

POLICY TITLE	Social Media
CATEGORY	Administrative
POLICY NUMBER	ADMIN-060 (Formerly AG-009-02)
POLICY OWNER	Corporate Engagement and Communications (CEC)
ACCESS	Public

### PURPOSE

The City of Vancouver Social Media Policy outlines the requirements, roles and responsibilities for all City employees and representatives when engaging on behalf of the City on social media platforms.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the City of Vancouver.

#### Exemption

The Vancouver Public Library Board, Vancouver Police Board and Office of the Auditor General have implemented Social Media Policies specific to those agencies and are responsible for ensuring that such policies address the risks associated with the use of social media noted in this Policy.

### DEFINITIONS

**Content:** Any information uploaded or added to an online location. Content can include text, photos, videos, links, geographic markers, etc.

**Employee:** full-time regular, temporary, part-time, and auxiliary City employees.

**Messages:** includes online communications such as blog posts, wall posts, tweets, document posting, video posting, comments, replies, direct messages, events and invitations.

**Social media:** internet-based applications that enable the creation and exchange of user-generated content. Blogs and Twitter are text-based examples of social media. YouTube, Flickr, Tumblr and Pinterest are multimedia examples of social media.

**Social network:** websites where individuals construct a public or semi-public profile on a website and connect with others in their extended social network. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+ are examples of social networks.

**Social media channel:** category of social media tools, e.g. blogs, micro-blogs, video sharing, podcasts or social networks.

**Social media platform:** specific social media service such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube.

**Social media account:** established profile on social media platforms.

**Moderator:** A person or persons responsible for filtering content and comments to an online environment. Moderating includes allowing or rejecting content and comments based on policies, guidelines, standards and laws, posting rationale for rejected or edited discussion and ensuring dialogue and discussion remains on topic.

## POLICY STATEMENTS

### 1 General

The City of Vancouver uses social media as a communication and engagement tool to encourage information sharing and dialogue with a wide variety of audiences. Use of social media must meet City of Vancouver business and communication objectives including but not limited to service provision, communications, public engagement, human resource management and emergency management.

Corporate Communications oversees the City of Vancouver's social media efforts in accordance with City web standards as defined in this policy, as well as the City's *Social Media Handbook*, *Social Media Strategy* and related policies. Social media accounts are primarily managed by individuals representing City departments, programs, services and operations.

### 2 Participation

Social media channels are an official venue for interacting with the public. All social media management, posting and interactions must reflect the policies and mission of the City of Vancouver.

Development, implementation and usage of City-approved social media channels is overseen by Corporate Communications. Corporate Communications also centrally allocates and monitors all City accounts. City departments and programs manage the accounts, are the primary content authors and moderate interactions according to the *Participant Terms of Use*, found on [vancouver.ca](http://vancouver.ca) and in the *Social Media Handbook*. Where appropriate, 3-1-1, the Emergency Operations Centre, Corporate Communications and other applicable City representatives will be granted permission to post on any account.

Corporate Communications is the only department that can set up new social media accounts and provide access to those accounts. Employees wishing to engage on social media platforms on behalf of the City of Vancouver must submit a *Social Media Account Request Form* and seek approval from Corporate Communications. Employees active on City of Vancouver social media accounts must demonstrate compliance with this policy

and the *Social Media Strategy and Handbook*, and sign the *Social Media Practitioner Responsibilities Statement of Acknowledgement* form.

Employees representing the City on social media channels are expected to conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the City and in accordance with the *Code of Conduct* and the *Social Media Handbook*. Employees must not divulge confidential information on social media sites, including but not limited to, in camera items, personnel matters or Emergency Operations Centre internal information.

In situations where employees are not in compliance with this policy, the *Code of Conduct*, the *Social Media Handbook* or *Social Media Manager Responsibilities*, Corporate Communications has the right to remove posts, restrict posting privileges and if necessary, shut down accounts. Employees may also be subject to disciplinary consequences for such non-compliance.

### 3 Guidance

The Corporate Communications team supports employees with strategic planning and training for the use of social media tools. Approved departmental, divisional, and program-based social media accounts are managed by City employees who have shown adequate understanding of the responsibilities for maintenance.

### 4 Identification

All social media channels must clearly be identified as managed by the City of Vancouver and follow branding standards in the *Social Media Handbook* and *Visual Standards Guide*.

Contact information, a purpose statement and the *Participant Terms of Use* must be clearly visible on the account or channel in accordance with the *Social Media Strategy* and *Social Media Handbook*.

### 5 Posting guidelines

Employees posting content, comments or links on City of Vancouver social media accounts must adhere to City standards for any other kind of publication or dialogue, including the *Social Media Handbook* and *Media Relations Policy*.

The *Participant Terms of Use* describes appropriate posting behaviour by individuals interacting with City of Vancouver social media accounts. Employees must adhere to this Policy and moderate comments in a manner that enforces the Policy.

Employees must also adhere to the *Code of Conduct*, *Human Rights* and *Harassment and Respectful Workplace* policies. Employees must not post information that might compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.

Corporate Communications monitors content posted on social media sites and may take steps to modify or remove any posts that contravene City policies or guidelines or relevant Provincial and Federal legislation.

## 6 Personal Use

The City of Vancouver recognizes that employees may wish to use social media in their personal life. This policy does not intend to discourage nor unduly limit personal expression or online activities. However, employees should recognize the potential for damage to be caused (either directly or indirectly) to the City in some circumstances through personal use of social media when an individual can be identified as a City of Vancouver employee. Accordingly, accounts where this might be a concern should clearly identify that the owner's views are his or hers alone, and do not reflect the views of the City of Vancouver.

All employees are expected to use sound judgment to ensure that their personal social media postings are consistent with their obligations under the *Code of Conduct* and do not compromise the professional, respectful and non-partisan performance of their official duties.

## 7 Records

All City of Vancouver social media activities will adhere to applicable provincial, federal, local law, and other public regulations. The activities will also adhere to Corporate Records and Information Management Policy.

The [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) applies to social media content. Content on City of Vancouver social media accounts must be able to be managed, stored, and retrieved in compliance with the Act.

## 8 Termination of employment

If a staff member with social media access is no longer employed with the City, IT will inform Corporate Communications to have their access removed from all relevant social media accounts.

## 9 Non-compliance and Breach

Breach of this policy may lead to discipline up to and including discharge.

## RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

[Social Media Handbook](#) - includes Participant Terms of Use and Social Media Account Request Form

[ADMINN 059 \(AG-009-01\)](#)

Media Relations Policy

[CP-001-03](#) Visual Identity

[AE-028-01](#) Code of Conduct

[AE-002-06](#) Respectful Workplace Policy

[AE-002-05](#) Human Rights and Harassment Policy

[ADMIN 009](#) Corporate Records and Information Management

[ADMIN-035](#) Technology Acceptable Use Policy

**APPROVAL AND REVIEW HISTORY:**

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	Corporate Management Team	4/25/2014
<b>Version 2 endorsed by:</b>	Auditor General Committee	7/15/2022
<b>Version 2 approved by:</b>	City Council	10/25/2022