

Altona

**Town of Altona
Social Media Policy**

PURPOSE

This establishes a policy for the administration of official Town of Altona (Town) social media accounts. The Town is committed to community engagement, transparent and accessible communication, and excellence in customer service. The Town's social media accounts are intended to be used to provide information to the public, engage with residents and answer questions, and to engage in open discussion in a manner that is polite and respectful.

SCOPE

"Official Social Media" use refers to use of social media for the purpose of communicating on behalf of the Town. This includes social media accounts with an official Town-branded profile picture, and/or updated by designated employees as part of their role. Official Social Media is intended to be used for municipal business reasons, and is to be conducted in a responsible and professional manner. Personal Social Media Use is encompassed within the Town of Altona Information Technology Policy (34-2017).

This policy applies to all Town employees and Members of Council. The policy also refers to responsibilities of those posting comments on official Town of Altona social media pages, and moderation of comments.

PRINCIPLES

This policy establishes guidelines for Official Social Media in order to balance the disbursement of timely and accurate information with the Town's need to ensure that:

- a) the information that is provided through social media is accurate, accessible, transparent and accountable; and is in line with the Town's strategic priorities and guiding principles;
- b) the information that is provided through social media does not compromise public safety or the security of confidential or sensitive information; and
- c) the credibility of the Town's public image is safeguarded.

1.0 Ownership of Accounts

All Official Social Media accounts are the property of the Town, and will remain the property of the Town even if the designated employees managing the account leave. Municipal employees do not have the authority to create social media accounts on behalf of the Town of Altona, or any department or initiative

pertaining to the Town of Altona, unless given consent to do so by the CHRO or CAO.

2.0 Administration

The CHRO will work collaboratively with staff to ensure that Official Social Media contains accurate, easy to understand, and accessible information regarding municipal policies, programs, services, events and initiatives. Official Social Media is to be used as a tool to demonstrate the Town's commitment to engaging the community, and to release relevant and accurate information in a timely manner.

3.0 Unsuitable Content

The CHRO reserves the right to edit or remove any content from the Town's social media pages that is deemed unsuitable, inappropriate, or in violation of this Social Media Policy. Content may be deemed unsuitable if it includes any of the following, as defined below: commercial endorsement, personal political content, confidential information, objectionable material, discriminatory language, or violates the terms of this policy or any other by-laws, policies or procedures of the Town of Altona.

- a) Commercial endorsement includes endorsement by the Town of one product or service over another.
- b) Personal political content includes support of, or opposition of, any political campaigns or matters before Town Council, personal comments or opinions about municipal staff and/or elected officials, as well as personal views about the municipal political process.
- c) Confidential information includes any information 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.
- d) Objectionable material includes, but is not limited to, text, links, images or videos related to material promoting hate and/or violence, material that is pornographic, sexually explicit, or obscene in nature, material that encourages illegal activity, or material that contains information that may compromise the safety and security of the public or public systems. Objectionable material also includes any material which violates a legal ownership interest, or copyright.
- e) Discriminatory language includes any language that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, age, religion, gender, marital status, family status, status with regards to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.

4.0 Comments and Direct Messages

The Town is not responsible for comments made by the public on official social media accounts, and reserves the right to remove any content that is deemed inappropriate for any reason and at any time. Town staff shall moderate comments to ensure that posted comments are constructive and suitable for all readers, and respectful of all readers. The Town of Altona shall also employ auto-moderating of comments for profane or discriminatory language where possible. Posted comments must comply with the following considerations:

- a) Comments must be civil; inappropriate language will not be tolerated. Any posts containing threatening, profane, discriminatory, obscene, inflammatory, unlawful or otherwise objectionable statements or content will be removed wherever possible, and will not be replied to by Town staff.
- b) Advertising or promotional announcements are not permitted. Posts deemed as spam and/or explicit commercial endorsements will be removed.
- c) We recognize that differing and questioning opinions are a part of conversation; however, posts with personal attacks or references to the personality of individuals will be removed wherever possible.
- d) Comments or questions should be within the scope of the topic under discussion. General questions and inquiries for the Town of Altona are most quickly responded to by calling the Administration Office at 204-324-6468.
- e) Comments reflect views of the individuals posting them, and not those of the Town of Altona Administration or Council.
- f) Individuals are responsible for what they post. Comments must not breach any law, confidentiality, or copyright. Offending comments will be removed wherever possible.

The CHRO or designate shall respond to all direct messages and inquiries to the official social media accounts in a timely manner during business hours. Outside of business hours, an auto-reply shall be enabled where possible. Social media accounts are not monitored 24/7. Comments or direct messages must not be used to report any suspicious activity, crimes, or emergencies.