



## CORPORATE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Policy Title:	<b>Social Media Policy</b>	Policy No:	7.01
Section:	Communications	Resolution:	2020-95
Policy Lead:	Chief Administrative Officer	Effective Date:	4/28/2020
Application:	All Staff	Last Review Date:	1/1/2018
Approved by:	Council	Previous Resolution:	2017-413

### 1.0 PURPOSE

The Social Media Policy establishes service standards, procedures and guidelines relating to social media networks used by the Municipality of East Ferris for the following purposes:

- To provide accurate, timely and clear information about municipal services, programs, events and public safety to East Ferris residents, businesses, visitors and other stakeholders;
- To increase accessibility to local government in order to encourage greater interest and participation in local affairs;
- To promote greater transparency in government; and
- To assist municipal departments and employee site moderators to implement best practices on a consistent basis across the Corporation, and mitigate risks relating to social media usage.

The policy also serves to:

- Protect the municipality's reputation;
- Promote the events, programs and services of local Agencies, Boards, and Commissions, non-profit organizations and charities;
- Provide employees with clear implementation and use guidelines; and
- Provide protocol around monitoring, administration, acceptable use and privacy.

### 2.0 DEFINITIONS

“Brand” – means the unique and identifiable symbol, association, name or trademark which serves to differentiate competing products or services.

“Department” – means an administrative or business unit of the Municipality.

“Social Media” – means information created by people using highly accessible and scalable publishing technologies that is intended to facilitate communications, influence interaction with peers and public audiences typically via the Internet and mobile communications networks. It includes, but is not limited to, web-based blogs and online social media networks such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Wikipedia, YouTube and Flickr. For the purpose of this Policy, social media will refer to Facebook and Twitter exclusively.



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“Social Media Moderator” – means any staff designated by the CAO that are responsible for administering a particular social media site, including writing and publishing content to the site and moderating comments made by the public.

### 3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all Municipality of East Ferris employees, including permanent, part-time, temporary, casual, contract, students, elected officials, interns and volunteers who use social media networks and/or websites (including personal sites) that discuss, share or comment on Municipal business.

### 4.0 RESPONSIBILITY

#### 4.1 Social Media Moderator Responsibilities

Municipal employees who participate in social media communication as social media moderators on behalf of the Municipality must do so in accordance with the following employee expectations and responsibilities:

- Use of an employee’s municipal e-mail address, communicating in an official capacity, or discussing municipal business on any social media site will constitute conducting municipal business.
- Social media moderators shall at all times conduct themselves in a positive, professional, honest, ethical and fair manner in accordance with this Policy and related policies.
- Social media moderators are expected, at all times, to conduct themselves in the best interests of the Municipality.
- Online postings to the Corporation’s social media sites are to be strictly municipal business or community events in accordance with *Section 4.3 Content* and will be coordinated through the CAO in accordance with confidentiality and privacy standards (MFIPPA).
- Online postings for local agencies, boards, commissions, non-profit organizations, and charities will promote information, events, programs and services deemed beneficial to residents and businesses of the Municipality in accordance with *Section 4.3 Content*.
- Municipal social media sites are for information sharing purposes only, and responses to comments will not be made, unless the comment is a direct question regarding policies,



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programs or services and requires a response. Response times will not be guaranteed.

Social media moderators who fail to comply with this Policy may be subject to corrective action or disciplinary action which may include, but is not limited to: an apology; coaching; education or training; a warning; suspension or leave without pay; and termination of employment for cause. In addition, depending on the nature of the Policy violation or nature of the Terms of Use violation of the social media site or website, participants may also be subject to civil and/or criminal penalties.

### 4.2 Site Administration

The use of all social media sites by the Municipality will adhere to:

- Applicable provincial and federal laws and regulations;
- The Terms of Service of each social media site; and
- All applicable municipal policies, guidelines, and by-laws including, but not limited to, applicable administrative policies, human resources policies, internet use policies and records management policies.

### 4.3 Content

The following content is appropriate for moderators to post to social media sites:

- Information pertaining to municipally sponsored events and activities;
- Information pertaining to municipal services;
- Information pertaining to public health and safety (i.e. road closures, inclement weather, etc.)
- Information pertaining to emergency services;
- Contents of media advisories and press releases;
- Notices of upcoming meetings and events; and
- Information, events, programs and services of local Agencies, Boards, and Commissions, non-profit organizations and charities.

Inappropriate content, as determined by the CAO, is not permitted to be posted on municipal social media sites by site moderators, nor by the public. Content shall be deemed inappropriate if it includes:



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- Commercial endorsement or solicitation;
- Personal political content;
- Confidential information;
- Objectionable material; and
- Discriminatory and/or foul language.

For greater certainty and clarity, the following definitions are provided with respect to what is considered inappropriate content:

Commercial endorsement or solicitation includes endorsement by the Municipality of one product or service over another as well as statements requiring or requesting receipt of any product, service or asset for personal gain or use.

Personal political content includes endorsement or support of, or opposition of, political campaigns or matters before Municipal Council; personal comments or opinions about municipal staff and/or elected officials, and personal views about the municipal political process.

Confidential information includes information classified as confidential or proprietary records in the possession of the Municipality as well as information about members of the public, municipal employees and elected officials.

Objectionable material includes matter which may contain, but is not limited to, material promoting hate and/or violence, and 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, content that 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.

Language which presents a discriminatory, demeaning or derogatory portrayal of individuals or groups or contains anything which, in light of generally prevailing community standards, is likely to cause deep or widespread offence. It is also language that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, family status, status with regards to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.



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**NOTE:** The Corporation's Workplace Harassment/Discrimination Prevention Policy, Code of Conduct, Use of Technology Policy and Workplace Violence Policy must also be adhered to.

### 4.4 Protocols

The moderators will review social media sites regularly to ensure that all content is in compliance with the policy guidelines. Any content that is deemed inappropriate or does not adhere to this Social Media Policy must be immediately removed and brought to the attention of the CAO.

Each social media site maintained by the Municipality shall contain a link to a disclaimer that states:

- a. "The Municipality is not responsible for content posted by other users";
- b. "The Municipality, at its sole discretion, may remove any and all posts by other users";  
and
- c. "The Municipality of East Ferris will not guarantee responses to comments by other users. For more information or to speak with a staff member, please contact the Municipal Office".

### 4.5 Response Considerations

Site moderators shall adhere to the Social Media Response Chart, attached to and forming part of this policy. Additionally, the following considerations shall be made:

- a. Private information shall not be shared;
- b. Sources of information shall be cited;
- c. Only factual information shall be posted; and
- d. The Municipality shall be reflected upon positively.

### 4.6 Records Management and Retention

The Corporation's social media moderators will be responsible for ensuring that applicable content is retained for the appropriate period of time under the Corporation's Records Retention By-law.



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### 4.7 Privacy

Social media posts must be in compliance with:

- a. The requirements for the collection of Personal Information under MFIPPA;
- b. The requirements for use and disclosure of Personal Information under MFIPPA; and
- c. The requirements for securing Personal Information under MFIPPA.

### 5.0 COMMUNICATION OF POLICY

This policy will be communicated to Council and staff of the Municipality of East Ferris and will be made available to the public on the municipal website and social media pages.

### 6.0 CONNECTIONS TO OTHER POLICIES AND BY-LAWS

Municipality of East Ferris Community Emergency Plan

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

Municipality of East Ferris Communications Policy

### 7.0 REVIEW

This Media Relations Policy will be reviewed once per term of Council or as requested by the CAO or Council.