

Social Media Policy



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Administration & Finance	February 21, 2017	19-2017	1	4
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Purpose

Every day, people discuss and debate municipal services and issues in online conversations. The City of Kenora recognizes the vital importance of engaging in these online conversations and is committed to engage in online social media the right way.

This policy is being developed to help empower the corporation to participate in this widely-used communications channel.

Guiding Principles for Online Social Media

The following principles guide how our employees (including the Mayor and Council) must represent the Municipality in an online, official capacity when they are speaking.

- Follow our corporation's policies: As an employee and a representative of the Municipality, you must act with honesty and integrity in all matters. This commitment is true for all forms of social media. These principles are to guide your actions at work and are also applicable to your personal activities online.
- You are responsible for your actions: Anything you post that can potentially tarnish the Municipality's image will ultimately be your responsibility. We do encourage you to participate in the online social media space, but urge you to do so properly, exercising sound judgment and common sense. (See Liability for more information)
- Be a "scout" for compliments and criticism: Even if you are not an official online spokesperson for the Municipality, you are one of our most vital assets for monitoring the social media landscape. If you come across positive or negative remarks about the Municipality or its brands online that you believe are important, consider sharing them by forwarding them to the City Clerk's office.

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- Let the subject matter experts respond to negative posts. You may come across negative or disparaging posts about the Municipality or its activities, or see third parties trying to spark negative conversations. Unless you are an official spokesperson for the City, avoid the temptation to react yourself. Pass the post(s) along to the City Clerk who is trained to address such comments.
- Be conscious when mixing your work and personal lives. Online, your personal and business personas are likely to intersect. The Corporation respects the free speech rights of all of its employees, but you must remember that citizens, colleagues, supervisors, managers and members of Council often have access to the online content you post. Keep this in mind when publishing information online that can be seen by more than friends and family, and be aware that information originally intended just for friends and family can be forwarded on.

Remember: NEVER to disclose non-public information about the Corporation (including confidential information), and be aware that taking public positions online that are counter to the Corporation or political interests might cause conflict.

Employee Use of Social Media

- Employees and committee/board members must ensure that privacy, confidentiality, copyright and data protection laws are adhered to, and must not make comments that are considered defamatory or libelous;
- As a representative of the City of Kenora, it is expected that any time a public statement is made regarding the City (including on personal social media accounts), that the individual making the statement would be held to the same standards of professionalism that they would be at work.
- Employees who are deemed to be in violation of this policy will be subject to discipline as per the applicable Human Resource Policies, including the *Code of Conduct* and the *Internet and E-mail* policies, but also:
 - Proper Use of E-Mail and Internet Access
 - Employee Confidentiality
 - Protection of Personal Information
 - Behaviour and Conduct in the Workplace
 - Discrimination and Harassment-Free Workplace
 - Progressive Discipline

Enforcement of these policies will be as per the process outlined in each policy.

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Liability

Various kinds of conduct can expose a person or an employer to civil liability. The employer's liability will be triggered when a public service employee or authorized individual performs the activity. The following is a non-exhaustive list of examples of torts from which liability may stem from activity on City of Kenora electronic networks or devices:

- **Disclosing or collecting sensitive data**—Revealing or obtaining such information without authorization. In addition to the statutory provisions mentioned above, an unauthorized disclosure or collection of personal information can result, in some circumstances, in a civil action for invasion of privacy, nuisance or trespass under common law, and similar actions, for breach of contract and for breach of trust or breach of confidence (e.g., if confidential information is disclosed).
- **Defamation**—Spreading false allegations or rumors that would harm a person's reputation. In addition to criminal libel, publishing defamatory statements without a lawful defense can result in a civil action.
- **Inaccurate information** - Posting inaccurate information, whether negligently or intentionally. This can lead to civil lawsuits for negligent misrepresentation.

Note: The above is a non-exhaustive list of unacceptable use. Other activities could be deemed unacceptable at the discretion of the CAO.

Helpful Guidelines

1. Know and follow The City of Kenora's Employee Code of Conduct.
2. Employees are personally responsible for the content they publish on-line, whether in a blog, social computing site or any other form of user-generated media. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time. Protect your privacy and take care to understand a site's terms of service.
3. When you identify yourself, keep in mind your name and role within the City of Kenora may be easily identified to you. When you discuss City related matters such as products, services, programs or events, you must make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the City.
4. If you publish content online relevant to the City of Kenora in your personal capacity it is best to use a disclaimer such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent The City of Kenora's positions, strategies or opinions."
5. Respect copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws.

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6. Don't provide the City's or a client's, partner's or suppliers' confidential or other proprietary information and never discuss municipal business performance or other sensitive matters about business results or plans publicly.
7. Don't cite or reference clients, partners or suppliers on business related matters without their approval. When you do make a reference, link back to the source and do not publish content that might allow inferences to be drawn which could damage a client relationship with the City.
8. Respect your audience. Don't use ethnic slurs, discriminatory remarks, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any similar conduct that would not be appropriate or acceptable in the City's workplace. You should also show proper consideration for others' privacy.
9. Be aware of your association with the City of Kenora in online social networks. If you identify yourself as a City employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with colleagues and clients.
10. Spirited and passionate discussions and debates are fine, but you should be respectful of others and their opinions. Be the first to correct your own mistakes.
11. Try to add value. Provide worthwhile information and perspective. The City of Kenora is best represented by its people and what you publish may reflect on the municipality itself.
12. Don't misuse City of Kenora logos or trademarks and only use them if you have the authority to do so. For example, you shouldn't use the City of Kenora in your screen name or other social media ID.

This policy has been reviewed with me. I understand the policy and agree to abide by it.

Date

Employee Signature

Print Name