



MOHOKARE
LOCAL MUNICIPALITY



P. O. Box 20, Zastron, 995
Tel: 051 673 960
Fax: 051 673 155
E-mail: info@mohokare.gov.za
www.mohokare.gov.za

DRAFT SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

MOHOKARE MUNICIPALITY

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POLICY CONTENTS

Item No	Item	Page
1	INTRODUCTION	4
2	DEFINITIONS	4
3	PURPOSE	5
4	SCOPE	5
5	POLICY STATEMENT	5
6	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	6
7	STATUTORY AUTHORITY	7
8	POLICY PROVISIONS	7
9	REQUIREMENTS FOR POSTING CONTENT	7- 8
10	PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES	8-9
11	REQUIREMENTS FOR USER-GENERATED CONTENT	9
12	ENFORCEMENT OF THE POLICY	10
13	REVIEW	10
14	NON – ADHERENCE TO THE POLICY	10
15	IMPLEMENTATION DATE	10

1. INTRODUCTION

Mohokare Municipality recognizes the revolution of social media as a mechanism of communication. This provides an opportunity for two-way communication between the municipality, Community, citizens, partners and stakeholders thereby increasing the frequency and speed of engagement and enhancing communication.

To optimize the use of social media it must be used responsibly by and adhere to the professional and legal obligations mandated by relevant regulatory legislation and the standard code of conduct governing the municipality, municipal employees, councilors and stakeholders.

There are many diverse platforms providing social media networks in our society that will be encompassed in this policy but not only limited to those listed below:

- Google
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Mxit
- LinkedIn
- Blogs
- Virtual worlds
- Wikis

2. DEFINITIONS

In this Policy, unless the context indicates otherwise –

(a) Policy means the Social Media Policy

(b) Social Media an umbrella term that encompasses websites that integrate technology, social interaction, content creation and dissemination.

(c) Community in relation to the Municipality means that body of people comprising

- The residents of the Municipality;
- The ratepayers of the Municipality;
- Any civic organizations and non – governmental, private sector or labor organizations or bodies which are involved in local affairs of the Municipality;

(d) Councilor means a member of the Council;

(e) Municipal Manager means the person appointed in terms of section 54 A of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000;

(f) Systems Act means the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of 2000 as amended.

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Social Media Policy is to ensure accuracy, consistency, integrity and protection of the identity and image of Mohokare Local Municipality and to also ensure employees understand their obligation when using social media, importance of managing the risk associated with such use by providing for a set of standards and social media content.

This policy is for the mutual protection of the municipality and its employees.

4. SCOPE

This Policy applies to all users of the municipality's information system, municipal information, and any third party entrusted with municipal information. It also applies to expression of opinions and comments by municipal employees on social media networks as illustrated in section 1 above, which may in any manner link employees to the municipality, its partners and stakeholders.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

The phenomenal growth in digital technology and the rise of social media platforms over the past few years have revolutionised the way in which people communicate and share information. Mohokare Local Municipality embraces and recognizes the fundamental changes and opportunities that social media platforms provide.

Mohokare Municipality's policy is to encourage its employees to use new business tools in a responsible manner to enhance the municipality's communication and ultimately to serve the community.

The policy is derived to empower its employees to understand both the advantages and potential risks of social media as to enhance their use of social media and avoid or mitigate the risks inherent in social media.

This policy is not intended to limit, restrict or monitor social media activities outside work, using personal computers and other devices. However the line between public, private, personal and professional is often blurred in social media. By using Mohokare Local Municipality title, identifying oneself as the municipality's employee or by other affiliation with the municipality, stating or implying that one's statements are official and endorsed by the municipality or posting non-public Mohokare content or other information acquired at work, the interests and reputation of the organization are potentially affected.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER

- 5.1.1 Responsible for approving the establishment of social media accounts and ensuring that those who in an official capacity establish and post content to such social media sites comply with the terms of this policy.
- 5.1.2 Responsible for delegating the responsibility for social media and Web content and monitoring to staff members who will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the policy.
- 5.1.3 Responsible for reviewing and approving contractual terms and conditions of social media sites as well as approving social media provider list.
- 5.1.4 Provide training on intellectual property, privacy and code of conduct and related matters on the social media policy.

5.2 INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY UNIT (OFFICE OF THE MUNICIPAL MANAGER)

- 5.2.1 Is responsible for maintaining the server, storage and backups that host social media activities within the information technology environment.
- 5.2.2 Responsible for reviewing and approving the privacy policies and social media providers prior to establishment of the municipality's accounts on social media sites ensuring capability with the municipality's policies working with Corporate Services Directorate.

5.3 CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

- 5.3.1 Responsible for maintaining a website and social media network registry of the municipalities social media sites on the websites and for archiving information contained on such sites in accordance with applicable records management policies and archival standards.
- 5.3.2 Provides legal advice, in conjunction with the Municipal Manager's office in connection with legal issues arising from the posting of content on such social media sites.

5.4 MUNICIPAL COMMUNICATION UNIT

- 5.4.1 The person who is designated by the municipal manager or his or her designee, to maintain and monitor the social media network and Website and is the point of contact for communication and is listed as a point of contact on the website and social network registry.

5.4.2 Responsible for ensuring compliance with contractual terms and conditions imposed by the specific sites on which they have opened accounts and for which they are responsible.

5.4.3 Provide current information on social media practices and administrative procedures.

5.4.4 Responsible to ensure technologies is used for business purposes within the framework such as: computers, networks and telecommunication devices, etc.

7. STATUTORY AUTHORISATION

This Policy complies with the following:

- a. Social media legal implications guideline, 2012
- b. Department of Government Communication and Information system- Republic of South Africa: social media policy guidelines, 2011
- c. Local Government :Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000: chp 4: 17,18 and 21 , Sec 1 and Sec 2

8. POLICY PROVISIONS

Social media accounts administered by authorized employees should be used as part of a strategy for supplementing and enhancing contentment available on the Municipality's website, reaching and engaging existing and new audiences and carrying out the organizations strategic plan.

Social media accounts should not be used to create obstacles to public access to the municipality's content which should continue to be posted on the municipality's primary website.

Once the decision is made to open and maintain a social media account in the name of Mohokare Local Municipality such accounts must be established and maintained in accordance with this policy and administrative procedures, in line with Information Technology and legal prescripts.

9. REQUIREMENTS FOR MOHOKARE MUNICIPALITY POSTING CONTENT ON APPROVED SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

As a Municipality, the measure of success for any social media tool or application is to allow engagement with internal and external stakeholders by facilitating the following:

- Communication
- Disseminating information;
- Interaction; and/or education

9.1.1 Content must not be posted that is unrelated to the municipality's mission, strategic plan, and not in line with the objects of local government, contains personal attack, is abusive, threatening, unlawful, harassing, discriminatory, libelous, false, obscene, pornographic or infringes on the privacy or other rights of any third party.

- 9.1.2 Content must not be posted that is confidential, pre-decisional, internal or otherwise not intended for public dissemination.
- 9.1.3 Content must not be posted if it violates a person's privacy or includes personally identifiable information unless a prior consent has been obtained from the owner of the personally identifiable information.
- 9.1.4 Prior to posting content on the municipality's social media site, the municipal communication unit is responsible for ensuring that the content is free and clear of any restrictions and for checking necessary provenance and other related records that might indicate restrictions.
- 9.1.5 Contents with known restrictions , such as copyright, trademark , privacy , contractual or other restrictions must not be posted on the municipality's social media accounts unless prior permission from the rights –holders(s) before posting on the municipalities social media site.
- 9.1.6 An employee authorized to make statements on behalf of the municipality using the approved social media sites for purposes related to their employment must clearly indicate such authority.

10. PERSONAL SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES

- 10.1 Personal social media activities may not be conducted on the municipality's computers, telecommunication devices and networks. Official email addresses may not be used to set up a personal social media account, however employees and others covered by this policy may use their official title, Mohokare affiliation or official email address for professional identification on a personal social media such as (e.g. LinkedIn) consistent with the requirements of the organizations standard code of conduct.
- 10.2 When publishing content to a personal social media account, employees and others covered by this policy must avoid stating, implying or creating the impression that they are speaking in an official capacity on behalf of the municipality or that their activity is endorsed by the municipality.
- 10.3 When posting comments that pertain to the municipality, an effective way of distinguishing personal views from matters that fall within the municipality's duties is to include a disclaimer in connection with personal social media activities in order to make it clear that the views expressed are personal views and not those of the municipality.
- 10.4 Employees and others covered by this policy who are acting in their personal capacity must not disclose information derived from the municipality's employment that is privileged , confidential , private, sensitive , non-public , pre-decisional or in violation of any rights such as copy right and standard code of conduct.

10.5 Municipal logos and other branding symbols may not be used in personal social media posts without explicit permission in writing from the municipal manager. An employee can be held legally responsible for all comments that they post on their personal social media platforms.

10.6 Anonymously posting information about the municipality is strongly discouraged, as are using pseudonyms or false screen names with all social media activities regardless whether acting in a personal or professional capacity.

10.7 Councilors Activities and Responsibilities

10.7.1 Councilors may not without the permission of the municipal council disclose confidential information of the Council to any unauthorized person.

10.7.2 At all times act in the best interest of the municipality and in such a way that the credibility and integrity of the municipality are not compromised. Publishing content on personal social media municipality must not to be implicated.

10.7.3 Municipal logos and other branding symbols may not be used on social media for personal activities.

When posting comments that pertain to the municipality Councilors should be cautious, and such comments should not bring the municipality into disrepute.

10.7.4 Councilors must refrain from posting on behalf of the municipality if the information is not approved for public knowledge.

11. REQUIREMENTS FOR USER- GENERATED CONTENT ON MOHOKARE MUNICIPALITY SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

11.1 For all official municipalities social media accounts, whether housed on municipal server or operated and controlled by a third party(e.g. facebook) the municipal communication unit is responsible for monitoring all user –generated content at intervals determined by the unit (a) but not later than one business day after posting (b) delete content that violates the municipalities social media policy (c) respond to questions credibly and professionally (d) engage the community in ways appropriate to the purpose , terms and conditions of the site.

11.2 All personally identifiable information received from social media users must be treated in a manner that is consistent with this policy.

11.3 When a social media account under the operation and control of the municipality invites user comments and content, such account shall notify users that their comments are monitored, content may be removed and their activity on the account is subject to the municipality's terms.

12. ENFORCEMENT OF THE POLICY

- 12.1 The Policy comes into operation immediately upon its approval by the Council sitting on or at a date determined by Council resolution.

13. REVIEW

- 13.1 The Policy will be reviewed annually or in special instances regularly and to the extent necessary when there is new technology development and technological interface and controls.
- 13.2 Ensure amendments and new policy documents to the existing policy are approved by council.

14. NON- ADHERENCE TO THE POLICY

Violation of this policy may include:

- (a) Disciplinary action in accordance to the SALGBC disciplinary procedure and code collective agreement and Human Resource policies and procedures.
- (b) Illegal activities will be reported to law enforcement authorities for prosecution or punishment as provided by law.
- (c) In terms of Councilors, action will be taken in line with schedule 1 , section 14 of Local Government : Municipal Systems Act , 2000.

15. IMPLEMENTATION DATE

This policy is effective as at the date of approval of Council.