



CITY POLICY

SECTION: Municipal Government

NO: MU-IN-07

REFERENCE: Information Management

Date: June 8, 2026

Next Review Date: June 2028

TITLE: SOCIAL MEDIA

POLICY STATEMENT

The City of Dryden recognizes the evolving role of technology in communication and the significant influence of social media on modern business practices. With the closure of our local printed newspaper and the widespread adoption of digital communication in society, our city must increasingly depend on the social media platforms preferred by our residents.

To inform and engage effectively with our community, it is essential to connect with them on the popular social media platforms they already use. This policy aims to set clear guidelines for the use of social media, ensuring that the City delivers consistent, accurate information while safeguarding its reputation and supporting its employees.

1.0 PURPOSE

Specifically, this policy establishes protocols, criteria, and course of actions for:

- 1.1 Establishing, administering, and monitoring acceptable social media tools for use by the City of Dryden and its employees.
- 1.2 Determining and adopting new social media tools and/or accounts.
- 1.3 Providing timely, effective, and accurate information and responses on City of Dryden social media sites.
- 1.4 Ensuring a mechanism to address controversial or sensitive matters relating to online content about the City of Dryden, its business, its employees, and its elected officials.
- 1.5 Ensuring appropriate records and information management and retention efforts as it relates to online communication tools.

- 1.6 Ensuring appropriate protection of privacy of the public who engage or interact with the City via social media or social networking tools.
- 1.7 Advising all users within the City of their responsibilities regarding social media.
- 1.8 Protecting City of Dryden employees and elected officials from harassment.

2.0 SCOPE

- 2.1 The following are subject to this policy:
 - (a) All social media applications;
 - (b) City of Dryden employees (regular, part-time, casual or contract);
 - (c) City of Dryden members of Council;
 - (d) City of Dryden Boards and Agencies (Library Board, Dryden Police Services Board, Museum Advisory Board);
 - (e) Consultants and Contractors that are representing the City; and,
 - (f) City of Dryden Volunteers.
- 2.2 Those to whom this policy applies (listed above) will be referred to as users in this document.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

Social Media continues to evolve and therefore the following list of definitions will be updated over time. The following terms are defined as below:

Application: A software program that performs specific tasks for its end users. Microsoft Word is a popular example of an application, but applications may also be used in social media to allow users to do things such as upload pictures to their social network profiles.

Article: An original posting of content to a City of Dryden social media site by a City of Dryden author.

Blog: (an abridged version of the term web log) is a website with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video.

City of Dryden Author/Administrator: An authorized City of Dryden official who creates and is responsible for posted articles and information on social media sites.

Online Discussion Forum: A public forum with articles, commentary, descriptions of events, or other material such as graphics or video all limited to a specific topic.

This policy is subject to any specific provisions of the Municipal Act, or other relevant legislation or Union agreement.

Comment: A response to a City of Dryden article or social media content submitted by a commenter.

Commenter: A City of Dryden official, or member of the public, who submits a comment on behalf of the City of Dryden or in response to the content of a particular City of Dryden article or social media content.

Facebook: The most popular social networking site in the world. Owned by Meta. Facebook users can create and customize their own profiles with photos, videos, and information about themselves. Users can connect, or “friend” other users, browse the information on each other’s profiles, and write messages on their pages. Additionally, users can follow the profiles of organizations and businesses for news and updates.

Instagram: Instagram is a popular social media platform designed for sharing photos and videos. Owned by Meta. Users can create personal profiles, follow others, and post content that appears on their profile in a feed. It offers various filters and editing tools to enhance photos and videos, making it a creative platform for sharing photo and video moments and experiences with friends and followers. Instagram also includes features like Stories and Reels for short video clips and live streaming, making it a versatile platform for visual storytelling.

LinkedIn: A social networking site where professionals can exchange information, ideas and opportunities. It is also used to engage potential employers, from a user standpoint; and/or to engage potential employees from a business standpoint.

Snapchat: Snapchat is a multimedia messaging app. Users can send photos and videos (Snaps) to friends, which automatically disappear after a short time, typically a few seconds. It also offers features like Stories, where users can share short-lived content with their followers, and a Discover section for viewing content from publishers and creators. Snapchat is famous for its fun and creative filters, lenses, and stickers that users can apply to their Snaps, adding a playful and interactive element to communication.

Pinterest: Pinterest is a photo-sharing website with social networking features. Its main innovation is a grid-style layout that arranges images into what it calls “virtual pinboards.” The pinboards work like online photo albums and can be browsed, shared, re-shared, liked and commented on.

Podcast: A podcast is a digital file (usually audio but sometimes video) made available for download to a portable device or personal computer for later playback. A podcast also refers to the show that comprises several episodes. A podcast uses a feed that lets you subscribe to be notified when a new audio clip is published for consumption.

RSS: Really Simple Syndication — sometimes called web feeds — is a Web standard for the delivery of content — blog entries, news stories, headlines, images, video — enabling readers to stay current with favourite publications or producers without having to browse from site to site, blogs and news content using a news reader. All blogs, podcasts and videoblogs contain an RSS feed, which lets users subscribe to content automatically and read or listen to the material on a computer or a portable device. Most people use an RSS reader, or news aggregator, to monitor updates.

Social Media: Social media is content created by individuals using accessible and scalable technologies through the Internet. It includes web-based and mobile technologies used to turn communication into interactive dialogue between organizations, communities, and individuals. Examples of social media include Facebook, Instagram, X, RSS, YouTube, blogs, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Snapchat, etc.

Social Tools: Social tools (sometimes called social software) are software and platforms that enable participatory culture — for example, blogs, podcasts, forums and shared videos and presentations.

Web Browser: A web browser is a software application for retrieving, presenting, and traversing information resources on the World Wide Web.

X (formally known as Twitter): A social media gateway that allows users to post (Tweet), in real-time. X is geared towards instant live updates. Users can connect with friends, businesses, figure heads, celebrities, politicians, and pro athletes from around the world.

YouTube: YouTube is the world's most popular video hosting site on which users can upload, share, subscribe, and view videos.

4.0 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDING PRINCIPLES

4.1 The City's objective is to build a stronger social media presence by adopting a consistent approach to reliable communications and public engagement while producing more high-quality content. The City has approved use of social media tools specifically to:

- (a) Share time-sensitive information (e.g. emergency information, service disruptions, road advisories).
- (b) Improve accessibility of pertinent information to city residents.
- (c) Build relationships, increase learning, and support collaboration with city residents.

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- (d) Allow the City to participate in existing conversations and to engage residents in an interactive discussion as well as monitor conversations.
 - (e) Improve storytelling to strengthen the City's relationship with residents.
 - (f) Share our expertise with others and respond to and/or correct information (done so with respectful and factual statements).
- 4.2 All new social media tools proposed for City use will be reviewed and approved by the CAO or designate (use Approval Form). No user, acting on behalf of the City, may create or participate in a social media site without prior approval.
- 4.3 All approved City of Dryden social media sites shall be (1) published using approved City social networking platforms and tools; and (2) administered by designated personnel in the department managing the site/page with support from the Communications Coordinator and Information Technology (IT) as required. A minimum of two administrators shall be in place for each City social media site that utilizes administrators.
- 4.4 The City of Dryden's official website www.dryden.ca will remain the City's primary internet presence. Facebook/X/Instagram/YouTube and any other approved social media site can be directly integrated into the City of Dryden's website allowing for interoperability. This is important so visitors will not have to leave the City of Dryden's website to find the social media content they are looking for.
- 4.5 Administration of City of Dryden social media sites:
- (a) The IT department shall maintain a list of social media tools which are approved for use by City departments.
 - (b) The IT department shall maintain a list of all City of Dryden social media sites being used, including a list of approved administrators for the site(s).
 - (c) The City designated administrators must be able to immediately edit or remove content from social media sites. There shall be a minimum of two designated administrators per social media site, if applicable.
 - (d) The City will provide a standard tip sheet for social media tools that it approves for use and a response flowchart. (See Appendix A and B)
 - (e) These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink on the City website.

4.6 Site Content:

- (a) When needed, administrators and users shall consult with the Communications Coordinator when developing content to ensure branding guidelines are followed and messaging is appropriate for the intended audience.
- (b) Wherever possible, content posted to the City of Dryden social media sites will also be available on the City's main website.
- (c) Wherever possible, content posted to the City of Dryden social media sites should contain links directing users back to the City's official website for in-depth information, forms, documents and other information.
- (d) Each City of Dryden social media site shall include an introductory statement which clearly specifies its purpose. (E.g. Facebook - to facilitate communication between the City and members of the public)
- (e) The City of Dryden social media sites shall comply with all appropriate City of Dryden policies and standards, including but not limited to:
 - i. Social Media Policy;
 - ii. Acceptable Use of Electronic Communications Policy;
 - iii. Council Use of Electronic Communications Policy;
 - iv. E-Mail Policy;
 - v. Corporate Records and Information Management Policy;
 - vi. Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Policy;
 - vii. Code of Conduct (Council and Employees);
 - viii. Workplace Violence Policy and Program; and,
 - ix. Workplace Harassment Policy and Procedure.
- (f) The following types of content are prohibited on the City of Dryden social media sites:
 - i. Comments not topically related to the site or social media post being commented upon;
 - ii. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or election issues;
 - iii. Business sensitive information and intellectual property;
 - iv. Material protected under copyright laws;
 - v. Dispersing customer or client information without authorization;
 - vi. Profane language or content;
 - vii. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination based on race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender identity and

- expression, marital status, status about public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
 - viii. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 - ix. Threatening or violent behavior;
 - x. Solicitations of commerce;
 - xi. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
 - xii. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
 - xiii. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party; and,
 - xiv. Content that is inappropriate in the opinion of the CAO.
- (g) The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed to violate this social media policy, other City policies or any applicable law. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.
- 4.7 Use of the City of Dryden logo or other visual identity images without permission is strictly prohibited.
- 4.8 The City of Dryden social media sites are subject to the City's Corporate Records and Information Management Policy and Records Retention Schedule. Staff responsible for administering the sites shall preserve records in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible.
- 4.9 The City of Dryden social media sites shall comply with all applicable federal, provincial, and municipal laws regarding public disclosure and protection of privacy. Any content on a social media site that is related to City business, including a list of subscribers and posted communication, is a public record and subject to public disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act. All social media sites shall clearly indicate they are maintained by the City of Dryden and that any articles, posts and other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure. City of Dryden contact information shall be prominently displayed on the site.

5.0 USER RESPONSIBILITIES

See Appendix "A" Tips for Social Media Participation at City of Dryden and Appendix "B" Response Flowchart

- 5.1 All City social media administrators and users shall be trained regarding the terms of this Social Media Policy, including their responsibilities to review content submitted for posting to ensure compliance with the policy.

- 5.2 Users representing the City of Dryden via social media outlets must always conduct themselves as a representative of the City and in accordance with all human resource policies and brand standards.
- 5.3 Users should not use any social media tool to communicate with other employees on official City business unless that tool is being used only internally and its content is closed to the public.
- 5.4 Recognizing the benefit of monitoring online stakeholder input on City issues and the potential need for the City to respond to and/or correct information, users can access social media sites during work hours provided that they are related to or contain posts or discussions related to City business.
- 5.5 Users shall always protect their own privacy, the privacy of residents, customers, suppliers, and coworkers as well as the privacy of confidential or proprietary information that the City holds. Users are responsible for following all privacy protection laws such as the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act and for protecting sensitive City information. In addition, ask permission before posting someone's picture on a social media platform.
- 5.6 Users must not comment on, or speculate about, the City of Dryden's unannounced strategies or prospects, potential acquisitions or divestitures, legal or regulatory matters affecting the City and other similar subjects that could negatively affect the City of Dryden. If you're unsure of the sensitivity of a particular subject, seek advice from your manager or the Communications Coordinator before talking about it or simply refrain from commenting.
- 5.7 Be the first to respond to your own mistakes. If you make an error, be up front about your mistake and correct it quickly, as this can help to restore trust. If you choose to modify content that was previously posted, such as editing a post, make it clear that you have done so.
- 5.8 Users should adopt a warm, open and approachable tone. Remember that much of the City of Dryden's image is developed by the public's interaction with us. We all want that image to be a positive one. Your tone, your openness and your approachability can help promote that.
- 5.9 Users should use their best judgment. Remember that there are always consequences to what you publish. If what you're about to publish makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, seek advice from your manager or the Communications Coordinator. Ultimately, you have sole responsibility for what you post in any form of online social media.

- 5.10 Users shall keep records. It is critical that we keep records of our interactions in the online social media space and monitor the activities on those with whom we engage. As online conversations are often fleeting and immediate; it is important for you to keep track of them when you're officially representing the City. Remember that online City statements can be held to the same legal standards as traditional media communications. Keep records of any online dialogue pertaining to the City of Dryden.

6.0 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Managers shall ensure all staff is aware of their responsibilities and obligations regarding the use of social media tools and address all non-compliance issues.
- 6.2 Compliance with this policy will ensure the successful administration and use of social media tools within the City of Dryden. This policy will ensure that City information is shared in an appropriate manner, protected as required and in compliance with the Municipal Act, 2001, the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, all other applicable legislation and the City's By-laws, Policies and Procedures.
- 6.3 Users found to be acting in contravention to this policy shall be dealt with in accordance with the City's Code of Conduct Policy (HR-CO-01), Communication Policy (MU-CO-13) and (HR-DI-01) Discipline Policy.

History			
First Draft Date:	November 2011	Final Draft Date:	June 2012
Approval Date:	July 16, 2012	Approved by:	By-law 3979-2012
Amendment Date:	Feb. 19, 2019	Approved by:	By-Law 4612-2019
Amendment Date:	May 13, 2024	Approved by:	By-law 2024-29
Amendment Date:	June 8, 2026	Approved by:	City Clerk

This policy is subject to any specific provisions of the Municipal Act, or other relevant legislation or Union agreement.

APPENDIX "A"

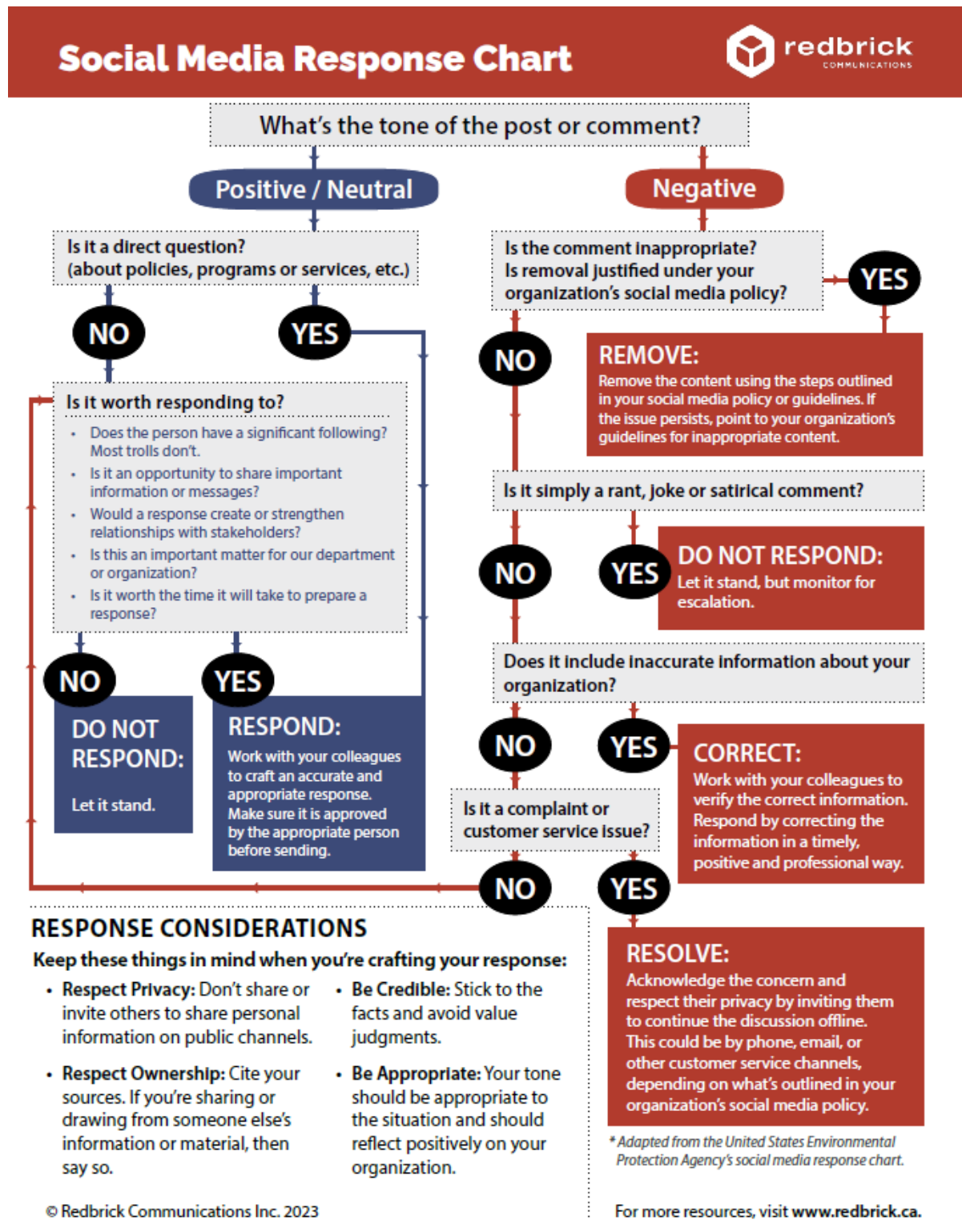
TIPS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA PARTICIPATION AT CITY OF DRYDEN

If you use any form of social media on behalf of the City of Dryden, these tips are for you! Remember that your participation in social media on behalf of the City of Dryden is a task that needs to be taken seriously and with respect. We expect everyone who participates in online commentary to understand and to follow these simple but important tips. Keep in mind that our overall goal is simple: to participate online in a respectful, relevant way that protects our reputation and complies with all applicable laws and regulations.

1. **Be Transparent:** When representing the City, use your real name, clearly state your affiliation with the City, and disclose your role (if not posting from an official City of Dryden profile). Transparency builds trust.
2. **Maintain Truthfulness:** Never make false or misleading statements. All claims should be supported by evidence.
3. **Acknowledge Mistakes:** Be transparent and prompt in correcting errors to rebuild trust. Clearly state if you modify previously posted content.
4. **Maintain Courtesy:** Promote a positive image by adopting a warm, open, and approachable tone. Your interactions contribute to the City of Dryden's reputation.
5. **Post Respectfully:** Share meaningful comments, avoid spam, and steer clear of off-topic or offensive remarks.
6. **Use Common Sense:** Respect privacy and confidentiality. Seek permission before sharing private or internal City conversations.
7. **Stick to Your Expertise:** Focus on your knowledge and provide unique perspectives on non-confidential City activities.
8. **Be Polite in Disagreements:** Maintain a polite and appropriate tone when disagreeing with others. If discussions become confrontational, disengage and seek advice/direction from your manager or the Communications Coordinator.
9. **Diplomacy in Competition:** If discussing competitors, be diplomatic, ensure factual accuracy, and obtain the necessary permissions.

10. **Avoid Legal Matters:** Refrain from commenting on legal issues or litigation involving the City.
11. **No Crisis Engagement:** Do not participate in social media discussions during potential crises. Refer such activity to your manager.
12. **Protect Privacy:** Be mindful of the long-lasting nature of online content and consider the information's sensitivity.
13. **Think Globally:** Recognize that your online responses may have different implications in various parts of the world. Be aware of global perspectives.
14. **Record Interactions:** Keep records of online interactions when officially representing the City, as online content is subject to the same legal standards as traditional media.
15. **Respect Copyrights:** Credit the original creators and obtain their approval when using others' content. Avoid using copyrighted material without permission.
16. **Uphold Brand Standards:** Ensure that you're following the City of Dryden's brand standards when posting content (logos, fonts, etc.).

APPENDIX "B" RESPONSE FLOWCHART



 City of Dryden Records Management Social Media Approval Form		
All new social media tools proposed for City use will be reviewed and approved by the CAO or designate. No user may create or participate in a social media site without prior approval. All approved City of Dryden social media sites shall be: (1) published using approved City social networking platforms and tools; (2) administered by designated personnel in the department managing the site/page with support from the Communications Coordinator and Information Technology (IT) as required; and, (3) maintained by a minimum of two administrators for each City social media site that utilizes administrators. (i.e. Facebook)	Date:	
	Department:	
	Department Contact:	
	Department Phone:	
	Department Manager:	
This signed form must be forwarded to the City Clerk with a copy to the IT Manager <u>prior</u> to establishing or using any social media tool.		
Social Media Type:	Administrators	
Dept. Manager Approval Name:	Signature:	Date:
CAO Approval Name:	Signature:	Date:

Original: Clerk's Office
Copy to: Department Manager
IT Manager

(Examples of Social Media: Facebook, X (formally Twitter), Snapchat, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok)

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