

**Schedule 'A' to
By-law No. 1273-19**

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

A. PURPOSE

The Township of Stirling-Rawdon is committed to increasing awareness of the Township's functions and services and fostering open and transparent communication with the community. To that end, the Township communicates with members of the public using a variety of methods, including social media. Township Representatives and Staff are responsible for supporting the Township in this objective and for recognizing that they may be perceived as speaking on behalf of the Township in their personal social media communications.

This Policy is to establish the expectations and protocol surrounding official Township Accounts and the personal use of social media by Township Representatives and Staff.

B. DEFINITIONS

- 1) "Council" means the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon;
- 2) "Member" means a member of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon;
- 3) "Personal Use" means the personal use of any social media account or platform;
- 4) "Social Media" means a web-based application that allows users to interact and/or to generate, share, and/or publish content such as text, photos, videos, or links. Examples of social media platforms include, but are not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, YouTube, Pinterest, Flickr, Google Plus, Reddit, Wikipedia, or blogs;
- 5) "Staff" means the officers or employees of the Township and of its municipal corporations and local boards, including the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and Clerk;
- 6) "Township" means the Corporation of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon;
- 7) "Township Account" or "Township Use" means an approved account or activity on any social media platform that is owned, operated, and/or maintained by the Township of Stirling-Rawdon; and
- 8) "Township Representative" means any Member of the Township of Stirling-Rawdon Council or a Committee or Board.

C. APPLICATION

- 1) The Social Media Policy applies to all Township Representatives and Staff, and includes personal social media accounts unrelated to an individual's position or role with the Township.

D. TOWNSHIP ACCOUNTS

- 1) To ensure that all communications about Township business and activities are accurate, consistent, and professional, the Township authorizes specific individuals to establish and operate social media accounts for official Township communications. All Township Accounts shall be approved by the CAO or designate. The CAO will be responsible for appointing an individual or individuals to maintain and monitor accounts in line with this Policy.
- 2) No individual without such authorization shall create an account purporting to be a Township Account, and only authorized individuals shall generate, share, post, respond to comments, or otherwise circulate any information, business or otherwise, through a Township Account.
- 3) The Township will maintain a list of approved accounts with the relevant login information. Any list containing such information is confidential and should be stored by the CAO. Authorized individuals will be given the login information necessary to operate any account(s) assigned to them.
- 4) Authorized individuals shall be determined at the sole discretion of the CAO.
- 5) Authorized individuals shall be responsible for:
 - a. Sharing or posting timely and appropriate information about Township activities, in accordance with any Township policies and procedures respecting the dissemination of Township or Council information;
 - b. Reviewing comments and questions and determining whether a response is required and, if so, responding to such comments or questions;
 - c. Correcting misinformation or information that is out of date; and
 - d. Removing any inappropriate content, including content that is:
 - i. Obscene, sexually-explicit, harassing, discriminatory, threatening, abusive, defamatory, or illegal;
 - ii. A personal attack or insult;
 - iii. Confidential information published without prior consent;
 - iv. Subject to copyright;
 - v. Overtly partisan in nature or endorses or opposes a candidate for municipal, provincial, or federal election; or
 - vi. Commercial in nature or otherwise unrelated to the Township of Stirling-Rawdon.
- 6) Authorized individuals may remove or block members, users, or followers who persist in posting inappropriate content.

- 7) All Township Accounts and associated content are the property of the Township and not the individual managing the account. Authorized individuals are responsible for any material that is posted to a Township Account without prior direction that is deemed to be inappropriate or offensive.

E. PERSONAL ACCOUNTS

- 1) Township Representatives and Staff may be perceived as representing the Township in their personal use of social media. Accordingly, such individuals are advised to conduct themselves in a professional manner that reflects well on the Township, while observing the following rules:
 - a. Staff shall not access or operate their own personal social media accounts during working hours unless they are on a designated break or lunch period.
 - b. Town Representatives and Staff shall not use the Township logo, crest, or any other Corporate insignia or image on a personal social media account.
 - c. Township Representatives and Staff shall not link or post a Township email address or other professional contact information to a personal social media account.
 - d. Township Representatives and Staff shall not use personal social media accounts to discuss or disclose information about the Township, Township Representatives, Staff, or third-party service providers or contractors that is not available to the public.
 - e. Township Representatives and Staff shall strictly comply with all policies and procedures, as may be in place from time to time, that may apply to content shared or posted to social media platforms. Such policies and procedures may include, but are not limited to, the Township's Code of Conduct, policies regarding Member or Staff conduct, IT use, confidential information, the protection of privacy, and/or workplace harassment or violence.
 - f. Town Representatives and Staff shall make clear that their views are their own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Township or Council, particularly when posting or commenting on any political party or candidate, business, product, or cause.

F. ACCOUNTS OF TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVES

- 1) Township Representatives who maintain social media accounts in their capacity as Members of Council or a Committee or Board acknowledge that such accounts are not Township Accounts, and as such they shall refrain from the use of text, insignia, or images that may reasonably give the impression of a Township Account.

- 2) Township Representatives shall not use social media accounts, whether expressly personal or in their role as a Member of Council or a Committee or Board, to disparage or malign any other Township Representative or member of Staff.
- 3) To ensure that all information circulated is accurate and current, Township Representatives who wish to share information on Township and Council activities, including meetings of Council or Committees/Boards, should direct members or followers to the Township website or Township Accounts where such information is posted.
- 4) Members of Council and Local Boards acknowledge that their conduct on social media platforms shall be subject to the provisions of the Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards, By-law No. 1272-19 and any content may be subject to other policies and procedures of the Township including, but not limited to, those governing confidential information and the protection of privacy.

G. COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN TOWNSHIP REPRESENTATIVES AND STAFF

- 1) Communications between Township Representatives, between Staff, or between Township Representatives and Staff, regarding Township business, shall take place in person, by telephone, or through approved email accounts. They should not occur via social media or any other online forum.

H. COMPLAINTS

- 1) The CAO shall be responsible for receiving complaints and/or concerns related to this Policy.
 - a. The CAO shall address complaints and/or concerns respecting Staff.
 - b. The CAO shall refer complaints and/or concerns respecting Township Representatives to the Mayor, or the Integrity Commissioner if the issue complained of may also be covered by the Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards.
- 2) Complaints or concerns regarding the CAO or the Mayor under this Policy may be referred to Council.
- 3) Where there is disagreement between the Social Media Policy and the Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards or other Staff codes of conduct, the respective code shall prevail.