



TOWN OF  
**HALTON HILLS**  
*Working Together Working for You!*

## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

**FROM:** Meagan Cooper, Communications Specialist

**DATE:** August 30, 2021

**MEMO NO.:** ADMIN-2021-0009

**SUBJECT:** Social Media Community Guidelines

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### PURPOSE OF THE MEMORANDUM:

The purpose of this memo is to inform Halton Hills Council of the implementation of Social Media Guidelines for all Town of Halton Hills platforms including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and Instagram.

### BACKGROUND:

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Town of Halton Hills has seen significantly higher levels of engagement on social media channels. In this current environment, many residents have expressed their frustrations to the Town regarding provincial closures, public health guidelines, vaccination rollout and more. Although the majority of resident interaction is positive and respectful, staff has seen an escalation of negative feedback expressed in a disrespectful, mean or rude manner.

This increase is to be expected given the global health emergency and recognizing that many people are experiencing anxiety and various other challenges. Staff recognizes that these negative interactions and feedback come from a place of stress and fear of the unknown and continues to communicate and de-escalate resident interactions with well-thought-out communication and helpful resources.

In response to the increases in engagement and feedback, the Town has developed Social Media Community Guidelines that staff can refer to when engaging with the public on official Halton Hills social media channels. These guidelines will act as a best

practice and ensure that Town channels remain a platform for constructive and respectful conversation.

## **COMMENTS:**

The proposed Social Media Community Guidelines are as follows:

### **Town of Halton Hills Social Media Guidelines**

The Town of Halton Hills welcomes and encourages open and engaging dialogue on our social media platforms. We encourage public feedback and consider it essential in strengthening democracy and communication in the Town of Halton Hills as outlined in our [Public Engagement Charter](#). We ask that if you contribute to our page, please follow these guidelines to ensure our page is a place for constructive and respectful conversation.

### **By interacting with the Town of Halton Hills social media accounts, you agree to:**

- Be respectful towards all users of the site
- Abide by the Terms of Use for the company hosting the site
- Not impersonate or falsely claim to represent a person or an organization.

### **Comments and private messages including any of the following are considered a violation of our Social Media Guidelines and may be hidden, deleted or not responded to:**

- Profanity, defamatory, libelous, offensive, abusive, discriminatory, harassing or demeaning content including images, videos and links;
- Threatening or condoning violent or illegal behavior or encouraging others to do so;
- Personal information such as names of individuals, email addresses, phone numbers, personal photos or videos;
- Confidential, sensitive or non-public information;
- Violate copyright or intellectual property;
- Are commercial in nature with intent to sell products/services or recruit followers;
- Contain information that is false, inaccurate or misleading;
- Are repetitive or disruptive to the community (SPAM) or violate Facebook's Terms and Policies; and
- Commenting or posting content that is unrelated to the page or post.

**Please note:** Halton Hills social media platforms are not monitored 24/7; regular business hours apply. If you would like to request a service or report an issue to the

Town, please visit our [Contact webpage](#) or call our After-Hours Line at 905-873-2600. Press 2 to connect to the Public Works After-Hours Line and follow the prompts.

## **CONCLUSION:**

As a next step, the Social Media Guidelines will be shared with front-facing staff and posted on the Town's website for resident reference. Staff will use this page as a resource if intervention with a non-compliant resident is needed. The Social Media Guidelines page will also be linked to social media platforms where possible. The guidelines will also become an appendix to the Public Engagement Charter.

Reviewed and approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alex Fuller". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Alexandra Fuller, Director of Communications

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "C. Mills". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chris Mills, Acting Chief Administrative Officer