



# P O L I C Y

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Policy Title <b>SOCIAL MEDIA</b>	Date: <b>June 25, 2015</b>	Resolution No.

## **Purpose**

To establish guidelines for creating and maintaining a positive, safe and courteous use of social media presence for Birch Hills County.

## **Policy Statement**

While it is a desire for Birch Hills County to be up to date with technologies, accessible to everyone and provide a transparent government; there is safety and professionalism to be taken into consideration. The social media policy will be for the purpose of maintaining these technologies along with the safe use and protection of those involved.

## **Regulation**

Designated employees of Birch Hills County are free to publish or post within social media sites in accordance with this policy. Employees are to identify themselves as an employee of Birch Hills County. Employees must coordinate the communications with the Chief Administrative Officer.

Any social media site is not to be used as a reference check for any prospective future employee(s) of Birch Hills County. All uses of social media sites are to follow the same ethical standards as are always expected as an employee of Birch Hills County.

Employees posting on their own media site as a private citizen may not represent Birch Hills County, and are reminded that they are bound by an official oath of confidentiality, a code of conduct and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP) and must not disclose any Birch Hills County information or content that they are not specifically authorized by the Chief Administrative Officer to disclose.

Comments made by the public will not be edited, but they must comply with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the County guidelines posted below. Birch Hills County Chief Administrative Officer will have the final authority on anything posted on the County's social media sites.

## **Posting Guidelines:**

### **For the public and County Representative**

- Comments should relate to the content posted and must not contain any personal information about another individual.
- Reproduced or borrowed content that appears to violate trademark or copyright laws will be deleted. Always attribute such work to the original author/ source or post a link to the work rather than reproduce it.



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- Threatening, offensive or harassing language is not permitted, and will be removed.
- Comments that constitute discrimination or harassment under the Alberta Human Rights Act are not permitted and will be removed.
- Comments that promote or defend illegal or dangerous activities are not permitted and will be removed.
- Comments that present demeaning, derogatory or defamatory portrayals of individuals or groups or contain any message that is likely to cause any form of offence, are not permitted and will be removed.
- Comments that promote or demote religious or political messages that might be deemed prejudicial to other religion or political groups are not permitted and will be removed.
- Comments promoting or demoting any business for commercial gain are not permitted and will be removed.
- It is never okay to publish confidential information, if done so, it will be removed and disciplinary measures will be taken.

### **Additionally For the County Representative**

- Posts must maintain a professional and courteous tone.
- Posts must stick to facts and refrain from debates over opinions.
- Posts will not be offensive, defamatory or of an aggressive nature.
- The author will refrain from making political or partisan posts as an employee of Birch Hills County.
- Posts will not criticize policies or decisions made by Birch Hills County staff and/or Council.
- Posts will reflect the values and ethics of Birch Hills County representatives. Personal or private information regarding staff, Councillors or third-party representatives will not be distributed on County social media platforms.
- Do not post anything that is dishonest, untrue or misleading.
- Remember that what you post will be around for a long time, so consider the content fully and be cautious of what information is disclosed.

Notwithstanding the foregoing list, the County reserves the right in its absolute discretion to remove any comment deemed inappropriate for any reason whatsoever

### **Records**

Any content that is or has been removed from the Birch Hills County media sites due to a conflict with the posting guidelines is to be reported to the Chief Administrative Officer.

This policy is to be posted on all Birch Hills County media sites.

All other comments and messages posted to Birch Hills County social media sites will be considered transitory records and will not be kept by the County. Information specifically



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collected as part of a County project or engagement exercise will be kept in accordance with FOIP.

### **Privacy**

Any information, photos or videos that are shared and/or posted to an official County social media site may be reproduced by the county for promotional or other purposes, with the appropriate permissions and acknowledgment of the source.

Comments and messages requested by the County and collected for public records using social media will be treated like any other form of communications received by the County and will be subject to the provisions of FOIP.

### **Violation and Enforcement**

A violation of this policy by a representative of Birch Hills County is a serious matter and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Approved: Original signed

Revised: