

THE TOWNSHIP OF JAMES

BY-LAW NO 26-16

BEING A BY-LAW TO ADOPT A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY.

WHEREAS Section 5(3) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25, as amended, provides that a municipal power shall be exercised by by-law unless the municipality is specifically authorized to do otherwise;

AND WHEREAS Council of the Township of James considers it desirable to Establish guidelines for the creation, administration, and responsible use of municipal social media accounts:

AND WHEREAS Council wishes to ensure that municipal social media accounts are used in a consistent and responsible manner to share information with the public;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of The Township of James enacts as follows:

THAT the Social Media Policy attached hereto as **Schedule "A"** be and is hereby adopted.

THAT The CAO Clerk-Treasurer may correct clerical, typographical, or grammatical errors that do not alter the intent or substance of the by-law.

THAT this by-law shall come into force and effect upon the final passing thereof.

READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME AND FINALLY PASSED IN OPEN COUNCIL THIS 18TH DAY OF OCTOBER 14, 2026.

Rodger Donaldson/Reeve

Teri-Lynn Jobb/CAO-Clerk Treasurer

SCHEDULE "A"
ADOPT A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
(Forms part of By-law No. 26-16)

Township of James
By-law No.

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1. Short Title

This policy may be referred to as the "Social Media Policy".

2. Purpose

The Township of James recognizes that social media can be an effective tool for sharing municipal information and promoting community awareness of programs, services, and events.

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the creation, administration, and responsible use of municipal social media accounts.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Township staff
- Members of Council
- Members of municipal committees or boards
- Any individual authorized to administer or post on a municipal social media account.

These individuals are referred to in this policy as Authorized Administrators.

4. Creation of Municipal Social Media Accounts

Social media accounts representing the Township of James may only be created with approval of Council by resolution.

Requests for new accounts shall be submitted to the CAO/Clerk-Treasurer and must identify:

- the purpose of the account
- the department, board, or committee responsible
- the proposed Primary and Alternate Administrators.

The creation of additional municipal social media accounts is expected to be limited and used only where there is a clear municipal purpose.

5. Purpose of Municipal Social Media Accounts

Municipal social media accounts are intended primarily to share information with the public.

Approved Social Media Accounts include:

Township of James

Used to share municipal notices, public information, service updates, and Council related announcements.

Elk Lake Recreation Committee

Used to promote recreational activities, community events, and general community information in the Elk Lake area. The Recreation Committee may establish additional posting guidelines appropriate to the operation of its social media group.

Elk Lake Public Library

The Elk Lake Public Library maintains its own social media accounts under the authority of the Library Board.

Elk Lake Volunteer Fire Department

Used to share safety tips, seasonal reminders, recruitment, training, funding announcements, and general public outreach.

6. Appointment of Account Administrators

Each municipal social media account shall have;

- one Primary Administrator, and
- at least one Alternate Administrator.

Administrators shall be appointed by Council through the Township’s Appointments By law or by resolution of Council.

Administrators are responsible for:

- managing the social media account
- ensuring content complies with this policy
- maintaining appropriate conduct when posting content.

7. Use of Municipal Social Media

Municipal social media accounts are intended to;

- share municipal notices and announcements
- promote municipal programs, services, and events
- share public safety information
- provide general community information.

Social media platforms are not official channels for submitting service requests, complaints, or formal correspondence.

Residents requiring assistance should contact the municipal office directly.

8. Public Comments and Moderation

The Township may enable or disable comments on any municipal social media platform at its discretion.

Where comments are enabled, the Township reserves the right to remove content that:

- contains profanity or offensive language
- includes harassment or personal attacks
- promotes discrimination or hate
- contains threats toward individuals or organizations
- includes confidential or personal information
- promotes unrelated commercial advertising
- encourages illegal activity
- is unrelated to the topic of the original post.

The Township is not obligated to monitor or respond to comments posted on municipal social media accounts.



9. Content Guidelines

Content shared on municipal social media accounts must:

- be respectful and professional
- be accurate and factual
- respect privacy and confidentiality requirements
- comply with applicable legislation and municipal policies.

Confidential municipal information must not be shared through social media.

10. Personal Use of Social Media

This policy does not regulate personal social media use by staff, Council members, or volunteers. However, individuals must avoid posting content that could reasonably be interpreted as representing the Township of James unless authorized to do so. Individuals must not express opinions which claim to be the opinion of the Township of James. Any personal blog or comment should contain a disclaimer that the views expressed on it are personal views of the author only. Individuals must not disclose confidential information or engage in conduct that could harm the reputation of the Township or its operations. Sensitive, Private or Confidential Business Information means information, knowledge or data of any nature and in any form relating to the past, current or prospective business or operations that, at the time(s) concerned is non-public information. Personal opinions must not be presented as official municipal positions.

11. Administration and Enforcement

The CAO/Clerk-Treasurer is responsible for the administration and enforcement of this policy. Failure to comply with this policy may result in:

- removal of administrative access to municipal social media accounts
- disciplinary action in accordance with municipal policies
- removal from committee or volunteer roles where applicable.

12. Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed by the Township periodically and at least once every five (5) years, or sooner if required.