

RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ABERDEEN NO. 373							
Policy Title				Adopted By			
ABERDEEN SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY				Council Resolution		164/22	
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RM Council		RM of Aberdeen No. 373		06/09/2022		1	

ABERDEEN SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. This policy governs the publication of and commentary on social media to empower our councillors, employees and committee members to participate in social media as fully as possible, while portraying the RM’s brand and representing its core values.

DEFINITIONS

2. The following definitions apply to this Policy:

“Committee Member” shall mean any member of a committee created or funded by the Municipality solely or jointly with another municipality.

“Social media” shall mean any web-based or mobile technology that turns communication into interactive dialogue, including without limitation, blogs, forums and social networking sites.

“Municipality” shall mean the Rural Municipality of Aberdeen No. 373

“Policy” shall mean the Aberdeen Social Media Policy

APPLICABILITY

3. This policy shall apply to all employees, council members, and committee members of the Rural Municipality of Aberdeen No. 373.

GENERAL PROVISIONS & GUIDELINES

4. Posting on an Official RM of Aberdeen No. 373 account.
 - Any social media account that is affiliated with the municipality must not conflict with the mission, values and objectives of municipality; must not contain or link to libelous, defamatory or harassing content; must not reveal proprietary information about municipality business; must not reveal confidential or personal information about anyone; and must not utilize pseudonyms or false screen names.
 - Social media will be used as a tool to aide in providing information to the ratepayers.

- Information (including images, video, etc.) posted on municipal channels must abide by copyright laws, and must be used only with permission or appropriate citing of the source.
- Only municipal office staff may post on social media under the municipality's name.
- If employees encounter a situation while using social media that threatens to become antagonistic, employees should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of the administrator.
- All ratepayers commenting on municipal social media accounts should politely be directed to forward their concerns/questions by email to the municipality's official email address, so that the concerns may be viewed by all office employees and/or submitted to council if necessary.
- Facebook posts may be made through Facebook's website or Facebook's mobile application. Account security is handled via Facebook's page roles, and the poster of each post is visible to staff.
- The RM of Aberdeen No. 373 reserves the right to shut down, without prior notice, any official social media channel for any reason.

5. Abuse and inappropriate conduct by the public

- Any abusive conduct or inappropriate language used by a member of the public on the RM of Aberdeen No. 373's social media accounts is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Comments and questions of an inappropriate nature may be removed at the administrator's discretion.

6. Posting on social media in a personal capacity

- Employees need to know and adhere to the RM of Aberdeen No. 373's Code of Conduct when using social media in reference to the municipality.
- Employees, Councillors, and Committee Members should be aware of the effect their actions may have on their images, as well as the municipality's image. The information that employees post or publish may be public information for a long time.
- Employees and Councillors, should be careful to identify their views and opinions as their own, and ensure they do not disclose information that they have obtained as an employee or councillor and that is not otherwise available to the public.
- Employees, Councillors, and Committee Members should be aware that the RM of Aberdeen No.373 may observe content and information made available by Employees, councillors and Committee Members through social media. Employees, Councillors, and Committee Members should use their best judgment in posting material that is neither inappropriate nor harmful to the municipality, its employees, its councillors or its ratepayers.
- It is the responsibility of each Employee to ensure that confidential information obtained in the scope of his employment is kept strictly confidential and not released to anyone by means of social media.

ENFORCEMENT

7. Proactively, the Administrator shall give a copy of this policy to each new Employee at the time of hire and each new councillor.
8. The policy will be made available on a continuing basis through electronic means so that every employee, Councillor, and Committee Member has access to it and can read, download, or print a copy.
9. Failure to receive training will not be an excuse for non-compliance with this policy.
10. A “3 strikes” policy for members of the public will be followed, whereby after 3 instances of abuse, an individual may be temporarily banned or blocked from social media portals for their conduct.
11. Inappropriate, harmful, or defamatory posts made by Committee Members may result in the removal of the member from the Committee.

ACCOUNTABILITY

12. Employees shall:
 - know the policy and comply with its principles.
 - disclose breaches of the policy immediately, whether they are committed by ourselves or a co-worker.
 - cooperate fully with investigations into alleged wrongdoing.
 - understand that breaches of the policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
 - if required, seek interpretation of the policy from the Administrator and/or the Municipal Solicitor.
 - make observance of the policy part of their daily work and review the policy as part of annual performance reviews.
 - not retaliate against anyone who has come forward with a complaint, or is a witness to a complaint.
 - not assume that violations of the values of this policy are someone else’s problem.