

Social Media Policy

Policy #: 011
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Amended: N/A

1.0 Purpose and Scope:

Social media serves as a powerful communication tool and allows the BAO to reach a wide audience on an accessible platform.

The purpose of this policy is to define the manner in which social media is to be used by the BAO and by employees and to establish guidelines on professional practices to ensure brand consistency and professional social media communications.

2.0 BAO Corporate Social Media Accounts:

The BAO has official accounts on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn. These accounts will be used to provide information to stakeholders and promote BAO's values. Only the Communications Officer can post, edit and respond to inquiries on behalf of the BAO.

The BAO's social media accounts:

- Are managed by the Communications Officer;
- Represent the BAO and its values;
- Require content approval by CEO prior to posting; and
- Are reviewed and monitored by the Communications Officer;

Guidelines for BAO's social media accounts:

- When an employee is at an event representing the BAO, event updates may be posted on the BAO social media accounts and not on personal accounts;
- Team photos at an event should be forwarded to the Communications Officer who will determine if appropriate to post on BAO social media accounts;
- First posts will be made by the Communications Officer, and employees are welcome to share or re-tweet these posts; and
- Communication will be in simple language with an engaging and friendly tone.

3.0 Employee Personal Social Media Accounts:

Employees who have personal social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest and/or Snap Chat are required to follow certain guidelines in maintaining their social media account(s). Employees are to use their best judgment when using social media, both personally and professionally. When in doubt, seek clarification from your manager or Communications Officer.

Employees of the BAO must comply with all employment related obligations in both their personal and professional activity, including standards for workplace behaviour, privacy, confidentiality, conflict of interest, nonpartisan services and political activity. These obligations apply to social media use, even on accounts unaffiliated to the workplace. The BAO, as the employer, must comply with legislation like the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Occupational Health and Safety Act that regulate workplace behaviour.

A personal social media account:

- Does not represent an employee's official role as a BAO representative;
- Does not require the managers approval;
- Is managed and is populated by the employee; and
- Is for the employee's own personal use.

Guidelines for a personal social media account:

- Do not reveal confidential/private or personal information gained through work;
- Do not use visuals (images, logos, etc.) that suggest the account represents the BAO;
- Do not compromise or appear to compromise the integrity of the BAO;
- Be consistent with an employee's obligations as a staff member of the BAO, including conflict of interest and political activity rules;
- If possible include the tagline "views expressed are mine and don't necessarily reflect those of my employer" or "Opinions are my own" to clear BAO of any liabilities;
- Reconsider posting material if any doubt exists;
- Do not include profanities or disparaging comments;
- Do not include the use of visuals with nudity or violence, or of a sexual nature;
- Do not post comments containing controversial opinions on politics, religion or other sensitive issues; and
- Endeavor to use correct spelling and grammar.

There is no requirement to talk about your work for the BAO. However, many employees are proud of the projects and initiatives they have helped develop and many have an interest in sharing their achievements including their job title and place of work. Employees should wait until BAO announcements are made by the Communications Officer/CEO before sharing anything on their personal social media accounts.

The determination of appropriate social media use is based on specific circumstances. The following scenarios will help guide the use of an employee’s personal account:

Examples of appropriate use:	Examples of inappropriate use:
Sharing a link to an official announcement on the launch day of a project or program after a BAO post on social media.	Sharing or posting details about upcoming legislation, decision made by the BAO Board, a new process or procedure or any other information that has not been released to the public.
Staff may publish their name, job title, and affiliation to the BAO on social media networks and must amend or remove the affiliation immediately once that affiliation changes or concludes	Re-tweeting a critical comment or gossip about the personal life of an employee of BAO or the Ministry, a licensee, a Board member or a public figure from the government such as a Minister or the Premier.
Reposting stakeholder or third-party content that is positive in nature.	Making false or inaccurate statements about a BAO policy or government policy.
Reposting or sharing a good news article about the BAO or the government.	Reposting or sharing an article that disparages, criticizes or makes negative comments about the BAO or the government.

Etiquette and Engagement:

Employees will make reasonable efforts:

- Not to engage in controversial conversations on social media; and
- Not to respond to questions, queries, complaints directed to them as employees in a private message.

Confidentiality:

Employees shall not:

- Post any private, confidential or embargoed information gained through their work with the BAO;
- Post any activities that occur in the workplace that would in any way portray a negative work environment (e.g. venting about your co-worker); and
- Collect, post or share private or personal information about other employees or photos of individuals without proper permission and approval of the individual. For photos or videos of individuals, proper permissions and approvals could include consent forms.

If you are unsure about what permissions are required or whether something is deemed private/personal, please speak to your manager or refer to the BAO’s Access and Privacy Policy.

Political Activity:

Employees should not engage in political activity on social media. If you are uncertain about political activity, please consult your manager for more information.

4.0 Policy Enforcement

Staff who breach this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.