



POLICY NAME:

Social Media Policy

POLICY AREA: General Government

POLICY NO: GG24-01

APPROVAL DATE: September 9, 2024

LAST UPDATED:

POLICY STATEMENT

1. The Town of Tisdale is committed to providing open access to information about its policies, services, and initiatives. It recognizes that social media applications are widely being utilized as communication tools with the potential to provide the public with timely information.

PURPOSE

2. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media platforms specifically so that the disbursement of timely and accurate information is balanced with the Town's need to ensure that:

- a) the use of social media platforms does not compromise public safety or the Town's image;
- b) social media content does not violate individual privacy or conflict with existing municipal policies and bylaws or other regulations as applicable; and
- c) social media content posted on behalf of the Town is accurate, accessible, transparent and accountable.

SCOPE

3. This policy applies to all Town of Tisdale Employees, Councillors, or its duly authorized representatives, who make public statements on social media sites that discuss, share or comment on the Town of Tisdale. This policy also applies to members of the public who use, comment or post on the Town's social media sites.

DEFINITIONS

4. **Chief Administrative Officer** shall mean the Administrator as appointed by Council in accordance with *The Municipalities Act*.
5. **Councillor** shall mean any duly elected member of Council.
6. **Employee** shall include:
 - a) a person receiving or entitled to wages;
 - b) a person whom an employer permits, directly or indirectly, to perform work or services for the Town of Tisdale; and



- c) a person on a leave from employment with the Town of Tisdale.
- 7. **Town** shall mean the Town of Tisdale, its employees, or its duly authorized representatives.
- 8. **Social media** shall mean interactive platforms via the internet in which individuals and communities create and share user-generated content.
- 9. **Social media user** shall mean a person who subscribes to or is a member of a Town social media platform and includes persons that may share content from time to time.

ESTABLISHMENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT

- 10. The establishment and use of Town social media sites are subject to approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 11. The Town shall be identified in a clear and consistent manner on all town-managed social media platforms.
- 12. Profile images on each town-managed social media platform shall contain the Town logo.
- 13. Copyrights shall be respected; text, images, or video created by non-employees without proper attribution and/or authorization shall not be shared.
- 14. Each social media platform must include a link to the Social Media Policy on the Town's website.
- 15. All social media platforms shall clearly indicate that it is maintained by the Town and shall contain the Town's contact information.
- 16. The Town shall update and monitor social media accounts during office hours. As customer service is a priority, the Town shall attempt to respond to all inquiries received through a social media platform in a timely manner during office hours; however, it is encouraged that those wishing to obtain official correspondence from the Town do so by contacting the Town Office by email, telephone, mail or fax. The Town shall assume no responsibility for lack of service due to social media platform-related downtime or issues.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- 17. The Chief Administrative Officer or their designate shall maintain and monitor the approved social media platforms.
- 18. The Chief Administrative Officer or their designate shall work collaboratively with municipal staff to ensure that information shared on the Town's social media platforms regarding Town policies, programs, services, events and initiatives is accurate, easy to understand and accessible in multiple formats.
- 19. Content authorized to be posted on the Town's social media platforms includes



information pertaining to:

- a) Town business and Town sponsored events and activities;
- b) the Town's Parks, Recreation and Culture Department;
- c) public health and safety (such as road closures, inclement weather, etc.);
- d) community member awards and achievements; and

20. Employees assigned to engage on a Town social media platform must only do so:

- a) not in response to being mentioned in a post, but when content shared will prove to be a benefit to the Town;
- b) not to win an argument, but to ensure that the Town is actively engaging in relevant topics within the Town's scope of responsibility;
- c) when content shared will prove to contain informative or helpful information and will act to ensure that the facts being shared are correct.

21. The Town's website will remain the Town's primary and predominant internet presence for in-depth information, forms and online documents. Where applicable, all Town social media platforms shall direct social media users to the appropriate section of the Town's website.

22. Municipal Employees and Councillors shall not publish or comment via social media in any way that suggests they are doing so in connection with or as representatives of the Town of Tisdale.

23. The Town of Tisdale expects all Employees and Councillors who use social media to do so without breaching their duties to the Town and adhere to their respective Codes of Conduct. Employees and Councillors should consider the following:

- a) Even if you don't explicitly identify yourself as a Municipal employee or Councillor, others may identify you as an employee or Councillor by your name, your place of work, a photograph, or the content you post.
- b) Identifiable Municipal employees should make it clear that their position does not officially represent the Town's position. Use phrases such as "in my personal view" or "Personally..." to communicate that you are expressing personal views.
- c) Do not use visual cues that suggest you represent the Town of Tisdale.
- d) Do not circulate any organizational or confidential information, such as internal deliberations about how decisions are made, personal information, such as client or employee information, or negative comments about the Town of Tisdale, Councillors, Employees, or residents.
- e) Do not disparage or embarrass the Town, Council, Employees, and others associated with the Town of Tisdale.



- f) Do not engage in workplace discrimination or harassment, or activity that includes inappropriate comments, photographs, links, etc.

REMOVAL OF CONTENT

24. The Chief Administrative Officer or their designate shall monitor the Town's social media platforms and will intervene to remove content that is deemed unsuitable.
25. The Town is not responsible for comments made by social media users and reserves the right to remove any content that is unacceptable at any time. Social media platforms are third-party, private businesses with their own terms of service and privacy policies. The Town does not accept any responsibility for the operation of social media platforms and is unable to guarantee the privacy of individuals who access content provided to such sites by the Town.
26. The Town reserves the right to, without notice, edit, remove, or refuse unsuitable content. At the discretion of the Chief Administrative Officer, content may be deemed unsuitable if it includes:
 - a) commercial endorsement or solicitation including endorsement by the Town of one product or service over another, as well as statements requiring or requesting receipt of any product,
 - b) service or assets for personal gain or use, but does not include the promotion of commercial services or products of significant Town sponsors, affiliations, or business partnerships;
 - c) personal political content including support of, or opposition of, political campaigns or matters before the Town council, personal comments or opinions about Town staff and/or elected officials as well as personal views about the municipal political process;
 - d) confidential information including classified-as-confidential or proprietary records in the possession of the Town, as well as information about members of the public, municipal staff and elected officials;
 - e) objectionable material including matter which may contain, but is not limited to, material promoting hate and/or violence, materials of pornographic, profane or sexually explicit nature. It also includes text that links to sexual or sexually explicit content, content that encourages illegal activity or contains information that may compromise the safety and security of the public or public systems or postings which violate a legal ownership interest of any party including interest in copyright and other intellectual property;
 - f) discriminatory language presenting a discriminatory, demeaning or derogatory portrayal of individuals or groups or containing anything which, considering generally prevailing community standards, is likely to cause deep or widespread offence. This also includes language that promotes, fosters or perpetuates



discrimination based on race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, family status, status concerning public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.

27. Any content removed by the Town based on these guidelines must be retained wherever practical, including the time, date and identity of the social media user when available.
28. As the Town's social media platforms will be open to the public, instances of abuse via the sharing of unsuitable content may occur. At the discretion of the Chief Administrative Officer, any user that has been found to have created a total of three (3) posts containing unsuitable content may be banned or blocked.

TOWN REPRESENTATION AND PERSONAL USAGE

29. This policy does not intend to discourage or limit personal expression on social media platforms. However, employees should recognize the potential for damage to the Town either directly or indirectly via the employee's personal use of social media when a person can be identified as an employee of the Town. Accordingly, employees should comply with this policy to ensure the risk of such damage is minimized. Employees are personally responsible for the content they publish in a personal capacity on any form of social media platform. Employees are cautioned that all participation in social media should be considered public communications and may be subject to disclosure in a legal process.
30. Employees engaging in the use of their personal social media platforms must:
 - a) only disclose and discuss information relating to the Town that is publicly available;
 - b) not imply that they are authorized to speak as a representative of the Town;
 - c) not use or disclose any confidential information obtained in their capacity as an employee/contractor;
 - d) not use their Town email address or any logos or branding elements that may give the impression of official Town support or endorsement.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION

31. Employees found in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Mayor

Chief Administrative Officer