**Social Media Guidelines for Employees**

These guidelines have been developed in accordance with Treasury Board Secretariat’s *Guideline for External Use of Web 2.0* to assist Statistics Canada employees in their use of social media and to help them comply with related legislation and policies.

**Usage Categories**

**Official Use**  
Use of an official departmental social media account for departmental communication purposes.

**Personal Use**  
Use of a personal social media account for purposes not related to work.

**Professional Networking Use**  
Use of a personal social media account for non-official communication purposes related to work, including participation in professional associations, knowledge sharing and career development.

Below, you will find guidelines on how to engage and behave in the social media sphere as a Statistics Canada and Government of Canada employee, based on the three usage categories identified above. The guidelines should be taken into consideration regardless of whether you are engaging in social media at work or at home.

**1. Official Use**

The official Statistics Canada social media accounts are managed by Communications Division following an official interaction protocol, which identifies standards, escalation and approval process for all comments or questions related to Statistics Canada, its activities, programs, products and services.

Employees are not allowed to reply to posts directed at Statistics Canada or speak on behalf of the Agency. Communications Division is responsible for replying to posts directed at Statistics Canada in social media venues.

For more information on how Statistics Canada is using social media, please see the Guidelines on the Use of Social Media at Statistics Canada.

**2. Personal Use and Professional Networking Use**

The following guidelines apply to employees when they:

* use social media on Statistics Canada's computer network; or
* identify themselves as Statistics Canada or Government of Canada employees in their personal or professional use of social media.

**2.1 Be professional**

Remember that as a public servant, your conduct online reflects upon the image of the Government of Canada at all times, not just during working hours. This is particularly true if the Government of Canada could be identified as your employer through your use of social media.

Also, every Government of Canada employee has responsibilities under the [*Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service*](http://icn-rci.statcan.ca/07/07p/07p1/07p1_019b_e.htm). The code stipulates that public service employees must ensure that “they exemplify, in all their actions and behaviours, the values of public service.”

If you have questions about an online activity in which you want to engage, or if you are unsure about whether or not a topic, post or comment is appropriate, please contact the [Web2Social team](mailto:Web2Social) in Communications Division.

**2.2 Be responsible**

Always keep in mind that you are personally responsible for the content you publish online through social media and can be held accountable for any inappropriate comment.

Be aware that the content you post is visible to the entire world and will remain public for a very long time. Before engaging in social media activities, be sure to understand the social media environment and its associated risks.

**2.3 Take ownership**

Clearly state that the content you publish is based on your personal sentiment and that you are not speaking on behalf of Statistics Canada. Consider using a disclaimer such as: “This is my personal opinion and does not necessarily represent the views of Statistics Canada.” However, it is important to note that such a disclaimer does not absolve you of your obligations as a public servant.

You must not use any Statistics Canada or Government of Canada corporate symbols (e.g. logos) or signature in your use of social media. They are for official use only.

**2.4 Be respectful**

Don’t engage in any conduct or use any language that would not be acceptable in the workplace. You should also show proper consideration for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.

Respect the opinions of others and protect their privacy. Don’t post pictures, cite, reference or share information related to other individuals (e.g. colleagues) without their explicit consent.

**2.5 Protect the brand**

When you express yourself in social media on issues related to, or about, Statistics Canada, you contribute to the public perception of the Agency. Never publish a post that contains profanity or abuse toward Statistics Canada or the Government of Canada.

If you publish information about Statistics Canada or the Government of Canada, ensure that the information is publicly available (e.g. published on the website) and wherever possible, clearly indicate the source.

**2.6 Remember that confidentiality is important**

Confidentiality is the most important value at Statistics Canada and it should be reflected in your personal use and professional networking of social media. Respect the oath that you took. Stay informed about [confidentiality requirements and best practices](http://confidentiality-confidentialite/DesktopDefault.aspx?lang=en&tabid=1) and take the appropriate measures to ensure that confidential statistical information remains secure.

**2.7 Don’t forget your day job**

You should make sure that your online activities during work hours do not interfere with your job and its related commitments. To that effect, you are encouraged to use social media during your personal time (lunch and breaks).

Don’t forget that all employees have an obligation to adhere to Statistics Canada’s [Network Use Policy Agreement](http://informatics/E_Side/infrastructure/services/Network_Services/Net_Use/Net_Use_Policy.asp).

**Contact Information**

For more information, please read the Frequently Asked Questions for Employees or contact the [Web2Social team](mailto:Web2Social).