



SUNDAYS RIVER VALLEY  
MUNICIPALITY

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to employees of the Sundays River Valley Municipality (SRVM) with regards to their interaction, engagement, participation and conduct on social media and online platforms and during online conversations.

## **2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

2.1. The policy is applicable to all SRVM employees, temporary and permanent, including members of the Council. For the purpose of this policy the term “employees” will encompass all the above-mentioned individuals.

2.2. The policy should further be read in conjunction with other relevant legislation and SRVM policies, particularly the Code of Conduct, Communications Policy, ICT policies and the SRVM disciplinary code.

2.3. The policy is applicable to SRVM employees using social media for official SRVM communication purposes as well as to SRVM employees utilising social media in their private capacity regardless of whether the employee’s employment or affiliation with the SRVM has been identified or made known in their social media interactions.

2.4. The policy should act as a guideline to employees as to what is expected from them when participating in online conversations and engaging on social media platforms.

2.5. For the purpose of this policy online platforms should be seen to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information or opinions with others in a digital manner.

2.6. Social Media refers to any tool or service which facilitates online conversations. Examples of these include Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, LinkedIn and Pinterest, among others.

2.7. Employees failing to comply with the provisions of this policy are in breach of the SRVM disciplinary code and may be guilty of misconduct.

## **3. GENERAL PRINCIPLES GUIDING SOCIAL MEDIA AND ONLINE PLATFORM USAGE AND ENGAGEMENT**

3.1. SRVM has the right to access, observe, review, interrogate and/or utilise any content, information or opinions made available by employees in their personal capacity on any social media or digital platforms which are in the public domain, for any purpose/proceedings which the SRVM sees fit.

3.2. SRVM may request the removal of any content on employee’s social media pages which are found to be in contravention of any SRVM policy.

3.3. Only those individuals authorised in the Communications Policy to represent SRVM may post or share information on behalf of SRVM on all social media and digital platforms.

3.4. Social media platforms, pages or accounts which use SRVM’s name or which utilise or represent the SRVM brand in any manner may only be created and managed by the Communications officer unless explicit permission has been given to the individual to do so.



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3.5. Content and images intended for internal use only are not to be forwarded, shared, posted or disseminated via social media or otherwise.

#### **4. EMPLOYEE CONDUCT ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL PLATFORMS**

The following principles apply to employees during their interaction and engagement on social media and digital platforms when used for official SRVM communication purposes as well as during their personal use of such platforms.

##### **ALL EMPLOYEES;**

4.1 Should use their best judgment when posting, sharing, commenting or liking any content to ensure that it is neither inappropriate nor harmful to SRVM, its employees, stakeholders or customers.

4.2. Should note that, although not an exhaustive list, examples of prohibited social media content include posting, sharing or liking content or images that are defamatory, racist, sexist, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libellous, or that can create a hostile work environment, or place SRVM in disrepute.

4.3. Are not to publish, post or release any information that is considered confidential or not public. Should employees have questions as to what is considered confidential, they are to consult with their Line Manager.

4.4. Should always seek permission before posting images or information on former or current employees, vendors, suppliers, stakeholders or clients.

4.5. Are encouraged to follow and share official social media posts of SRVM. When adding comments employees are expected to use sound judgment in not being counterproductive to the messaging of the municipality. Any concerns or criticisms over any official social media posts are to be addressed with the Communications officer directly offline.

4.6. May not make use of SRVM logo or brand on their personal social media pages or posts unless given written permission to do so by the Municipal Manager.

4.7. May not imply nor infer that their comments, posts or opinions shared on social media are the official comments of SRVM or were made as a representative of the SRVM.

#### **5. CREATING AWARENESS OF THE POLICY**

5.1. It is the responsibility of the supervisors to ensure that all employees are made aware of and receive appropriate training regarding the policy.

5.2. SRVM will conduct awareness training to educate supervisors in order to place them in a position to further conduct awareness sessions to employees under their supervision.

5.3. The policy will be distributed via emails and will be on all visible walls around the municipal buildings to further ensure awareness of the policy.



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## 6. COMPLIANCE

All persons referred to in paragraph 2.1 of Section 2: Policy: Social Media–

6.1. Are obliged to read this policy and ensure that they are familiar with, understand and will conform to this policy. Responsibility for ensuring that all employees and officials are aware of this policy lies with all heads of departments.

6.2. Who have doubts regarding a questionable situation that might arise relating to their usage of social media and online platforms should immediately consult her or his supervisor who will secure clarity from the Communications Unit.

## 7. TRANSGRESSION

7.1 Transgression of this policy will attract final written warnings or dismissal following a formal disciplinary procedure. The penalty will depend on the seriousness of the transgression.

Transgression	Severity	Penalty
Expressing 'private' opinion/s on social media that are highly offensive and incompatible with the RVM's values. Expressing unauthorised and disgraceful comments on social media that seriously taint the SRVM's public image.	Very Serious	Dismissible

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Approved by Council	22 September 2021
Signature Speaker	S H Rune 



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