

# Social Media Policy



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## 1. PREAMBLE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of the City of Dauphin's Social Media channels, the use of Social Media for corporate purposes, and the personal use of Social Media by City employees.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

The following principles will guide the use of the City of Dauphin's Social Media accounts and define the roles and responsibilities related to Social Media communication:

- Social Media communication on behalf of the City of Dauphin should be utilized as a source of important, accurate information, to share positive stories, and to create a positive image of the City, City services and amenities, City administration, and Mayor and Council.
- Social Media communication on behalf of the City should be well coordinated, effectively managed, and responsive to the information needs of Council, municipal employees, the public, and other stakeholders.
- The purpose of the City of Dauphin's Social Media channels is to engage with users in a positive, respectful, accurate, and informative tone to communicate information.
- Social Media use by City of Dauphin employees through personal accounts should be respectful of the City's reputation and conducted in a manner consistent with the City's Municipal Employee Code of Conduct Policy and Respectful Workplace Policy.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

**City** means the City of Dauphin.

**Council** means the Council of the City of Dauphin.

**User** means a person using a Social Media site or service.

**City employees** mean all City of Dauphin employees, including permanent, part-time, temporary, casual, seasonal, contract employees, and interns.

**Marketing Coordinator** is an employee of the City of Dauphin in the position of the Marketing Coordinator.

**Social Media** is a term for web-based sites and services that allow people to interact through the sharing of information, opinions, and knowledge. Social Media platforms include, but are not limited to: Blogs, Facebook, Flickr, Google+, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Reddit, Snapchat, TikTok, Twitter, Tumblr, Vlogs, YouTube.

#### 4. SCOPE

This policy applies to all City of Dauphin employees who use City Social Media networks and/or websites that discuss, share, or comment on City business and to all City of Dauphin employees who use Social Media from personal accounts in their off-work time.

#### 5. COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

##### Goals

The City of Dauphin's goal is to provide users with an additional means to interact with city residents and to provide accurate and current information through official City of Dauphin Social Media platforms. The City of Dauphin also aims to provide guidance to City employees for their personal use of Social Media to ensure that the City's Municipal Employee Code of Conduct Policy is upheld in any Social Media activity that could reflect on the City's reputation.

##### Social Media Channels

The City uses the following Social Media channels:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- LinkedIn

##### Roles and Responsibilities

The Marketing Coordinator is responsible for administering the City of Dauphin's Social Media accounts. Departments will provide the Marketing Coordinator with information necessary to develop Social Media content. Cooperation and coordination between departments is necessary to better serve and inform the public and ensure that themes and priorities are consistently reflected in the information and messaged communication to the public. The Marketing Coordinator:

- Decides on topics and timing of posts (working with all departments for content)
- Replies to direct messages and/or forwards them to the respective Senior Manager for a response
- Reposts and shares from other department-specific accounts
- Monitors main accounts daily, Monday to Friday, and sporadically outside of office hours

- Analyzes posts and performance/engagement
- Makes adjustments based on analysis

City employees may forward any pertinent content related to the City to the Marketing Coordinator for review.

### Responding to Comments

- It is up to the discretion of the Marketing Coordinator, the City Manager, or their designate to reply to comments when time permits. User comments that require a timely response are encouraged to call the City.
- See Appendix A – Social Media Response Chart to determine appropriate action, if any.

### Monitoring Responses to City of Dauphin Content

The City of Dauphin encourages healthy, interactive communication; however, content containing any of the following shall not be allowed on City of Dauphin Social Media channels and may be subject to removal or being blocked from the City of Dauphin's Social Media channels:

- Comments not topically related to the particular post being commented on;
- Comments that are offensive to an individual or an organization, violent, profane, hateful, insulting, rude, abusive, threatening, harassing, or aggressive;
- Content that promotes, fosters, and/or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, age, marital status, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation;
- Content that reveals personal or private information about any particular person, that names a City employee, or makes inference to them by naming their position, or is otherwise protected by *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* or any other applicable privacy legislation;
- Comments promoting or opposing any person campaigning for election to a political office;
- Inappropriate content or links to inappropriate content;
- Comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity;
- Content related to commercial sales, advertising, or promotions.

## 6. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The City of Dauphin recognizes that City employees may wish to use Social Media in their personal life, in off-work hours. It is not the intention of this policy to discourage or limit personal expression or online activities.

Personal Social Media posts and comments made by City of Dauphin employees are not representative of the City of Dauphin. The City cannot be held responsible for or guarantee the validity, accuracy, or security of third-party comments.

Employees should recognize the potential for damage to the City in some circumstances through personal use of Social Media when an individual can be identified as a City of Dauphin employee. The following guidelines will encourage personal use of Social Media in a way that does not reflect negatively on the City of Dauphin:

- Any employee activity online must reflect the principles of the City of Dauphin's Municipal Employee Code of Conduct Policy and Respectful Workplace Policy, including (but not limited to) guidelines related to standards of professionalism and integrity, the security of confidential information, the use of influence, and the respectful treatment of other City employees.
- At no time should a City of Dauphin employee present themselves as representing, or speaking on behalf of, the City of Dauphin in any online activity unless expressly authorized to do so. When posting or commenting with content related to City of Dauphin business or to municipal issues of interest to the City, employees should state that the views made through their personal Social Media accounts are theirs and theirs alone.
- Prohibited Social Media activity would include (but would not be limited to) disparaging comments made about the City of Dauphin, its Council, its employees, or its business; content that is defamatory, harassing, or libelous, or that contributes to a hostile work environment.
- If an employee encounters a situation while using Social Media that threatens to become antagonistic, they should disengage from the exchange in a polite manner and seek the advice of a supervisor.
- Any personal online activity that, following investigation and substantiation, is determined to have violated the City of Dauphin's Social Media Policy may subject an employee to disciplinary action, including termination.

	<b>DISTRIBUTION</b>
	Master Policy Manual
	Notice to Department Heads (Email)
	Notice to All Staff (Email)
	Intranet
	Internet (Public Information)



What's the tone of the post or comment?

Positive / Neutral

Negative

Is it a direct question?  
(about policies, programs or services, etc.)

NO

YES

Is it worth responding to?  
.....  
• Is it an opportunity to share important information or key messages?  
• Would a response create or strengthen relationships with stakeholders?  
• Is this a central / important matter for my department / organization?  
• Is it worth the time it will take to craft a response?

NO

YES

**DO NOT RESPOND:**  
Let it stand.

**RESPOND:**  
Work with the relevant department(s) to craft an accurate and appropriate response. Make sure it is approved by the appropriate department before sending.

Is the comment inappropriate?  
Is removal justified under your organization's social media policy?

YES

**REMOVE:**  
Remove the content using the steps outlined in your social media policy or guidelines. If the issue persists, point to your organization's guidelines for inappropriate content.

NO

Is it simply a rant, joke or satirical comment?

NO

YES

**DO NOT RESPOND:**  
Let it stand, but monitor for escalation.

Does it include inaccurate information about your organization?

NO

YES

**CORRECT:**  
Work with the relevant department(s) to verify the correct information. Respond by correcting the information in a timely, positive and professional way.

Is it a complaint or taxpayer service issue?

NO

YES

**RESOLVE:**  
Acknowledge the concern and respect their privacy by inviting them to continue the discussion offline. This could be by phone, email, or other customer service channels, depending on what's outlined in your social media policy.

**Keep these things in mind when you're crafting your response:**

- Respect Privacy: Don't share or invite others to share personal information on public channels.
- Respect Ownership: Cite your sources. If you're sharing or drawing from someone else's information or material, then say so.
- Be Credible: Stick to the facts and avoid value judgments.
- Be Appropriate: Your tone should be appropriate to the situation and should reflect positively on your organization.