



**MUNICIPALITY OF THE DISTRICT OF WEST HANTS**  
*Social Media Guidelines*

The purpose of these Guidelines is to maintain the integrity of the Municipality of the District of West Hants' presence in social media. These Guidelines are not intended to interfere with the private lives of Councillors or impact their right to freedom of speech but to ensure that Councillors are aware of their responsibility to maintain a positive representation of the Municipality.

Councillors that maintain personal social media accounts should follow the guidelines below when making posts or comments on any social media site whether it is public or private.

1. Councillors should conduct themselves professionally on all online platforms.
2. Councillors can be held accountable for their posts on social media platforms even when using a disclaimer such as "My views are my own" or equivalent.
  - Councillors must be aware that personal thoughts they publish online, even through use of a personal account, may be misunderstood as expressing the positions or opinions of the Municipality. Councillors are advised to exercise caution and to seek advice from the Communications Coordinator if they are unsure whether an intended communication is appropriate.
3. Commentary, content or images involving, but not limited to, the following is not acceptable:
  - promoting, perpetuating or fostering discrimination, as per the Human Rights Act on the bias of race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, status regarding public assistance, nationality, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
  - pornographic;
  - proprietary and/or confidential municipal information;
  - discriminatory or defamatory statements or sexual innuendos regarding councillors, co-workers, management, customers, or vendors;
  - violating privacy legislation, including discussions of items in closed session meetings;
  - could cause harm to the reputation of the Municipality or damage the Municipality's relationship with its residents or stakeholders in the community.
4. Councillors should ensure that only correct information is disseminated through their posts on social media and that incorrect posts are corrected visibly and publicly as soon as possible.



5. All conversations on social media networks should be considered public rather than private. Any post, photo, comment, etc. posted on the internet may be permanent despite efforts to delete them.
6. In an emergency situation, it is best practice to refer followers to the official social media accounts of the Municipality which will be regularly updated.
7. Councillors should be responsive on their social media sites addressing comments and questions. It is advised to not delete or suppress negative comments but to correct misinformation and let valid criticisms stand.
8. Social media sites should be monitored for inappropriate content such as comments that contain hate speech, defamatory statements or other inappropriate content. These comments and/or posts should be removed immediately.

I, Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk of the Municipality of the District of West Hants, the Province of Nova Scotia, do hereby certify that this is a true copy of the Guideline as adopted by the Council of the Municipality of the District of West Hants at a meeting duly called and held on the **11<sup>th</sup>** day of **December, 2018**.

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R. N. Brown  
Municipal Clerk

<i>Adoption</i>	
<i>Notice to Council:</i>	November 27, 2018
<i>Approval:</i>	December 11, 2018
<i>Description:</i> Initial approval of the Social Media Guidelines COGE-010.05.	

Original Guideline signed by Rhonda Brown, Municipal Clerk