

Office of the

INTEGRITY COMMISSIONER

Use of Social Media by Members of Council

July 5, 2016

Presentation to City Council

Purpose of bulletin

- To clarify how the Code of Conduct guides a member's use of social media.
- To assist members, staff and the public to understand how the Code of Conduct will be interpreted in relation to social media use.

Principles that underpin guidance



- Social media:
 - provides members with a valuable and convenient tool to communicate, inform and engage Torontonians about City Council work and members' activities to represent and advocate for ward interests
 - allows for efficient and direct engagement between members and Torontonians.
- When used in accordance with the Code of Conduct, social media enables members to showcase their diligent and conscientious service to their constituents and can help to improve trust and confidence in City Council and the City of Toronto.

Principles that underpin guidance



- Successful social media use requires authenticity, interactivity and a blending of the personal with the professional.
- Members must ensure their use of social media is mindful of, and consistent with, the Code of Conduct, legislation and City policies.
- Use of a member's title in a social media profile provides legitimacy and authority.
- A member's title can only be used for City purposes.
- City logos, staff, volunteers, computers, smart phones, services, and email accounts are City resources and can only be used for City purposes.
- Consumers of social media control whether to follow, friend or connect with members on social media.

When is caution required?

- When a member's social media account:
 - uses any toronto.ca email address as a point of contact for registration purposes;
 - identifies the member as a current member of Toronto City Council;
 - is publicized on the member's constituency website, the City's website, business cards, newsletters or any publication eligible to be paid for out of the *Constituency Services and Office Budget*;
 - uses the logo of the City of Toronto; or
 - is managed using City resources including computers, smart phones or tablets, City staff, the member's staff or volunteers or contract services eligible to be paid out of the *Constituency Services and Office Budget*.

What do you need to be cautious about? (para 15)



Subject to exceptions (set out on the next slide):

- Do not promote any candidate or political party **in any election.**
- In general, do not promote or appear to promote any third party interest including events, products, services or goods.

What are the exceptions? (para 17)

- Members may post the following content as long as it is occasional, voluntary, unsolicited and otherwise in accordance with the Code:
 - content that raises awareness of local events and activities;
 - content that raises awareness of federal and provincial government programs;
 - content that publicizes a member's attendance at a ceremony, event or activity that is otherwise permissible under the Code; or
 - content that publicizes the member's interactions with constituents, including local businesses.

Do not mix your campaign with your Council work



- Option 1. **The best practice.** Maintain separate accounts, like many did last election. (IB para 19a).
- Option 2. Maintain a single account but (IB para 19b):
 - On January 1 (will be May 1 if amendments to MEA pass) cease producing and distributing any publication that includes a social media handle
 - On date you file nomination papers:
 - Remove reference to City of Toronto, logo or images, reference to member's title from the account
 - Ensure the account registration information does not include any toronto.ca email address or City of Toronto phone number
 - Remove references to the account on the member's website or the City of Toronto website
 - Ensure that members' office staff do not have a role in relation to the account
 - Notify followers that the account will be used for election purposes (notification to use the social media forum, *e.g.* a Tweet or Facebook status update).

Other obligations

- **Confidentiality.** Do not use social media during *in camera* or confidential meetings
- **Role of Staff.** Do not use social media to engage in criticism of City staff.
- **Decorum.** Do not become involved in bullying, flaming or shaming of other social media users.