



District of Lantzville

Policy No.: 3000-10

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Social Media Policy

PURPOSE

This Policy provides guidelines for the District of Lantzville's participation in social media sites and networks and for the use of personal social media accounts by District elected officials, employees and volunteer board and committee members.

SCOPE

This Policy applies to all District of Lantzville elected officials, volunteer board and committee members, and employees, including permanent, part-time, temporary, casual, paid on-call, and co-op employees.

This Policy applies to any social media platforms that officially represent the District of Lantzville as well as the personal social media platforms and accounts of District elected officials, volunteer board and committee members and employees.

PRIMARY GOALS

This Policy aims to:

- Enhance communication with the community and stakeholders on District issues, operations, and services;
- Safeguard the District's reputation;
- Provide Council members, volunteer board and committee members, and employees with clear guidelines for appropriate use of social media; and
- Provide protocol around monitoring, administration, acceptable use and privacy on social media.

POLICY

GENERAL

1. The District uses social media as one way of sharing information.
2. The Corporate Administration Department authorizes specific employees to post on the District's social media sites. Only authorized employees may make posts on behalf of the District.
3. The Corporate Administration Department is responsible for the general oversight of the District's social media platforms.
4. All District social media sites will clearly indicate that they are owned by the District of Lantzville and will display the District's logo and contact information.

5. The District's social media accounts are not monitored 24/7. Residents can report operational or service issues to district@lantzville.ca, call 1.888.826.8271 for after-hours Public Works emergencies, or call 911 for all other emergencies.

6. All District social media sites are required to contain the following disclaimer:

“Welcome to the District of Lantzville's [*insert name of page*]! Please note that this account is not monitored 24/7. Please report operational or service issues to district@lantzville.ca, call 1.888.826.8271 for after-hours Public Works emergencies, or call 911 for all other emergencies.

While this is an open forum, please keep your comments clean and respectful. The District will remove unacceptable content, including anything that does not meet these guidelines:

- We do not allow graphic, obscene, or racial comments.
- We will not tolerate comments that have a harassing tone.
- We do not allow any comments that are abusive, hateful, or intended to defame anyone or any organization.
- We do not allow solicitation or advertisement of any non-government organization, product or service.
- We do not allow promotion of political candidates or any political campaign material.
- We do not allow photos or videos of people who have not given permission to the District to post their image.”

7. The District will only post photos or videos of identifiable individuals where permission has been granted and with a signed consent form.

EMPLOYEE AND VOLUNTEER BOARD AND COMMITTEE MEMBER USE

8. Employees and volunteer board and committee members must adhere to the following guidelines in their personal social media use:
 - a) Use social media in a manner that conforms to other District policies, including the Respectful Workplace (Bullying & Harassment) Policy No. 5005-2.
 - b) Not discuss the District's confidential or proprietary information including intellectual property, lawsuits, legal proceedings and other legal information, financial information, operational information, business plans, management changes, labour relations, or any other District information they have come into by virtue of their employment or volunteer appointment and that has not yet been made officially public by the District.
 - c) Do not speak on behalf of the District or represent that you do, unless you have been given explicit written authorization to do so. If you are offering personal opinions in relation to District business or services, you must make it clear that your opinions do not represent the District's position. Use phrases such as "in my personal opinion" or "personally" to communicate personal views about District business or services.
 - d) Ensure that they do not reveal or disclose personal information within the custody or control of the District unless expressly authorized by the District. This includes personal information of elected officials, other employees and members of the public.
 - e) Never identify or comment about other District employees without their consent. Even positive comments may be inappropriate or unwanted.
 - f) Not use social media in a manner that would harm the District's reputation. Remember that the internet is a public space. Consider that co-workers, residents and the general public may read what you post, regardless of how obscure or secure the site you are posting to may seem. You are expected to conduct yourself respectfully, truthfully and to demonstrate professionalism.

- g) Take responsibility not only for their own social media posts but also any comments made on their posts that were reasonably encouraged or welcomed by their post.
9. Employees administering the District's social media sites must adhere to the Procedures set out in this Policy.
10. Employees who violate the terms of this Policy, including via personal social media use, may be subject to discipline.
11. Volunteer board and committee members who violate the terms of this Policy may be subject to removal from their volunteer appointment.

ELECTED OFFICIAL USE

12. Elected officials must include the following disclaimer on their personal social media pages:

“The views, posts, positions or opinions expressed on this page are my own and do not represent those of the District of Lantzville.

Please note that any post that does not follow these guidelines will be removed from my page:

- I do not allow profanity.
 - I do not allow graphic, obscene, or racial comments.
 - I do not allow comments that have a harassing tone.
 - I do not allow any comments that are abusive, hateful, or intended to defame anyone or any organization.
 - I do not allow promotion of illegal activity.”
13. Elected officials will regularly monitor their social media accounts and immediately take measures to deal with any messages or posts by others that violate section 12 above.
 14. If elected officials publish online content relevant to the District in a personal capacity, they will use “in my opinion” or a similar disclaimer to ensure it is expressly clear that they are speaking for themselves and not the District or Council as a whole.
 15. Elected officials will ensure that their social media content does not indicate that they have come to a conclusive view on a matter coming before Council.
 16. Elected officials will not engage in back-and-forth communications amongst themselves on social media to avoid the possibility of this being construed as a meeting of Council.
 17. Elected officials have a duty of confidentiality to the District and a duty to uphold the District's reputation. Elected officials will not post any of the following on social media:
 - a) Any information discussed in closed session, unless the information has been released from closed session by a resolution of Council
 - b) Any information that they would not present in a public forum.
 - c) Any personal or confidential information regarding any District employees, elected officials and/or advisory committee members.
 - d) Any negative statements disparaging staff or calling into question the professional capabilities of staff.
 - e) Any confidential business information belonging to the District, including non-public financial or operational information.

18. Elected officials will not report on any Council business on their social media profiles and websites until the District has released formal communication, e.g., Council agenda, adopted minutes, announcements, media releases, Council Updates or Community Updates, which elected officials are then encouraged to share.
19. In emergency situations, elected officials:
 - a) are not involved in Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) communications, except for occasionally the Mayor when working with the EOC Director and the EOC Public Information Officer
 - b) will only share official emergency updates published by the District of Lantzville EOC
 - c) will direct public inquiries regarding the emergency to the District of Lantzville official website and social media platforms to encourage one official source of information
 - d) will encourage the public to register for Voyent Alert! through rdn.bc.ca/voyent-alert to receive messages from the District of Lantzville through an app, text message, voice call or email for critical events such as floods or wildfires.
20. Elected officials will not use the District's logo or photos of Municipal Hall on their social media pages.
21. Elected officials should refer any questions received through their social media pages regarding District policies or operational services to district@lantzville.ca for District employees to respond.
22. Elected officials who re-post something written by someone else should first ensure that they have permission to do so and should clearly state that the material was authored by someone else. They should ensure that what they are re-posting otherwise meets the requirements of this Policy and is not profane, harassing, abusive or defamatory.
23. Elected officials may promote the District's social media posts by liking and sharing content from the District's social media platforms.
24. Elected officials are not to post or use District social media sites from the beginning of the nomination period until the election results are made official by the Chief Election Officer. The District may delete posts by sitting elected officials on District social media sites during municipal election campaigns.
25. Elected officials shall not use social media for campaigning on District technology or devices.
26. The District may request that an elected official edit, retract, or delete certain posts or content on their social media sites if it is necessary to ensure compliance with applicable laws, or to avoid damage to the District's reputation, or the District's relationships with suppliers, contractors or customers.
27. If an elected official violates this Policy, the matter will be brought forward to Council at the Closed portion of a Council meeting for review.

DISTRICT SOCIAL MEDIA PROCEDURE

1. The Corporate Administration Department maintains a list of all District social media pages in use and the names of all employee administrators of these accounts, as well as the associated user identifications and passwords.
2. The Corporate Administration Department handles the day-to-day management of the District's social media sites. This includes:
 - a) Ensuring content is up-to-date and correcting misinformation;
 - b) Ensuring that posts, in-box messages and discussion comments are reviewed and responded to;
 - c) Removing any post that does not meet the guidelines; and
 - d) Denying access to or blocking users that do not adhere to the District's posting guidelines.
3. Whenever an employee is designated as an administrator for a District social media site, the Corporate Administration Department will provide training on the District's approach to social media and expectations for administrators.
4. When an employee with access to District social media sites leaves the District's employment, the Corporate Administration Department will change all passwords for social media sites to which they had access. It is the responsibility of the departing employee's Department Head to ensure the Corporate Administration Department is notified about the departure of an employee with access to District social media sites.
5. The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA) applies to social media content on District social media pages. Therefore, social media content on District social media pages is an official record of the District. Employees using District social media accounts are responsible for ensuring compliance with FOIPPA.

RESPONSIBILITY

The Corporate Administration Department office is the lead authority for the District's online communication strategies. Any new social media account for corporate use may only be established by the Corporate Administration Department.

DISTRIBUTION

All Council members, employees and volunteer committee and board members.