



File Name	Draft Social Media Policy
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Date	October 2017

INTRODUCTION

Social media provides new cost effective online communication channels that allow engagement, feedback and discussion with a broad audience. Social media provides a convenient and effective platform to share information, connect and communicate with many people and to engage in instantaneous communication, conversations and feedback.

Presently, the West Coast District Municipality's website is the main source of information. The implementation of social media as part of the municipal communication strategy will enable the municipality to update the public about projects and initiatives in "real-time".

As part of its revised communication strategy, WCDM has included the usage of social media platforms to communicate and interact with its stakeholders.

This policy will outline how the WCDM, its employees and stakeholders will operate and use the WCDM social media platforms including actions to be taken for non-compliance of this policy.

DEFINITIONS

Social Media: forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.

OVERVIEW

The primary objective of using social media is for information dissemination, stakeholder engagement, education, awareness, promote new initiatives, highlight service delivery and to enhance dialogue between WCDM and its stakeholders.

It is important that WCDM promote access to information and services, operate in a clear and transparent manner and create opportunities to listen and engage with stakeholders.

This policy applies to all WCDM employees, service providers of WCDM and other stakeholders directly and indirectly involved with WCDM.

PROFESSIONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The Municipal Manager and Communications Officer are authorised to speak and publish content on behalf of WCDM. Any other employee must receive authorisation by the Municipal Manager to speak or publish content on behalf of the municipality. Under no circumstances may staff comment as a representative of a department unless staff are authorised to do so.

Once authorised to comment staff must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Protect confidential and proprietary information. Do not post confidential information about WCDM, its employees or service providers. Only post public information that is approved by the Municipal Manager or Director.
2. Use only the approved official social media accounts.
3. Ensure that all content posted are accurate.
4. Respect copyright. When posting, be mindful of the copyright and intellectual property rights of others.
5. Respect WCDM's time and property. WCDM computers and employee time are reserved for WCDM related business.
6. Think twice before posting. All content published on the internet is public.
7. Comment only on the area of expertise and authority.
8. Be responsible for what is published.

Authorised employees shall not:

1. Post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist or unlawful;
2. Use or disclose confidential material; and/or
3. Make any comments that could potentially be damaging to the WCDM's reputation.

PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

This policy does not intend to discourage or limit the personal expression or online presence of staff members.

However, all employees of WCDM are obliged not to:

1. Speak for and on behalf of the WCDM in their personal capacity;
2. Use the corporate identity or logo of the WCDM for any personal endorsements;
3. Publish any post that might bring WCDM into disrepute and/or create unfavourable remarks that might damage its reputation; or
4. Use or disclose any confidential information obtained in your capacity as an employee/service provider of WCDM.

When accessing social media via WCDM's internet systems, staff must do so in accordance with the WCDM Internet and E-mail Usage Policy. It is not acceptable to spend WCDM employee hours using social media that is not related to your work.

This policy is aligned to WCDM Human Resources Policy as well as the Internet and E-mail Policy, specifically the section referring to Private use of WCDM resources.

LANGUAGE

Posts on social media platforms will be alligned to the current Language Policy of WCDM.

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Employees found in violation of this policy may be subjected to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, depending on the severity and implications of the breach.

PASSWORDS AND ACCESS

Passwords to WCDM social media platforms remains the property of WCDM. Access will only be granted to authorised personnel.

CONCLUSION

The WCDM reserves the sole right to review, edit and/or delete any comments WCDM deems inappropriate. WCDM social media accounts are not open to comments promoting or opposing any person or party campaigning for election, or promotion or advertisement of a business or commercial transaction. This policy is subject to amendment or modification on a yearly basis.

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