

DISTRICT OF MACKENZIE

Social Media Policy 1.27

Established by Council on [ENTER DATE] - Resolution No. [ENTER #]

1.0 Purpose:

1. The District of Mackenzie (the District) Social Media policy is to provide guidance on the appropriate use of social media. The aim is to protect the reputation of the District while promoting transparency and positive communication.

2.0 Definitions:

1. For this policy the following definitions shall apply:

Content: Any information uploaded or added to an online location. Content can include text, photos, videos, links, geographical markers etc.

Social Media – Internet based applications that enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Examples include but are not limited to blogs, Facebook, X, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok etc.

Social Network - An online platform that allows individuals to create profiles, connect with others, and share content through interactions such as posting, commenting, and messaging, enabling communication and the building of virtual relationships.

Employee – Full-Time, Part-Time, Permanent Part-Time, Temporary and Seasonal District employees, both unionized and exempt.

Council Member - The Mayor or a Councillor currently elected to the District of Mackenzie Council.

3.0 Account Management for Official District Communication

1. Content posted on the District social media accounts should be accurate when relating to any Council or District decisions, public events and services offered by the District.
2. Official District of Mackenzie social media accounts which represent the District can only be created and managed by Corporate Services department in partnership with the District of Mackenzie departments.

4.0 Professional Use of Social Media

1. Employees must ensure content shared on official accounts is factual, neutral, and aligned with the District's goals and communication standards.
2. Only authorized personnel may post from or manage official District accounts.
3. All public inquiries or comments received through official channels must be handled promptly and professionally by authorized personnel.
4. Sensitive or confidential information about the District, its employees, or citizens shall never be shared on social media.

5.0 Personal Use of Social Media - Employees

1. Employees are free to express their personal opinions on social media outside of working hours, however, they must not represent their views as those of the District.
2. Employees affiliated with the District who discuss District issues online must include a disclaimer such as:
 - a. *"The views expressed here are my own and do not reflect those of the District of Mackenzie."*
3. Employees must respect the privacy and dignity of colleagues, citizens, and stakeholders of the District in their personal online conduct.

6.0 Employee Guidelines

1. When using social media, whether personally or professionally, employees should:
 - a. Uphold the values and integrity of the District.
 - b. Avoid sharing offensive, discriminatory, or defamatory content.
 - c. Not disclose confidential or proprietary information related to the District or District personnel.
 - d. Report any online behavior that could harm the District's reputation to a supervisor or Corporate Services.
2. Not engage in arguments or debates on controversial topics using official accounts.

7.0 Use During Working Hours

1. Personal use of social media during working hours is discouraged except during breaks
2. Employees must not use District devices or accounts for personal social media activities unless authorized.

8.0 Personal Views vs Official Statements – Council

1. The District recognizes that Council Members use social media in their personal life. This policy is not intended to limit or discourage the use of social media for personal use; however, Council Members should recognize the potential negative impact that can be caused to the District through the use of personal social media when they identify themselves as elected officials of the District.
2. Council Members should clearly distinguish their personal opinions from the official position of the District when using social media. While personal expression is allowed, individuals must ensure that their views do not misrepresent the District or its Council.
3. Council Members who discuss District issues online must include a disclaimer such as:
 - a. *“The views expressed here are my own and do not reflect those of the District of Mackenzie.”*

9.0 Council Guidelines

When using social media, whether personally or professionally, Council Members should:

1. Uphold the values and integrity of the District.
2. Avoid sharing offensive, discriminatory, or defamatory content.
3. Not disclose confidential or proprietary information related to the District or District personnel.
4. Report any online behavior that could harm the District’s reputation to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or Corporate Services.
5. Not engage in arguments or debates on controversial topics using official District accounts.

6. Council Members must not appear to claim to speak on behalf of the District or Council unless expressly authorized to do so.
7. Council Members will use caution in reporting Council decision-making by way of their social media profiles and websites before the District has released any formal communication.
8. Council Members will refrain from using or permitting the use of their social media accounts for purposes that include:
 - a. Defamatory remarks, obscenities, profane language, or sexual content;
 - b. Negative statements disparaging other Council Members or District staff or calling into question their professional capabilities;
 - c. Content that endorses, promotes, or perpetuates discrimination or mistreatment on the basis of race, religion or belief, age, gender, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation or any other protective status as per the Human Rights Act;
 - d. Statements that indicate a closed mind in relation to a matter that is to be the subject of a statutory or other public hearing; or,
 - e. Promotion of illegal activity.
9. Council members must regularly monitor their social media accounts and immediately take measures to deal with the publication of messages or postings by others that violate the terms of the Code of Conduct.

10.0 Privacy and Security

1. Employees managing District accounts must follow best practices for password management and account security.
2. All content posted on social media is considered public and may be retained indefinitely. Employees should assume that anything they post, even in private accounts, can be made public.

11.0 Legal Considerations

1. Privacy: Adhere to Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPPA) to protect personal information.
2. Defamation: Avoid false statements to prevent liability.
3. Records Retention: Archive social media posts related to District matters.

12.0 Breach

1. Breach of this policy may lead to disciplinary measures up to and including termination of employment.
2. Council may impose sanctions on Council Members whose conduct does not comply with this policy, including but not limited to a motion of censure.

13.0 Review and Updates

1. This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to reflect changes in technology, social media platforms, or District operations.