

# EDITORIAL POLICY

## SOCIAL MEDIA



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## 1. Policy Objectives

This Social Media Editorial Policy for Township of Wentworth has been established to:

- To guide the management and use of official Wentworth Township social media practices
- Encourage interaction with citizens
- Provide guidance to those responsible for managing social media
- Establish netiquette and ethics for participants

## 2. Definitions

In this policy, unless the context indicates otherwise, the following terms mean:

- **Municipal Social Media:** A digital media based on web technologies such as blogs, photo and video sharing and social networks, set up by the Municipality to facilitate the creation and sharing of content generated by various people, collaboration and social interaction and with which applications such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Google+ or LinkedIn are associated.
- **Netiquette:** The rules of politeness, good manners and decorum established in this policy to govern the behavior of users on a municipal social media.
- **Ethics:** The rules of moral conduct set forth in this Policy to govern the behavior of users on a municipal social media site.
- **Participant:** A person who participates in municipal social media, but does not include those responsible for managing what is posted.

## 3. Municipality's Presence on Social Media

This policy is evolving and can be adapted according to the social media that the Municipality may join in the future. Please note that the use of social media is intended to complement the other information tools used by the Municipality.

The website remains the main reference.

## 3. Goals for Using Social Media

Official social media is intended to reach the various stakeholders of the Municipality, including: citizens, seasonal residents, businesses, suppliers, employees, future citizens, visitors, media, elected officials and employees of the Township of Wentworth.

The Municipality's social media aims to:

- Increase the frequency of communication with citizens
- Create a two-way communication and an interactive community
- Stimulate citizen participation in municipal life



- Develop a sense of belonging
- Contribute to the influence of the Township of Wentworth

Social media are used to:

- Promote activities, events, facilities and services to citizens
- Provide information of public interest
- Promote the actions and projects carried out
- Recruit personnel
- Transmit urgent communications
- Participate in citizen exchanges
- Release awareness campaigns

## 4. Social Media Content

### Citizen Information

The Municipality uses social media to provide citizen information, including promotional or awareness campaigns related to the municipal organization, its services or its mission. Only information from the Municipality, its partners or recognized organizations is shared.

In the event of an emergency, the use of the Municipality's social media is solicited to inform citizens because of their immediacy and speed of dissemination.

Please note that social media is not an emergency service, it is used as a means of transmitting information to share a situation and inform citizens on the instructions to follow.

### Events and Activities

The Municipality promotes its events and those in which it is a partner on its various social media. Organizations recognized by the Municipality may receive various types of support, but the Municipality does not automatically broadcast the events of these organizations on its official accounts.

### Press Releases

All press releases issued by the Township of Wentworth will be posted on its official website. Press releases issued by the Township may be posted on social media. The choice of these publications remains at the discretion of the Municipality.

### Calls for Tenders, Public Notices, Regulations and Job Offers

Depending on the social media used, calls for tenders, public notices, regulations and job postings may be posted by the Municipality, although it is not legally required to do so.

### Advertising and Promotions



Advertising on social media is for the exclusive use of the Municipality. The topics discussed are in the interest of the population.

No advertising from individuals, political parties, organizations or businesses is tolerated on Wentworth Township social media without prior approval from the Communications Department.

## Complaints and Requests

Although the Municipality is interacting on its official accounts, it does not handle complaints and requests submitted by users on social media. Users will be invited by those responsible for managing the municipal social media to make a complaint by contacting the Citizen Services Department directly by phone or email at the following coordinates :

- Telephone : 450 562-0701
- Email : [info@wentworth.ca](mailto:info@wentworth.ca)

## Media Requests

Journalists wishing to address a question to the Municipality should contact the Executive Director by email or telephone. Questions cannot be submitted via social media. Under no circumstances will the Municipality respond to media inquiries made through social media.

## 5. Presence and Monitoring on Social Media

### Time to Respond

While the use of social media implies the notion of speed and immediacy, some interventions may require prior verification with the various departments of the Township of Wentworth. A delay is therefore to be expected. For example, the individual may receive a communication advising that their post has been considered, but that a more specific response will be provided at a later date.

Unless there is an emergency that requires an immediate response, the Township of Wentworth will monitor and facilitate its social media during business hours.

## 6. Roles and Responsibilities

### The Employee in Charge of Communications

The management of the Municipality's official social media is the responsibility of the employee in charge of communications or the persons delegated by the general management. Any posting of messages or images on behalf of the Municipality on social media must be done by one of the authorized persons.



The following are the primary duties of the communications employee with respect to social media:

- Animate the community
- Create and manage an editorial calendar
- Create new accounts (if applicable)
- Publish and modify information (scheduled or not)
- Manage comments
- Answer questions or refer to the right resources as needed
- Create content
- Strategic intelligence
- Analyze usage statistics

## General Management

With respect to social media, the General Management will review any request made for the creation of a new account. No department may create an account without first obtaining approval from the General Management.

## Elected Officials and Employees

The Municipality welcomes the use of social media and encourages its elected officials, employees and anyone interested in municipal activities and services to participate, share and spread the word about the Municipality's official messages. However, appropriate use is required.

Employees of the Municipality who have accounts on certain social media may mention that they are employees of the Municipality. Despite their professional affiliation, their messages and positions do not represent the official position of the Municipality and should be considered as strictly personal opinions.

## Participants

The person participating in a municipal social media :

- Agrees to be bound by this policy
- Exonerates the Municipality of any civil liability for the content of what is published on this site
- Does so at its own risk
- Assumes sole responsibility for the comments made and the documents published on the site
- Is responsible for protecting its personal information

## 7. Netiquette and Ethics



Netiquette and ethical rules are necessary for the proper functioning of social media. They include all the guidelines and codes of conduct to be respected.

The Municipality encourages exchanges and the sharing of opinions among Internet users, but asks them to avoid turning the debate into a private discussion.

## Netiquette

On a municipal social media, the netiquette is:

- Courtesy
- Politeness
- Respect
- Rudeness and offensive language are prohibited

## Ethical Rules

On a municipal social media, the following ethical rules apply:

- Respect for copyright
- Respect for privacy
- Protection of personal information
- Personal attacks or insults, even those that are supposedly humorous, defamatory, sexist, obscene, hateful, racist or violent comments are prohibited

## Comments Not Tolerated

On municipal social media, the following comments are immediately deleted:

- Those related to the municipal, school, Quebec, Canadian or international political scene
- Those that promote or discredit a business, product or cause
- Those that constitute a form of advertising or promotion
- Those that are accompanied by a document implicating a person who has not consented to its distribution
- Those that are not related to the topic being discussed or the objectives of the media

## Hyperlinks

On a municipal social media site, a hyperlink to a site whose practices do not comply with this policy is immediately removed.

The presence of a hyperlink does not imply that the Municipality endorses or is in any way associated with the website to which it leads.

## Subscriptions



The Township of Wentworth follows Facebook accounts of users that appear to be relevant and related to its mandate. The fact that it follows an account or "likes" a page does not mean that it endorses its words or activities.

## Prohibitions

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, no person may, in any manner or at any time, use any municipal social media to:

- Undermine the dignity, honour or reputation of any person by referring to, among other things, that person's age, race, skin color, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, political beliefs, language, ethnic origin, social or physical condition
- Do something, make a comment, or send an image that is offensive, defamatory, harassing, derogatory, or disruptive, as determined by a reasonable person
- Harm others
- Harm the Municipality
- Disseminate false information or derogatory remarks about the Municipality, a member of Council, an employee or a citizen
- Criticize, ridicule or denounce a member of Council or an employee of the Municipality
- Engage in propaganda
- Intimidate, threaten or harass anyone
- Play a trick on a person
- Impersonate or attempt to impersonate another person
- Communicate without authorization information held by the Municipality
- jeopardize the security and confidentiality of information held by the Municipality
- Violate professional secrecy
- Infringe the intellectual property rights of a third party, in particular through the unauthorized use or reproduction of an electronic file
- Circulate a "work" that does not belong to him/her or that is protected by copyright
- Encourage the commission of an offence or an act punishable by law or regulation

## Consequences of Non-Compliance With this Policy

Posting a comment or document on municipal social media is a privilege, not a right. The person in charge of managing what is published on a municipal social media may :

- Delete, without prior notice or formality, anything that does not comply with this policy
- Block access, temporarily or permanently, without prior notice or formality, to anyone who has not complied with this policy

In the event of ambiguity in this policy, the interpretation of the Director General of the Municipality shall prevail over any other interpretation.





## Official Language

The Township of Wentworth's social media posts are written in both French and English.

## 8. Policy Update

The Township of Wentworth reserves the right to modify this policy without prior notice if deemed appropriate.

Thank you to the MRC of Argenteuil and Saint-Mathieu-de-Beloeil for allowing us to draw inspiration from their policies.

If you have any questions regarding this policy, please contact [agirard@wentworth.ca](mailto:agirard@wentworth.ca) or 450 562-0701, ext. 2025.