



County of Elgin Policy Manual

Subject: **Social Media Policy**

Date of Approval: November 26, 2019

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The County of Elgin makes use of social media as an engagement tool for residents, users of County services, community partners, County Councillors and staff. Social media is defined as any on-line application, platform, site or account created and maintained by the County of Elgin which facilitates engagement, sharing of opinions and information about County-related subjects or community issues.

In using social media, the County of Elgin is committed to:

- Responding to questions and concerns as quickly as possible;
- Maintaining the highest levels of accuracy, objectivity, and impartiality in the information communicated;
- Respecting freedom of speech and difference of opinion while protecting Councillors, staff and users from offensive, abusive, or otherwise inappropriate speech;
- Providing accessible and inclusive services.

## **INAPPROPRIATE USE**

The County of Elgin prohibits the use of its social media for any purpose which would contravene any legislation or government regulation, or which might result in civil liability to the County or to any person. The Ontario Human Rights Code prohibits certain forms of discrimination and harassment of other individuals or groups, and the Criminal Code of Canada includes prohibitions against child pornography, obscenity, hate literature, sedition and literature for illicit drug use. Civil liability encompasses laws pertaining to libel and slander. Use of social media facilitated by the County of Elgin is conditional on the user's agreement to observe this policy. By continuing to use the application, the user indicates agreement to all requirements of this policy.

Comments, posts and messages are welcome on County of Elgin social media sites, provided they do not contain:



- Content that contains profanity, pornography, sedition, defamation, discrimination, the incitement of hate or the promotion of illegal activity;
- Personal attacks, insults, threatening language or content that could be construed as bullying;
- Potentially libelous statements;
- Plagiarized or copyrighted material;
- Private, personal information published without consent;
- Comments totally unrelated to the content of the forum;
- Hyperlinks to material that is not directly related to the discussion;
- Commercial promotions or spam;
- Organized political activity;
- Attempts to modify, hack or gain access to files, passwords, networks or data belonging to others.

### **RESPONSIBILITY**

All social media sites affiliated with the County of Elgin will be regularly screened by County employees. All postings which contain any of the above will be removed at the earliest opportunity and the poster barred from posting any subsequent messages to the County's social media sites.

The County of Elgin reserves the right to edit or modify posted content when reposting or providing comment. The County is not responsible for the authenticity of content posted by external users to the County's social media sites. Being followed by the County on social media or having messages or content created by external users shared through the County's social media does not necessarily imply endorsement.

### **SHARING OF INFORMATION**

The County of Elgin will not use information shared through its social media for commercial purposes nor will it share this information with third parties. All information shared through the County's social media will be managed under the terms of the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.