



**Policy Number:** 2025 – 01

**Date of Issue:** January 21, 2025

**Page:** 1 of 5

**Motion Number:** 2025 – 15

**Policy Subject/Title:** SOCIAL MEDIA

**Signature of Approval by Authorized Personnel:**

  
Karrie A. Gau, CAO

**Supersedes:** June 4, 2019  
Date of Last Update

Policy 2019 – 02 Motion #2019 – 133  
Title & No. of Previous Policy if Applicable

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

The Town of Wainwright (the Town) recognizes the importance of social media as a tool for sharing information and awareness, as well as promoting a sense of community. Social media is one of many tools used by the Town to communicate and incorporates a variety of digital assets to meet its goals including photos, graphics, multi-media, email marketing and links to the Town website.

The Town strives to ensure its social media platforms provide a consistent and accurate source of information that residents and other users view as a trustworthy, timely and transparent means of communication about the organization, its services, activities, governance, strategic goals, and vision. The Town aims to achieve a unified voice with consistent messaging across all channels and in all communications.

The Town strives to keep all social media platforms relevant and current, including but not limited to, Facebook, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and LinkedIn.

The Town's Facebook page will not permit users to comment publicly. Users are encouraged to connect with the Town by:

- Calling the Town Office at 780-842-3381
- Visiting the Town Office in person at 1018 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Wainwright
- Contacting Administration and Council (contact information available at [www.wainwright.ca](http://www.wainwright.ca))
- Direct messaging on Facebook
- Visiting the Town website at [www.wainwright.ca](http://www.wainwright.ca)
- Signing up for the Town's monthly Tidbits newsletter at [www.wainwright.ca](http://www.wainwright.ca)

## PURPOSE:

This policy outlines how the Town will aspire to achieve effective and appropriate use and management of its social media channels to:

1. Share information and increase awareness regarding:
  - a) Town Council activities, priorities, and business;
  - b) Town services, programs, initiatives, events, and opportunities to participate in organized activities, boards and committees;
  - c) Activities of partner organizations and stakeholders.
2. In the event of an emergency, provide updates to help keep residents safe, secure, and informed.
3. Ensure residents can access official Town information on their preferred platforms, knowing they can find consistent, timely and accurate updates related to their needs and interests.
4. Further the strategic priorities and organizational goals of the Town.
5. Uphold the image, brand and reputation of the Town, its Council, and its employees.

The policy will:

1. Outline standards and procedures that will guide social media use on a day-to-day basis.
2. Establish authority structures for social media content decisions.
3. Protect the reputation of the Town by ensuring a consistent and professional approach by employees and elected officials who communicate via social media platforms.
4. Create social media protocols, criteria and courses of action for the establishment and monitoring of acceptable tools and accounts.

## DEFINITIONS:

**Posting:** any content or image, including but not limited to, photographs, video, clip art, scanned images, documents and emoticons.

**Social Media:** all forms of online presence or publications including but not limited to Facebook, YouTube, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, and LinkedIn.

## PROCEDURES:

1. Employees assigned to manage social media on behalf of the Town must conduct themselves as a Town representative and in accordance with Town policies. Only assigned employees will be granted authority to manage selected social media platforms. Upon termination or change of

position, all access to assigned social media platforms will be revoked. Administrative privileges must be transferred to another assigned Town employee(s) at the time of exit.

2. When using any type of social media, the Town will follow all applicable provincial and federal laws and regulations as well as internal policies and bylaws, including but not limited to, the Criminal Code of Canada, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Municipal Government Act, Employee Code of Conduct, and Council Code of Conduct.
3. The following content will not be permitted on Town social media:
  - a) Personal attacks on individuals or specific groups;
  - b) Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
  - c) Profanity, sexual content or links to sexual content;
  - d) The encouragement or conducting of illegal activity;
  - e) Non-approved content related to sales, advertising or promotions;
  - f) Content promoting a candidate for municipal, provincial or federal election.
4. A posting may be considered inappropriate and removed if it:
  - a) Renders any employee or elected official unable to perform their duties satisfactorily;
  - b) Leads or may lead to a refusal, reluctance or inability of any other employee, elected official or third party to work with the employee responsible for the posting;
  - c) Discloses information or provides comments that harms or jeopardizes the reputation of the Town;
  - d) Is in breach of the Criminal Code of Canada and therefore injures the reputation of the Town;
  - e) Expressly or impliedly discloses information or personal information in contravention of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, its regulations thereunder, or any other applicable legislation;
  - f) Expressly or impliedly discloses confidential information, including but not limited to, matters discussed in camera during the Town Council meeting;
  - g) Any other circumstances determined to be inappropriate by the Town.
5. Employees and elected officials who participate on social media using their own platforms must follow the Employee Code of Conduct Policy and/or Council Code of Conduct Bylaw. They must conduct themselves in a professional manner and abide by the following guidelines. For the purpose of this section, "users" will refer to all employees and elected officials of the Town.
  - a) When creating a social media profile, users must ensure that their use of social media does not put the Town's security, reputation, or information at risk.

- b) Users may never use their @wainwright.ca email address to create a social media account.
- c) Users may not use the official Town logo on their social media platforms, unless they are sharing a posting from the Town's social media.
- d) Users shall be held personally responsible for the content they publish on their own social media platforms and shall not hold the Town responsible or liable for any content placed on their own platforms.
- e) A user's personal or off-duty conduct shall be considered inappropriate within the meaning of this policy when they expressly or impliedly post negative comments or images critical of the Town, its employees or elected officials. At all times, users have a duty of fidelity and loyalty to the Town which would preclude such conduct.
- f) Users can be involved in political debate and state their own opinions on their social media platforms. All actions must be done with respect. Bullying, hatred, bigotry, disrespect, harassment, and otherwise bringing the Town, Council, or Town Administration into disrepute are all prohibited and are subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Town's Council Code of Conduct Bylaw and Progressive Discipline Policy.
- g) Users must not act, claim to act, or give the impression that they are acting as a representative of Council or the Town on their social media platforms. Users must make it clear that their actions and opinions on social media are their own.
- h) Users may not publish or report on meeting discussions that are held during in camera sessions on social media, regardless of the profile being public or private.
- i) All media used on social media profiles must follow copyright laws and best practices regarding privacy, rights, and permissions.
- j) A user's social media platform shall not be promoted by the Town's social media. The Town reserves the right to like or share content that is posted to users' accounts if the post is deemed to be of informational value to the community.
- k) During an emergency, users shall adhere to best communication practices and allow the municipality and/or the Information Officer to release emergency information on official social media platforms. As a best practice, it is encouraged that during an emergency, users share the official social media platforms so citizens know which social media will have the most up-to-date information.
- l) Once an elected official's term comes to an end, or they resign from their position, they must delete or rename any political social media platforms to reflect that they are no longer a sitting member of Council within two weeks of their term or resignation. If elected officials do not know the process of deleting a social media page, help will be provided upon request.

6. For the purpose of determining whether a posting by an employee or elected official is inappropriate, the Town shall act reasonably and in good faith.

7. Posting ownership release is given to the Town on any postings taken for and published on the Town's social media. No credit will be given for postings taken and published by Town employees or elected officials on the Town's social media.
8. The Town may disclose and post an employee's job title and business contact information on its website, or any social media operated by the Town, acting reasonably, without the employee's prior consent when doing so is in furtherance of the Town's operation and management.
9. Employees who do not want their photograph or name published on the Town's social media must inform their Department Head. This information will be recorded and relayed to the employee(s) assigned to manage social media on behalf of the Town. Otherwise, the Town may post photographs of employees and/or employee names when such photographs are taken in the context of employment and for the purpose of furthering the Town's operation and management, including but not limited to promotion of the Town.
10. The duties and obligations of employees and elected officials pursuant to this policy survive the employee's or elected official's resignation or termination from employment with the Town.
11. This policy should be read in conjunction with any other related policies and bylaws of the Town. Where a conflict exists between this policy and another policy or bylaw of the Town, this policy shall prevail.
12. The very nature of information technology (including social media) is that it is fluid, flexible and quickly changing. As a result, the Town may issue written clarification or amendment to this policy from time to time.

**REVIEW CYCLE:**

This policy will be reviewed every three (3) years.