

Overview

The purpose of the social media policy is to protect the City of Cornwall's (hereinafter 'the City') reputation and ensure consistency and professionalism with how the City communicates with the public via social media platforms. It further provides the City's employees, Council, and the public with an understanding of the policies and procedures surrounding the acceptable use of social media pages as they relate to the City.

Social media platforms are powerful tools and communication channels that have become, in many cases, the primary source of information for many individuals. With this shift from print to digital information-seeking, the City encourages the use of social media platforms to further its strategic goals.

The City's website (www.cornwall.ca) will remain the primary source of information and Internet presence. However, the City is committed to using social media in a professional and accessible way to complement it.

This policy will outline:

- Monitoring and administration of the City's social media platforms, including approved and banned social media platforms.
- Monitoring and triaging messages received through social media.
- Content suitable for social media platforms, and.
- Usage of social media for employees and Council.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all City employees, and members of Council in the delivery of day-to-day work where the usage of (a) social media platform(s) is/are required.

Definitions

Employees: Refers to all full-time, part-time or casual staff, contractors, consultants or any other individual acting on behalf of the City.

Council: Refers to all elected officials, including the Mayor.

Official Record: Items created and documenting City business, regardless of format.

Official Social Media Page(s): Official accounts approved, created and maintained by the City.

Public Statement: An approved statement delivered by an employee or Council relating to the City's business or employees. Public statements are platform agnostic and should be given the same level of care across platforms. Statements are given final approval by the individuals quoted and by the Manager of Communications.

Social Media Content: Planned content that has been developed with the intent to be posted on any of the City's official social media pages.

Designated Employees: City staff tasked with posting, updating, monitoring and reviewing content on official social media pages.

Administrative Employees: City staff who have access to social media pages for administrative purposes such as but not limited to removing/adding Designated Employees, managing pages during an emergency situation, etc.

NOTE: Other social media pages/accounts/groups that have "Cornwall", "City of Cornwall", "Cornwall, Ontario", "City of Cornwall, Ontario" in their page name or reference the City are NOT official, City-administered pages. The posts and/or discussions on these pages do not reflect the views or corporate identity of the City. Official, City-administered pages will be clearly identified where appropriate.

Administration of Official Social Media Pages

Designated employees monitor the City's official social media pages during regular business hours which are Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

Due to the high volume of messages received through official accounts, the Communications Team has direct authority to choose which messages they respond to or do not respond to. In all cases, residents sending messages will receive an automated message indicating that 1) these accounts are not monitored 24/7, 2) for emergencies, please contact 9-1-1, 3) for further help, automated messages will push to Cornwall Connect for resolution of some of the most common service requests.

Designated Employees are to be identified by the Manger of Communications, and the Director, Government Relations & Corporate Priorities has final authority on who is considered a Designated Employee.

Administrative Employees are considered to be the Chief Administrative Officer, the Director, Government Relations & Corporate Priorities, and the Executive Assistant to the Mayor and Chief Administrative Officer.

The Manager of Communications shall provide oversight and accountability of the City's official social media pages.

Official Social Media Pages are as listed:

- Twitter/X
- Facebook
- Instagram
- LinkedIn

Banned Social Media Pages are as listed below:

- TikTok

New platforms may be evaluated at any time, and the creation of Official Social Media Pages are at the discretion of the Manager of Communications.

Intent of Official Social Media Pages

While audiences and interests may differ from page to page and channel strategies may differ from one to another, the general intent behind leveraging official social media pages for the City are as follows:

- Increase awareness of core municipal services, term-of-Council priorities
- Complement and enhance existing corporate communication methods
- Inform the public of time-sensitive situations
- Reinforce corporate brand identity and key messaging

Content on Official Social Media Pages

City departments are responsible to provide content and context to the Communications Team on any events, resources, or updates pertaining to their

department. This content should be provided with as much advance notice as possible.

The provision of an annual planning calendar is ideal. At the very least, content should be provided to the Communications Team seven (7) business days away from the desired posting date. Content provided within seven (7) business days, unless defined as an emergency, may or may not be posted, at the discretion of the Manager of Communications.

Content posted on all Official Social Media Pages will be bilingual (English, followed by French).

All content, including videos and visual images, produced with City funds will remain at all times the property of the City of Cornwall and must be stored in a central repository to be identified by Communications for ease of access.

Branding of Official Social Media Pages

One intent of Official Social Media Pages is to reinforce corporate brand identity and key messaging. As such:

All official social media pages shall bear the City's logo and contact information. Contract information on all social media pages, where applicable, should read:

*City of Cornwall
360 Pitt Street
Cornwall, ON, K6J 3P9
Telephone: 613-930-2787
cornwall.ca*

Terms of Use of Official Social Media Pages

Members of the public are invited to participate on the City's official social media pages by commenting. All interactions shall remain respectful, as defined in the Social Media Terms of Use, for each page.

Social media utilization by City employees (Terms of Use) and guidelines for members of Council

City employees engaged in online interactions on the City's official social media pages or any online conversation that involves information about the City on a private or public page are required to meet the Social Media Terms of Use. Council members are strongly encouraged to abide by these same terms.

City employees are encouraged to amplify city messaging and posts where possible. Commenting and two-way discussions with other users should be done with caution especially in emotionally charged contexts or in situations where information and facts may be evolving or change quickly.

The public and residents of the City have a reasonable expectation that City employees, when commenting on posts on Official Social Media Pages, are speaking on behalf of the City – regardless of whether someone is 'on shift'/'on the clock' or not.

City employees who choose to comment on social media will be accountable for using approved, up-to-date City messaging, even on their personal accounts. Communications employees can confirm whether messages ought to be shared or if members of the public ought to be engaged, in case there is any doubt. Employee training is also available via Communications.

If City employees are identified as breaking these Social Media Terms of Use as deemed by their Supervisor and the Manager of Communications, disciplinary action may be taken.