town Staff without their express consent. Even positive comments may be inappropriate or unwanted.
  - 7.2.6. Staff must not use social media in a manner that would harm the Town's reputation. Such conduct includes slurs, derogatory comments, or insults.
  - 7.2.7. Staff are responsible not only for their own social media posts but also any comments made to their social media posts that were reasonably encouraged or welcomed by their post.
- 7.3. Staff are reminded that despite efforts they may take to keep social media posts private, there is a public nature to all social media posts. Furthermore, social media users may be denied an opportunity to delete an ill-advised post completely. Screen shots and cached data can maintain a social media post even after the original post is deleted.
- 7.4. Staff are encouraged to use caution in their personal social media use. Employees who violate the terms of this policy with social media use, including personal social media use may be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal for cause.

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY** that this policy was duly passed by a majority vote of the whole Council at a duly called Council meeting held on the 16 day of November 2020.

**GIVEN** under the hand of the CAO and under the seal of The Town of Annapolis Royal the 16 day of November 2020.



Sandi Millett-Campbell  
Chief Administrative Officer

