

CENTRAL COAST REGIONAL DISTRICT
POLICIES

A-30 – Social Media Policy

Preamble: This policy will govern the publication of any commentary and creation of pages on social media by employees and any commission of the Central Coast Regional District (CCRD). For the purposes of this policy, social media means any online platform for online publication and commentary bearing the CCRD's name or any of its programs. This includes but is not limited to: Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Flickr, wiki pages, etc. This policy is in addition to and complements any existing or future social media policies regarding the use of technology, computers, e-mail, and the internet.

CCRD employees and Commissions are free to publish or comment via social media in accordance with this policy. CCRD employees and Commissions are subject to this policy to the extent that they use CCRD social media accounts.

Publication on social media platforms carries similar obligations and risk to any other kind of publication or commentary. All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that CCRD employees and Commissions must otherwise follow.

Purpose: The purpose of the Social Media Policy is to be a communication tool to post information to the public about events occurring in the region of the CCRD. The Social Media Policy is not for conducting business, for surveying or engaging the public in dialogue.

Policy:

1.0 Setting Up Social Media Accounts

Social media identities, logon ID's, user names and passwords may not use CCRD's name without prior approval from the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Once created, logon information must be distributed to the staff members who will have publishing privileges.

The official CCRD logo or another pre-approved image that is attributable to the Central Coast must be used as the profile image. Other pre-approved photos may be used as a cover photo, if the platform provides a space for one and provided they have been pre-approved by the CAO.

2.0 Publishing and Posting

Be mindful of what is posted, because it reflects on the image of the CCRD. Post only what is related to CCRD and CCRD Commissions.

THINK (Is it True, Helpful, Inspiring, Necessary, Kind) before you post.

Information that has been made public is allowed to be posted. Confidential information including information from a third party may not be published on any of the CCRD's social media sites.

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Privacy settings which allow other people to post and/or comment should be set to limited access. This allows the information to be posted in a more controlled manner.

3.0 Honesty and Transparency

CCRD believes in transparency and honesty when communicating with stakeholders. Do not say anything that is dishonest, false, or misleading. Be smart about protecting yourself and your privacy. And remember: you are speaking on behalf of the CCRD or a Commission of the CCRD, not yourself.

4.0 Copyright Laws

It is critical that you show proper respect for the laws governing intellectual property and its fair usage and dealing. You will never quote more than short excerpts from the work of others, and always provide recognition to the original author/source. It is good general practice to link other's work rather than reproduce it.

5.0 CCRD and Your Audience

As a public service provider, CCRD will show respect for a diverse set of customs, values, and points of view. Don't say anything contradictory or in conflict with CCRD's website. Do not post anything disrespectful or derogatory. Refrain from posting topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory, which includes politics or religion. If you are unsure about your post, get a second opinion from a colleague.

If the Board as a whole has *publicly* taken a position on an issue, then the CCRD can use social media to share that opinion. Only post this information if the Board has publicly published their positions, and have done so in a relatively non-controversial manner.

In regards to political issues, such as a referendum, only post general information, such as when and where the referendum is happening. Sharing and liking posts are always to support a view without publicly stating a position. This should only be done where the Board has publicly taken a position on the issue.

6.0 Confidentiality

Notwithstanding the need for employees working for the CCRD to make informed decisions on issues by obtaining input from internal and external sources, employees are to ensure that information that is normally considered confidential (i.e. financial, legal, and personnel issues) is not disclosed to any person outside the CCRD unless authorized to do so.

7.0 Controversial Issues

If you see misrepresentations made about CCRD in the media, you may only correct it after gaining approval from the CAO, and only with respect to the facts. If you speak about others, make sure what you say is factual and that it does not reflect poorly on that party. Avoid arguments about controversial issues, as that provides no benefit to the CCRD.

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8.0 Correcting Mistakes

If you make an error, be upfront about it and correct it ASAP. If you choose to modify a post, make it clear that you have done so. If someone accuses you of posting something improper (copyrighted material, defamatory statements, etc.), deal with it quickly and in an appropriate manner. Better to remove something than risk legal action.

9.0 Disclaimers

While using disclaimers is a good practice, it may not have much legal effect, especially on social media platforms. Be cautious when using disclaimers on posts for social media. If you are concerned with what you are posting, ask a colleague for a second opinion.

10.0 Social Media at Work

Unless you are posting on behalf of the CCRD or a commission of the CCRD using CCRD accounts, social media is not to be used while working. However, lunch time is free time.

If you have a social media account for your own uses remain cautious about what you post, as you are an employee of CCRD and may be seen as such by others. Once you post something, you have no more control over it. Remember to THINK and consider any information you post online. For example, avoid posting your own post about this subject.

11.0 Enforcement

Policy violations will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination for cause in accordance with CCRD Personal Policy and BC employment laws.

12.0 Compliance with Freedom of Information & Privacy Act

Officials and employees of local government in British Columbia are subject to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (the Act), and have a duty to understand the key sections of this Act, and must avoid disclosing any verbal or written material that is meant to be confidential concerning the CCRD, its board members, officers, staff members or clients. Employees must not disclose or use confidential information gained by virtue of their association with the CCRD for personal gain, or to benefit friends, relatives or associates.

Proposed Adoption: June 12, 2014

Rationale: This policy is to establish a policy on social media to govern CCRD publication of any commentary and creation of pages on social media by employees and any commissions of the CCRD.