



Employee Use of Public Facing Social Media

Last updated – October, 2012

Protocol

THE CITY OF WINNIPEG ENCOURAGES THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA AS TOOLS IN SUPPORT OF THE ACHIEVEMENT OR ADVANCEMENT OF ESTABLISHED BUSINESS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES. PUBLIC FACING SOCIAL MEDIA SITES HELP CONNECT THE ORGANIZATION TO THE CITIZENS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS.

EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATING IN SOCIAL MEDIA MUST BE AWARE THAT THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL CONTENT THEY POST TO SOCIAL MEDIA SITES, INCLUDING WHEN PARTICIPATING ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG, WHILE USING CITY OF WINNIPEG EQUIPMENT AND WHENEVER MAKING ANY REFERENCE TO THE CITY OF WINNIPEG ONLINE, BOTH PROFESSIONALLY AND PERSONALLY. EMPLOYEES MUST FOLLOW THE SAME BEHAVIORAL STANDARDS ONLINE AS THEY DO IN ALL OTHER ASPECTS OF THEIR ROLE AS CITY OF WINNIPEG EMPLOYEES; THE SAME LAWS, PROFESSIONAL EXPECTATIONS, AND GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTING WITH CITIZENS, CLIENTS, VENDORS, CO-WORKERS AND THE MEDIA APPLY ONLINE AS IN ALL OTHER ASPECTS OF THE WORK ENVIRONMENT.

Guidelines that apply to professional use of public facing social media:

All City of Winnipeg social media sites and Social Media Moderators shall adhere to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA), all copyright laws, fair use and financial disclosure laws, the [City of Winnipeg Use of Social Media Administrative Standard No. AS-011](#) (hereinafter, the “Use of Social Media Administrative Standard”), including other applicable City standards, protocols and procedures as listed in Part D thereof, and any others laws that apply to the City or your functional area.

Employees may participate in public facing social media on behalf of the City only with expressed written permission of the relevant Department Head.

Employees that engage in public facing social networking activities while conducting City business must adhere to the [Employee Code of Conduct](#), this protocol, the [Use of Social Media Administrative Standard](#) including other applicable City standards, protocols and procedures as listed in Part D thereof. Use of City e-mail addresses and/or communicating in an official capacity will constitute conducting City business.

While text for social media can be more abbreviated than that for traditional communication tools, all content should still be written in a professional tone. While some abbreviations are acceptable (eg. info), use of emoticons, social media acronyms and jargon (such as LOL, BTW, etc.) or shortened text prevalent in SMS messaging (B4, 2nite, 4U, etc.) is not appropriate.

Apply sound recordkeeping principles to internal and external social media presence as established in the [City of Winnipeg Corporate Recordkeeping Administrative Standard AS-006](#) (hereinafter, the “Corporate Recordkeeping Administrative Standard”) and the Records Management By-law 86/2010.

Protect your privacy, the privacy of citizens and the information the City holds. Follow all privacy protection laws, (including, without limitation, FIPPA), the [Respectful Workplace Administrative Standard](#), and protect sensitive and confidential City information.

Respect the privacy of vendors, suppliers, clients, citizens, co-workers or other stakeholders by ensuring expressed written permission is received prior to posting names, phone numbers, addresses, photos or other personal information. All staff must adhere to the [Employee Code of Conduct](#) and [Respectful Workplace Administrative Standard](#) and the [Use of Social Media Administrative Standard](#) including other applicable City standards, protocols and procedures as listed in Part D thereof.

Guidelines that apply to personal use of public facing social media:

Employees must not disclose information about the City or gained through their employment with the City. Employees who wish to express personal opinions must use a private personal ID and a personal non-City email address.

With the increasing use of social media for personal purposes, City users should be mindful of the public recognition that may be associated with their name, and that personal posts might be construed as being information related to or authorized by the City of Winnipeg. The [City of Winnipeg Employee Code of Conduct](#) applies at all times and employees must avoid situations in which personal interests conflict, or appear to conflict, with the interests of the City; and not engage in any activity that could damage the City’s reputation.

If you represent yourself as a City employee, or if you are providing a comment on any social media site that is related to your work and/or your position in the City of Winnipeg, you must adhere to the [Employee Code of Conduct](#) and [Respectful Workplace Administrative Standard](#) and the [Use of Social Media Administrative Standard](#) including other applicable City standards, protocols and procedures as listed in Part D thereof. Employees must not post on behalf of the City of Winnipeg unless they’ve been authorized to do so. (See “Guidelines that apply to professional use of public facing social media” above”)

Use City email addresses to participate in social media sites only while conducting City business.

Employment recommendations, references and endorsements appearing on social media sites (as defined in the City’s Social Media Standard) as well as those written in personal letters of recommendation, or provided verbally must include a statement that unequivocally they are made as a personal reference and do not, in any way, represent the City of Winnipeg or the position of the City of Winnipeg. Official employment references are provided by authorized employees only and must adhere to the processes outlined by the City of Winnipeg’s Employment Reference Check Protocol.

If you are contacted by a member of the media regarding public statements that you have made on social media, refer the media outlet to Corporate Communications staff at 204-986-6000 or mediainquiry@winnipeg.ca.

Follow the [Code of Internet Ethics](#), specifically the provision which states employees involved in social media for personal interest must do so outside of scheduled work hours.

Note: *While the term Supervisor is used above, it is expected that City of Winnipeg employees will seek the appropriate level of approval based on the structure of their department.

Tips for using social media sites:

Protect your privacy. Educate yourself on the privacy policy and privacy settings of the social networking sites you are using and customize your settings to restrict access only to certain users. Review your privacy settings periodically.

Avoid sharing personal information. Posting birth dates, email addresses, cellphone numbers, home addresses or detailed family information online can put you and your family members at greater risk for identity theft or frauds and scams. Despite the use of privacy settings, there is still a risk the information could be compromised, so avoid posting information you wouldn't want the public to see.

Think twice before you post. Be mindful that what you publish online is immediately available to other people and to search engines, and cannot be retracted. Your posts have the potential to be seen by anyone, including your employer and co-workers.

Be cautious of third party applications. These applications are often used by criminals to steal personal information.

Photos and videos can reveal more personal information than you think.

Geotags, which are bits of data showing the longitude and latitude of where a photo or video was taken, are embedded in these files when taken with GPS-equipped smartphones and digital cameras. When these files are posted online, this data often remains with them, allowing others to find the exact location of where the photo or video was taken, which can be your home, work or places you frequent. Educate yourself on how to disable the photo/video geotagging function on your smartphone or digital camera, and the potential privacy and security risks associated with posting photos and videos online.

You aren't the only one posting about you and your family. Friends and family members who post information and photos on the social media sites they use may not be familiar with the potential privacy and security risks associated with these actions, and how they not only affect themselves personally, but also the people they post photos, videos, or comments about. Discuss online privacy and security with your family so that everyone makes informed decisions about what they post online, and what information of theirs is being posted.