

Policy:	<b>AD-016</b>
Coverage:	<b>Town of Stellarton</b>
Council Approval:	February 5, 2018
Effective Date:	February 5, 2018



## Use of Official Website and Social Media Policy

### 1. Purpose

The Town of Stellarton is committed to using social media and Town website for the purposes of sharing information resources with our community and visitors, and for engaging with residents, visitors, and community stakeholders.

### 2. Definitions

**Follow** means to subscribe to a social media account of another user and receive their posts as updates.

**Political Material** means comments or posts made by politicians, supporters or otherwise, for the purpose of political gain.

**Social media** means the web-based applications and sites and includes blogging, microblogging (Twitter), photosharing (Flickr, Snapchat), video sharing (YouTube), webcasting, and networking (Linkedin, Facebook, wikis, blogs, discussion boards) which allow users to interact with each other by sharing information, opinions, knowledge, photographs and interests.

**Town Website** means the official website for the Town of Stellarton [www.stellarton.ca](http://www.stellarton.ca).

**Social Media Moderator** means Town of Stellarton Communication Officer and representatives tasked with posting and reviewing content on Social Media sites and Town Website.

**Town of Stellarton Social Media sites** means social media sites created and managed by Town staff and approved representatives.

### 3. Scope

This Social Media Policy applies to all Town of Stellarton staff members and Committee/Council members participating on all Town of Stellarton owned social

media sites. The participation in social media by employees and Committee/Council members acting in an official municipal capacity should be viewed in the same way as participating in other media or public forums.

#### **4. Procedures**

##### a) Creating a Town Social Media Site

- Employees and committee/board members wishing to use social media sites should work with the Communications Officer to discuss specific goals and objectives.
- Employees must have approval from the Clerk, Communications Officer, prior to establishing a social media page on behalf of the Town of Stellarton; Login and password information will be provided to the Communications Officer.

##### b) Administering Town Social Media and Website

- All Town-owned social media sites are administered by Town employees.
- When a Social Media Moderator leaves the Town, all passwords should be changed for those Town-owned social media sites to which they had access.
- An appropriate disclaimer or other terms and conditions, as approved by the Clerk's Department, must be posted to the Town's Social Media webpage, which should be accessible from each Town social media site.
- Content of Town of Stellarton Social Media sites will be monitored by social media moderators who are responsible for:
  - Correcting misinformation and ensuring content is up-to-date;
  - Ensuring responses to wall posts, in-box messages and discussion comments are made in a timely manner;
  - Removing any post that is considered to be false, defamatory, abusive, hateful, obscene, racist, sexually-oriented, threatening, discriminatory, or invasive of someone else's privacy;
  - Denying access to or blocking users who continue to post inappropriate or offensive comments.
- Website will be maintained by the Communications Officer

#### c) Internal/External Content Standards

- Comments, posts, and messages are welcome on municipal social media sites provided they do not contain:
  - Obscene, racist, or otherwise discriminatory content;
  - Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language;
  - Plagiarized material or copyrighted material;
  - Confidential information published without prior consent.
  - Promotion of political candidates or other political material not approved by Council.
  - Content that defames or contradicts council, Town goals, or staff members.
  - All municipal social media sites or pages within existing social media services will be required to link to the Town's Social Media page which will contain the following terms and conditions:
    - All posts are monitored by municipal staff who may delete any message. If a submission violates guidelines, or is in any other way inappropriate, the submission will be removed in its entirety from the site. If a user continues to post messages that violate the guidelines, the user may be blocked from using the site. If you believe a submission to any municipal social media site violates the guidelines, please report it immediately to the municipality.

#### d) Employee Use of Social Media

- Employees must ensure that privacy, confidentiality, copyright and data protection laws are adhered to, and must not make comments that are considered defamatory or libellous;
- 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.

#### e) Council / Committee/ Commission Members and Social Media

- Members of Council are welcomed and encouraged to participate in social media, through their own accounts, while respecting the Council Code of Conduct. Members of Council are encouraged to follow the official Town sites and to share content.
- The Town of Stellarton Social Media Sites will follow any current Member of Council's social media accounts, which are used to promote

municipal and community information. (i.e. strictly personal accounts will not be followed). All accounts owned by Members of Council will be un-followed, and no further material will be shared on Social Media sites as of the start of nomination period for any municipal elections or by-elections.

- If any accounts belonging to non-incumbent candidates are being followed, they will also be un-followed and no further material will be shared on Corporate Social Media sites as of the date that they file nomination papers.
- Any violations of the Code of Conduct by Council / Committee/ Commission Members will be dealt with according to the resolution process outlined in the Code.

f) Request to post content on Town operated Social media or Town Website

- Content is to be forwarded to the Communications Officer or appointed staff moderator for posting; content has to adhere to the standards in this policy.
- All files will be given in MS Word format and PDF formats.
- Media and graphics will be sent with content and will adhere to this policy.

Town Clerk Annotation for Official Policy Book

Date of Notice to Council Members of Intent

To Consider (Minimum 7 Days): January XX, 2018

Date of Passage of Current Policy: February 5, 2018

I certify that this Policy was adopted by Council as indicated above.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Town Clerk

July 12, 2018  
Date