



THE TOWN OF  
**HINTON**

**Social Media Use Policy**

**Council Approved**

**Administration (AD) #1205**

**Approved**

February 20, 2018

**Revised**

August 05, 2025

**Next Review Date**

August 05, 2028

## **1.0 POLICY STATEMENT**

- 1.1 Social Media allows for efficient and direct engagement between the Town and its residents and visitors. Social Media enables the Town to show diligent and conscientious service to constituents and can help to improve trust and confidence in the Town.
- 1.2 Town of Hinton Social Media Pages are intended to be welcoming, informative and constructive places for residents to gain information, ask questions, share feedback, and discuss Town policies and programs.
- 1.3 This Policy provides guidance, support, and parameters for Town Employees in their use of Social Media as representatives of the Town. It has been developed to help Employees understand the opportunities, responsibilities, risks, and boundaries associated with using Social Media.

## **2.0 PURPOSE**

- 2.1 The Town uses Social Media to inform the community of Town news and events, and provides additional platforms for direct engagement, allowing two-way communication.

2.1.1 Official Town Social Media Pages should:

- a) Increase awareness and transparency of municipal services, public notices, upcoming municipal projects, Town-sponsored events, and other Town-related initiatives.
- b) Increase access to the Town by providing more opportunities for two-way communication.
- c) Provide an additional channel of communication in the event of a crisis, disaster, or emergency.
- d) Disseminate time-sensitive information quickly.
- e) Develop opportunities to build trust and stronger relationships with the community.
- f) Enhance the reputation and image of the Town.

2.2 This Policy provides guidelines for Town Social Media presence to ensure communications are effective and responsive to the public and comply with all applicable laws, Town policies and bylaws, and legislated requirements of the Protection of Privacy Act and the Access to Information Act.

### **3.0 SCOPE**

3.1 This Policy applies to all Town Employees.

3.2 This Policy applies to all communication between the Town and the Public via Town Social Media sites.

### **4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

4.1 Administration Leadership

- 4.1.1 The CAO may designate additional Authorized Administrator(s) other than Communications Coordinator(s) and IT Coordinator.
- 4.1.2 The CAO may revoke authorization of Authorized Administrator(s) and/or Authorized User(s) at any time and if it is determined that there has been inappropriate behaviour, content, or misuse.
- 4.1.3 Directors are responsible for ensuring Employees understand the requirements of this Policy.
- 4.1.4 Managers must endorse their Employees' requests to become an Authorized User of Town Social Media Accounts using the Social Media Authorization Request Form (Appendix I).

4.2 Authorized Administrators:

- 4.2.1 Every Town of Hinton Social Media Page must have at least one Authorized Administrator assigned to that Page.
- 4.2.2 Communications Coordinator(s) and IT Coordinator are the only Authorized Administrators for Town Social Media Pages, unless otherwise authorized by the CAO.
- 4.2.3 Authorized Administrators may grant Authorized Users access to Town Social Media Pages, following submission of a completed Social Media Authorization Request Form and completion of Social Media training from the Communications Service Unit.
  - a) Authorized Administrators must maintain a record of who has access to each Official Town Social Media Page.

4.3 Authorized Users of Town Social Media Pages must:

- 4.3.1 Maintain awareness and understanding of Social Media Use Guidelines – Authorized Users.
- 4.3.2 Update and maintain the Social Media Page(s) they are responsible for, including,
  - a) Posting Content and Engagement on behalf of the Town,

- b) Moderating Comments in line with Town of Hinton Social Media Terms of Use (Appendix II),
- c) Posting notices on inactive seasonal accounts.

4.3.3 Encourage the Public to submit inquiries and feedback through Hinton Listens.

4.3.4 Ensure that communications made through Social Media are accurate, appropriate, consistent, and professional, and adhere to all relevant legislation and Town of Hinton Policies.

4.3.5 Ensure the federal Copyright Act is complied with, and that consent of licence holders is obtained before contributing Content to Town of Hinton Social Media sites.

4.3.6 Protect personal information in compliance with the the Protection of Privacy Act and the Access to Information Act.  
a) There may be exceptions where superseding legislation is found to apply (e.g. Victim Services, Family Resource Network).

4.3.7 Obtain permission from the appropriate Department Director and an Authorized Administrator before creating or delegating the creation of a new Town of Hinton Social Media Page.

4.4 Communications Service Unit will:

- 4.4.1 Be Authorized Administrators for all Town of Hinton Social Media Pages.
- 4.4.2 Conduct Social Media Training for all Authorized Users.

4.5 All Employees must

- 4.5.1 Adhere to Employee Code of Conduct Directive HR 1904.8 when using Social Media.

## 5.0 BEST PRACTICES

5.1 Disclaimers

- 5.1.1 A disclaimer shall be displayed on Town Social Media Pages clarifying the legal rights and obligations of the Town and the public in relation to Social Media, including the Social Media Terms of Use (Appendix II).

5.2 Third Party Content

- 5.2.1 Town Facebook pages should only share information about programs and events that the Town is directly involved with.
  - a) Exceptions may be approved by the CAO or designate.

## 6.0 RELATED MATTERS & REFERENCES

- 6.1 Protection of Privacy Act (Statutes of Alberta, 2024 Chapter P-28.5)
- 6.2 Access to Information Act (Statutes of Alberta, 2024 Chapter A-1.4)
- 6.3 Copyright Act (RSC 1985 c. C-42)

6.4 Town of Hinton Policies:

- 6.4.1 Employee Code of Conduct Directive (HR-1904.8)
- 6.4.2 Public Communications Policy (AD-1204)
- 6.4.3 Public Participation Policy (AD-1209)
- 6.4.4 Personal Information Protection Directive (AD-1200.1)

## 7.0 DEFINITIONS

7.1 **Authorized Administrator(s):** Administrators with control of a Town Social Media Page can manage the following:

- 7.1.1 Content: Create, manage or delete any content on the Page, such as posts, stories and more.
- 7.1.2 Messages: Respond to direct messages as the Page in Inbox.
- 7.1.3 Comments: Respond to comments on the Page and edit or delete existing comments made by the Page.
- 7.1.4 Linked Accounts: Add, manage or remove linked accounts, such as Instagram.
- 7.1.5 Ads: Create, manage and delete ads.
- 7.1.6 Insights: Use Page, post and ad insights to analyze the performance of the Page.
- 7.1.7 Events: Create, edit and delete events made by the Page.
- 7.1.8 Removal and Bans: Remove or ban people from the Page.
- 7.1.9 Settings: Manage and edit all settings, such as Page information and deleting the Page.
- 7.1.10 Access: Give or remove people's Facebook or task access to the Page or linked Instagram account, including people with Facebook access with full control.

7.2 **Authorized User(s):** Authorized User(s) of Town Social Media Pages can manage the following:

- 7.2.1 Content: Create, manage or delete posts, stories and more. Respond to comments and update Page information.
- 7.2.2 Messages and Community Activity: Respond to direct messages as the Page in Inbox, comment, manage unwanted content, and report activity on the Page.
- 7.2.3 Ads: Create, manage and delete ads, and other ads-related tasks.
- 7.2.4 Insights: See how the Page, content, ads and other metrics perform.

7.3 **Comment or Content:** Words, photographs, videos, images, audio, and/or links that are published online.

7.4 **Engagement:** Interactions and activity on content posted on Social Media, including likes, Comments, and shares.

7.5 **Employee:** Any person that is directly employed, on a full-time or part-time basis, whether union or salaried, with the Town of Hinton.

7.6 **Members of Council:** Individuals who won seats in the most recent Hinton municipal election and hold the positions of Mayor or Councillor.

7.7 **Municipality/Town:** The municipal corporation of the Town of Hinton.

7.8 **Posts or Posted:** Content or message published on a Social Media platform.

7.9 **Social Media:** Forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other Content (such as videos).

7.10 **Social Media Page(s):** An online platform or web page, often associated with a specific organization or individual, designed for communication, information sharing, and community building. These pages allow users to create and share content, interact with others, and engage in social networking activities. Examples include Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and Instagram profiles.

7.11 **Town of Hinton Social Media Page(s):** Any publicly accessible Social Media Page owned and operated by the Town of Hinton.

## 8.0 APPENDICES, PROCEDURES, & FORMS

8.1 Social Media Authorization Request Form

8.2 Social Media Terms of Use

## 9.0 REVISION CONTROL

9.1 This Policy must be reviewed every three years.

9.2 Upon Council approval, all former versions of this Policy are hereby rescinded.

Date	Revision
August 05, 2025	 Jordan Panasiuk, Chief Administration Officer