

Corporate Policies and Procedures			
DEPARTMENT: Human Resources		POLICY #: A-18	
POLICY: Personal Use of Social Networking			
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POLICY STATEMENT:

The purpose of this Corporate Policy is to guide employee's use of social networking made on an employee's personal time and to ensure employees understand that they cannot communicate on behalf of the County of Renfrew or any of its' departments, programs, services, clients, elected representatives or other employees without specific permission from their Department Head – refer to Corporate Policy IT-09 regarding the business use of social networking.

Consistent with the Corporate Competency of **Professionalism**, employees must conduct themselves responsibly. Employee conduct, even outside of the workplace, must be in compliance with their workplace obligations, including but not limited to confidentiality, all human rights policies and applicable legislation.

For the purposes of this Policy, 'social networking' refers to any and all online social media networking or community forum/websites where people come together, post information, attachments, videos, pictures, build knowledge, discuss ideas or socialize.

Online communities include, but are not limited to:

- Blogs or weblogs
- Bulletin Boards
- Chat Rooms
- Discussion Groups
- Instant Messaging (IM)
- Mailing lists or listservs
- Photo/video sites i.e. 'YouTube'
- Social Networking sites i.e. 'Facebook', 'MySpace'
- Wikis
- Twitter
- Or any other online medium similar in nature to above

For the purposes of this Policy, "The County of Renfrew" includes the Corporation of the County of Renfrew, any of its departments, programs, services, clients, elected representatives, supervisors or other employees, including confidential details or information and/or the reputation or good standing of any of the aforementioned.

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For the purposes of this Policy, “Employees” include all employees defined under Corporate Policy A-01 – Employee Definitions.

The County of Renfrew acknowledges that employees may participate in social networking on their own time. All employees are advised that social media are not private, regardless of the security or restriction of access to said websites, and that he/she will be held accountable for conduct that is inconsistent with the Corporate Competencies of *Honesty and Integrity; Professionalism; Client Service Orientation; and Focus on Results*, as well as the relevant legislation including but not limited to:

- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA)
- Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA)

and other relevant departmental policies and procedures.

A social networking post made on an employee’s personal time, but that harms the County of Renfrew reputation or hampers its operations, can constitute grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Further, violation of this Policy exposes the County of Renfrew to risks and legal liability and the employee to risk of criminal or civil liability.

PROCEDURE:

1. Employees may chose to be members of social networking sites or may chose to engage in other personal on-line social media.
2. Any such employee comments or conduct on social networking that breaches confidentiality regarding the County of Renfrew, its clients, employees or the workplace, including but not limited to photos or personal information and/or confidential business information will violate this policy.
3. Employee comments or conduct on social media websites that is disparaging, defamatory, insulting, demeaning, offensive, insubordinate, threatening, harassing or discriminatory to the County of Renfrew, its clients, employees or the workplace, or that are deemed objectionable by the County of Renfrew in that the content might damage the County of Renfrew’s reputation will violate this policy.

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4. Employee comments or conduct on social media must not interfere with the employee's ability to carry out their duties or result in other employees being unwilling to work with the employee in question.
5. Employee comments or conduct on social networking must not interfere with the employer's ability to manage and direct the work process. This conduct would include, but is not limited to, insolent or insubordinate comments concerning any employee in a position or capacity of supervision in the County of Renfrew.
6. Employee comments or conduct on social networking must not include any information which the County of Renfrew deems confidential or sensitive, including but not limited to any information concerning the workplace, specifically personal information concerning employees or the persons whom we serve, as well as information governed by the applicable Acts aforementioned in this Policy.
7. Those social networking websites that assign, name or make the property thereof the employee in question are the 'sole' responsibility of said employee. All employees are held accountable for the security and comments made on a site for which they are aligned and take ownership. This includes, but is not limited to a personalized 'Facebook' page, etc.
8. Employees must be aware and acknowledge that comments and/or conduct that would violate this policy will be subject to disciplinary measures up to and including termination of employment.
9. Violation of the terms of this policy may result in criminal and/or civil liability/charges against the employee in question from either or all the County of Renfrew and/or the applicable third party(s).