



Policy Title: **Social Media Policy** Policy No.: **124**

Date Approved: **2015-10-19** Policy Type: **Administration**

1. Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the City of Chestermere’s social media presence.

2. Policy

- (a) The City of Chestermere recognizes the value of social media as a communication and engagement tool to encourage information sharing, dialogue, and listening with a variety of audiences.
- (b) Social media shall be used as a tool to reach the organization’s corporate objectives and communications goals.
- (c) Corporate Communications shall oversee the City of Chestermere’s social media efforts.
- (d) The City shall be active on its social media accounts only during business hours unless waiting to address content would damage the City’s reputation.
- (e) All comments will be regularly moderated and reviewed by City of Chestermere staff.
- (f) Social media guidelines for Elected Officials are outlined in Policy 808, that being the Council Social Media Policy.

3. User Posting Guidelines

- (a) Anyone wishing to post on the City’s corporate social media accounts shall adhere to the following guidelines:
 - (i) Direct messages and posts are not considered official correspondence.
 - (ii) The City shall not allow users to directly post videos or photos onto the City’s central Facebook page, but will allow them to post to subpages.
 - (iii) The City shall not tolerate comments that are offensive, rude in tone, or abusive to an individual or organization.

- (iv) Users of the City's social media accounts agree that they shall not post any content that meets the following conditions, and the City reserves the right to, without notice, edit, remove, or refuse content that meets any of the following conditions:
- Contrary to the principles of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Alberta Human Rights Act, and any other applicable codes of conduct;
 - Racist, hateful, sexist, homophobic, slanderous, insulting, life-threatening, or otherwise offensive messages;
 - Defamatory, serious, unproven, or inaccurate accusations against individual or organization;
 - Aggressive, coarse, violent, obscene, or pornographic content;
 - Content which may offend the privacy, personal information, property, or other rights of any individual or organization;
 - Content which infringes the policies of the social media platform;
 - Hyperlinks to website or other content that meet the above conditions
 - Content where the sender is not the author;
 - Content for advertising or other commercial purposes;
 - Announcements from labour or political organizations;
 - Content written in a language other than English;
 - Unintelligible or irrelevant messages; and
 - Any other content that the forum moderators feel will not add to the normal flow of debate.
- (v) Users shall agree that they shall not use the City's social media accounts in such a way as to offend the privacy, personal information, property, or other rights of any individual or organization. Users also agree not to use the site in such a way as to breach the laws of jurisdiction in which users currently reside.
- (vi) Users participate at their own risk, taking personal responsibility for comments, username, and any information provided.
- (vii) If City staff find that a comment or post contravenes any of the guidelines under 3(iv), staff will make a copy of the comment for the record and delete the post from the City's account.
- (viii) If a user continues to violate the guidelines under 3(iv), City staff may block the user from posting.
- (ix) An explanation of the guidelines under 3(iv) shall be placed on the City's social media accounts and on the City's website.



4. Personal Use

- (a) City staff in their capacity as private citizens have the same rights of speech as other citizens subject to the following limitations as described below:
 - (i) Employees must not represent or be perceived to represent the City on their own social media accounts or any multimedia sites.
 - (ii) Employees should not post on personal social media sites during business hours.
 - (iii) Employees may not post on personal social media sites using City of Chestermere devices.
 - (iv) In their capacity as private citizens, employees may post on public or private social media forums but it is not recommended that they post or reply to content relating to their work at the City to avoid the perception that they are speaking on behalf of the City.
 - (v) If an employee is commenting on items related to any aspect of the business of the City, users should clearly identify that the owner's views are theirs alone and do not reflect the views of the City.
 - (vi) Employees shall not use City logos or trademarks in personal postings.
 - (vii) All employees are expected to use sound judgment to ensure that their personal social media and multimedia postings are consistent with their obligations under Policy 736, that being the Human Resources Policy, and do not compromise the professional, respectful, and non-partisan performance of their official duties.

5. Accounts Administration

(a) Accounts

- (i) The City shall maintain one main account for the City on each designated social media platform to maximize the power of the City's communication efforts. The account shall post and share information from all business units in the organization.
- (ii) Other social media accounts for specific functions or business units may also be created if there is significant rationale and capacity to maintain them.
- (iii) New social media accounts or platforms shall be set up with the collaboration and consultation of Corporate Communications and authorized by the relevant Director.

- (iv) Notification of the creation of new accounts or platforms shall be sent to Directors and Council.
- (v) Departments or programs that wish to have new social media accounts set up shall complete social media content planning.

(b) Administrators

- (i) At the request of a Director or Manager, Corporate Communications may provide access to the City's social media accounts to department or function administrators.
- (ii) Prior to using the City's social media accounts, department or function social media administrators shall complete the required training, social media content planning, and sign an administrator agreement.
- (iii) If an administrator does not comply with applicable policies and guidelines, Corporate Communications may request improvement from the administrator or their Supervisor. If improvement is not made, the individual may lose their social media administrator privileges.

(c) Administrator Posting Guidelines

- (i) Employees representing the City on social media channels are expected to conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the City and in accordance with Policy 736 and *Brand & Style Guide*.
- (ii) Administrators shall post factual information that would be beneficial to the community. As per the administrator guidelines, administrators shall not offer opinions.
- (iii) Administrators shall not divulge confidential information on social media sites including but not limited to in camera items, personnel matters, Emergency Operations Centre information, legal proceedings, ongoing investigations, and any matters before Council.
- (iv) Administrators shall comply with all regulations set out in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and any other applicable legislation.
- (v) Administrators shall only post or comment on information related to their area of expertise and authority.

(d) Account Review

- (i) Corporate Communications shall review social media accounts regularly.

- (ii) Accounts that are no longer active or have limited audience participation may be decommissioned by Corporate Communications as per the *Brand & Style Guide*.
- (iii) Administrators that have not been posting regularly will be contacted and asked to increase the frequency of their posts. If administrators do not post at all for several weeks, their access may be removed.

6. Disclaimer

- (a) The views of commenters participating on the City of Chestermere's social media accounts do not necessarily represent the views of the City of Chestermere. City staff will be monitoring the input and may participate or intervene, if appropriate.
- (b) While the City of Chestermere endeavours to maintain the currency and accuracy of information published on its social media sites, the information is subject to change. It is advisable that users ascertain the currency of information immediately prior to use.
- (c) The City of Chestermere disclaims all responsibility for any loss or damage which may arise from the use of social media.
- (d) Links to external sites are provided as a convenience to users and such sites and associated content are not under the control of the City of Chestermere. The inclusion of any link does not imply endorsement of that website, service, or person by the City of Chestermere. The City of Chestermere is not responsible for the content or reliability of links, or for any loss or inconvenience arising from their use.

7. Compliance and/or Termination

- (a) In situations where employees are not in compliance with this Policy or related documents, Corporate Communications has the right to remove posts, restrict posting privileges, and if necessary, close accounts.
- (b) Non-compliance of this Policy may lead to discipline, legal proceedings, and/or termination.
- (c) If a staff member with social media access is no longer employed with the City, their Supervisor will inform Corporate Communications to have their access removed from relevant social media accounts.

8. Referenced Legislation/Documents

- *Policy 736, Human Resources Policy*
- *Policy 808, Council Social Media Policy*

- *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
- *City of Chestermere Brand & Style Guide*

Approved by:



Mayor



CAO

Revision History (*completed by Legislative Services*)

Policy Title	Date Approved	Resolution No.
Social Media Policy	2005-03-05	
Social Media Policy	2015-10-19	335-15