

TOWN OF GRAND COULEE

SOCIAL MEDIA

<i>Section</i>	<i>Classification</i>
General Governance	Policy
<i>Approved (Date)</i>	<i>Motion No.</i>
July 9, 2019 amended June 10 th , 2025	#26 #2025-152

1. OVERVIEW

Social media has transformed the way organizations communicate, providing new opportunities to engage with the public, residents, and stakeholders. While beneficial, the use of social media must be managed to uphold the integrity, confidentiality, and reputation of the Town of Grand Coulee. This policy establishes clear expectations and requirements for the professional and responsible use of social media by all individuals acting on behalf of the Town.

2. DEFINITIONS

- **“Town”** means the Town of Grand Coulee, including its employees, Council, volunteers, contractors, or any other authorized representatives.
- **“Council”** refers to the elected municipal Council of the Town of Grand Coulee.
- **“Representative”** includes members of Council, committee members (appointed or otherwise), Town employees, contractors, volunteers, and any other persons representing the Town.
- **“Social Media”** refers to any online platform or tool used for public communication, including but not limited to Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, blogs, and wikis.
- **“CAO”** refers to the Chief Administrative Officer of the Town of Grand Coulee or their authorized delegate.

3. PURPOSE

This policy is intended to:

- a) Ensure that the Town’s use of social media supports effective, accurate, and respectful communication;
- b) Prevent the unauthorized disclosure of confidential or sensitive information;
- c) Protect the reputation and integrity of the Town, its Council, employees, and representatives;
- d) Clarify responsibilities and limitations for both personal and official use of social media by those affiliated with the Town;

e) Maintain compliance with relevant legislation, including The Municipalities Act, The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (LAFOIP), and any applicable codes of conduct.

4. APPLICATION

This policy applies to all individuals acting on behalf of the Town of Grand Coulee, including:

- Council members (elected officials)
- Employees (active or on leave)
- Contractors and third-party service providers
- Volunteers and appointed committee members

This policy governs both official and personal use of social media when referencing, discussing, or otherwise communicating about the Town or its business.

5. OFFICIAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Only the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), or a person expressly delegated by the CAO, is authorized to post messages related to Town operations, council decisions, council debates, or emergency updates on the Town's official social media platforms.

The following are strictly prohibited:

- **Any public comment on council discussions, debates, or decisions** by employees, Council members, or contractors, regardless of intent or platform;
- Posting unofficial or unauthorized Town information or policy interpretations;
- Posting on behalf of the Town without express authorization.

In circumstances requiring urgent communication, and where the CAO is unavailable, a pre-designated alternate with administrative access may post on official platforms, with prior approval or as directed by policy in emergency protocols.

All official messaging will comply with applicable legislation, including privacy, copyright, and defamation laws.

6. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

While employees, council members, contractors and representatives retain the right to personal expression, they must:

- Refrain from commenting on, disclosing, or implying knowledge of Town business, Council debates, decisions, or confidential matters;
- Avoid any communication that could be interpreted as speaking on behalf of the Town unless explicitly authorized to do so;
- Clearly state that views expressed are personal, where appropriate;
- Uphold the dignity, confidentiality, and reputation of the Town and its stakeholders;
- Avoid defamatory, discriminatory, or offensive content relating to the Town or any person associated with it;
- Not share, distribute, or post internal Town information without explicit authorization.

Any individual who is identifiable as being associated with the Town must conduct themselves with professionalism online to avoid reputational harm to the municipality.

7. EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

In the event of a public emergency or situation impacting public safety, authorized personnel will prioritize emergency communications on all official platforms. All other content will be secondary to these communications and may be postponed or suspended at the discretion of the CAO.

8. VIOLATIONS AND DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Any breach of this policy will be addressed promptly and may result in:

- Verbal or written warnings
- Suspension of duties or access privileges
- Termination of employment, contract, or volunteer service
- Additional legal action where warranted

Disciplinary action will be proportionate to the nature and severity of the violation and consistent with applicable employment law, municipal policy, and contractual obligations.

9. POLICY REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed bi-annually or as required by legislative change or operational need.

Authorized by:

Mayor and Council
Town of Grand Coulee

Administered by:

Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

