



Example: Social Media Guidelines

Prepared by Statistics Canada

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Rules of engagement

Statistics Canada reserves the right to edit, refuse or remove any post, question or comment that does not comply with the rules listed below. Users acting contrary to these rules may be temporarily or permanently excluded from Statistics Canada's social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Reddit) or its online discussion platforms (Chat with an Expert, StatCan Blog, Question of the Month).

Be respectful

Your username, post, question and/or comment **must not** contain:

- profanity or discrimination on the basis of, for example, race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, or sexual orientation;
- text written in all capital letters, which can be difficult to read and might be interpreted as yelling.

Be accountable

Your post, question and/or comment **must** be:

- relevant to Statistics Canada or the subject matter of the discussion topics;
- in either English or French;
- coherent and intelligible;
- original (it cannot be excerpted from another source);
- without announcement from labour or political organizations;
- without reference to any commercial activity such as advertising or publicity;
- considerate of your privacy and the privacy of others (do not include your phone number or email address in your post, question and/or comment).

Be patient

Statistics Canada cannot commit to replying to every post, message or comment, but will engage in conversations when appropriate and as frequently as possible, in a timely manner.

If you participate in a chat session on the Chat with an Expert module:

- Please do not submit your question or comment more than once. All questions and comments may be subject to review by a Statistics Canada moderator prior to posting. Participants will be notified by email if their question or comment fails to adhere to the above rules of engagement.
- The experts will be responding to as many questions as possible within the time allowed. All questions that remain unanswered at the end of the session will be answered by email in the following business days. The full transcript of each chat session will be available on the website shortly after the session closes.

If you participate in an AMA (Ask Me Anything) on Reddit:

- Please do not submit your question or comment more than once.

- The Statistics Canada experts participating in this event will be responding to as many questions as possible, within the time allocated to the AMA. Experts will not address questions or comments that are deemed offensive, inappropriate or irrelevant to the discussion topics.
- Questions or comments from online users must also follow the rules of engagement established in the subreddit in which the AMA is being conducted.

Please note:

- Statistics Canada respects the [Official Languages Act](#) and is committed to responding to any questions or comments in the official language (English or French) in which it was asked.

Social Media Terms of Use

These Terms of Use provide details as to how Statistics Canada will interact with the public on its social media platforms. Statistics Canada uses these social media platforms as a communication and outreach channel to reach and engage with Canadians.

The terms and conditions detailed below are specific to Statistics Canada. The [terms and conditions of the Government of Canada](#) also apply to Statistics Canada.

Accounts

Statistics Canada has official accounts on the following social media platforms:

- [Facebook](#)
 - English: [Statistics Canada](#)
 - French: [Statistique Canada](#)
- [Instagram](#)
 - English: [@statcan_eng](#)
 - French: [@statcan_fra](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
 - Bilingual: [Statistics Canada](#)
- [Reddit](#)
 - Bilingual: [u/StatCanada](#)
- [Twitter](#)
 - English: [@StatCan_eng](#)
 - French: [@StatCan_fra](#)
- [YouTube](#)
 - English: [Statistics Canada](#)
 - French: [Statistique Canada](#)

Content and frequency

By following Statistics Canada's social media accounts ("following," "liking" or "subscribing"), you can expect to see:

- interesting facts on various aspects of Canada,
- information on survey and census collection activities,
- information on new products and services,
- information about recruitment at Statistics Canada,
- announcements on new website features,
- Canadian statistics depicted using various formats,
- interesting information about some of our employees who are bringing innovation and modernization to Canada's national statistical organization
- and much more...

The number of posts published will vary depending on the number of publications, reports and analyses being released by the agency.

Engagement

Statistics Canada welcomes feedback and ideas that are constructive and relevant from its followers. All comments will be read and any emerging themes or helpful suggestions will be passed along to the appropriate area in the organization.

Statistics Canada cannot commit to replying to every post, message or comment, but will engage in conversations when appropriate and as frequently as possible, in a timely manner. Questions and comments will be handled on a case-by-case basis when they are received: on posts published on our account, through private messages or via direct mentions.

Statistics Canada does not endorse any of the views expressed in comments posted by users, and in no way verifies or confirms the accuracy of those comments. Questions or comments that violate its [Rules of engagement](#) may result in the post being deleted and/or the user being blocked from the account.

Availability

Statistics Canada recognizes that the Internet is a 24/7 medium, and questions, comments, tags, and direct messages are welcome at any time. Moderating of the accounts will occur during regular office hours, Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., EST. Questions posted after business hours or on weekends and statutory holidays will be addressed as early as possible.

Statistics Canada is committed to serving its clients in a prompt, reliable, courteous, and fair manner. Depending on the nature of the enquiry, response times will vary. To ensure prompt service on social media, Statistics Canada will try to acknowledge receipt and/or answer direct questions within 1 business day.

Social media platforms are managed by third parties, and as such, Statistics Canada is not responsible for a lack of service caused by the platforms becoming unresponsive or unavailable.

Liking, following, and subscribing

There is no implied endorsement of an account, channel, page, individual, group or site should a Statistics Canada social media account decide to:

- "follow", or some other similar feature, another social media account;
- share content from another user (e.g., re-tweeting, reposting or linking);
- use a "like", or other similar feature on content, posted by another user or account.

Statistics Canada may use the "Like" function on publications that contain information that is relevant to its mandate or that share its data.

Statistics Canada will only "Follow" the accounts of other Government of Canada institutions, key partners and other statistical organizations publishing information that is relevant to its mandate.

Accessibility

As part of the Government of Canada, Statistics Canada is committed to achieving a high standard of accessibility. Social media platforms are third-party service providers and are not bound by the Government of Canada policies for web accessibility.

If you have any problems accessing the information on our social media accounts, [contact us](#) to receive the information in an appropriate format.

Copyright

Information posted by Statistics Canada on social media is subject to the [Copyright Act](#). For more information, visit our [Ownership and usage of content provided on this site](#) webpage.

Official languages

Statistics Canada respects the [Official Languages Act](#) and is committed to ensuring that information is equally available in both English and French.

Posts will be published simultaneously in both official languages on each platform. Questions and comments which require a response will be answered in the official language of origin.

Links shared by Statistics Canada on its social media accounts may direct users to sites of organizations or other entities that are not subject to the [Official Languages Act](#) and that these sources may only be available in the language in which they were written. These links are provided solely for your convenience and Statistics Canada is not responsible for the information found through them. If linking to external web content that isn't available in the language of the current page, a mention of "(English only)" or "(French only)" will be added after the link.

Most social media platforms are available in several languages, including English and French. To change the display language, see your account settings.

Privacy

Statistics Canada is committed to respecting the privacy of individuals. The agency's official social media accounts are hosted by third-party service providers, and are outside the control of the Government of Canada. We encourage you to read the Terms of Use for the platform(s) you are interested in.

- Facebook's [Terms of Service](#) / [Data Use Policy](#)
- Instagram's [Terms of Use](#) / [Data Policy](#)
- LinkedIn's [User Agreement](#) / [Privacy Policy](#)
- Reddit's [User Agreement](#) / [Privacy Policy](#)
- Twitter's [Terms of Service](#)
- YouTube's [Terms of Service](#)

Information shared with Statistics Canada on social media is subject to the provisions of the [Access to Information Act](#) and the [Privacy Act](#). For more information, visit Statistics Canada's [Privacy notice](#).

Employees on social media

Some Statistics Canada employees may be active on social media through their own personal accounts, under their own names or pseudonyms. Despite their professional affiliation with Statistics Canada and the Government of Canada, their posts do not represent the official position of Statistics Canada or that of the Government of Canada, and should be considered the product of each individual as a private citizen.

Media enquiries

Media representatives are asked to refrain from submitting questions or requests through Statistics Canada's social media accounts.

Any media enquiries can be sent directly to our [Media Hotline](#).

General enquiries

For general enquiries on our products and services, [contact us](#).

If you are looking for more information about the organization and its data holdings, please visit the [Statistics Canada website](#).

Social Media Guidelines for Employees

These guidelines have been developed in accordance with the Treasury Board Secretariat's [Guideline on Acceptable Network and Device Use](#) (Network B) to assist Statistics Canada employees in their use of social media and help them comply with related legislation and policies.

Usage Categories



Official Use

The use of an official departmental social media account for departmental communication purposes.



Personal Use

The use of a personal social media account for purposes not related to work.



Professional networking Use

The 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 on social media 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 using social media at work or at home.

1. Official Use

Statistics Canada's official social media accounts are managed by the Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Relations Division, within the Strategic Communications and Outreach Branch, and are subject to an official interaction protocol, which outlines the standards, as well as the escalation and approval processes, for all social media outreach activities related to the agency's programs, products and services.

Only specific individuals within Statistics Canada's corporate social media team have been granted permission to reply to posts directed at Statistics Canada or speak on behalf of the agency on social media.

For more information on how Statistics Canada uses social media, see the [Guidelines on the Use of Social Media at Statistics Canada](#).

2. Personal use and professional networking use

Employees are welcomed and encouraged to share the social media content posted by the agency's official corporate accounts on their own social media profiles. This type of engagement falls under the category of using social media for personal or professional networking use.

The following guidelines apply to employees when they

- use social media on a Statistics Canada-owned computer or device network
- 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 can be identified as your employer through your social media accounts.

Furthermore, every Government of Canada employee has responsibilities under the [Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector](#) (Network B). The code stipulates that public service employees must ensure that they "demonstrate the values of the public sector in their actions and behaviour."

If you have questions about an online activity in which you want to engage, or if you are unsure about whether a topic, post or comment is appropriate, please contact the social media team at [Web2Social](#).

2.2 Be responsible

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

Be aware that the content you post is visible to everyone 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 post is based on your own personal opinions or tailor your messaging so it is clear that you are not speaking on behalf of Statistics Canada.

For example,

- Bad post: "**We** just released this great tool today..."
- Good post: "**Statistics Canada** released a great new tool today..."

Furthermore, consider using a disclaimer in your social media profile description, such as "These are my own personal views." However, it is important to note that such a disclaimer does not absolve you of your obligations as a public servant.

Government of Canada corporate symbols (e.g., logos) or branding are for official use only and must not be used on personal social media accounts.

2.4 Protect the brand

When you express yourself on social media on issues related to or about Statistics Canada, you contribute to the public perception of the agency. Never post something that contains defamatory or abusive comments about Statistics Canada or the Government of Canada.

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

2.5 Be respectful

Do not engage in any conduct or use any language on your social media profiles 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. Do not post pictures or cite, reference or share information related to other people (e.g., colleagues) without their explicit consent.

2.6 Remember that confidentiality is important

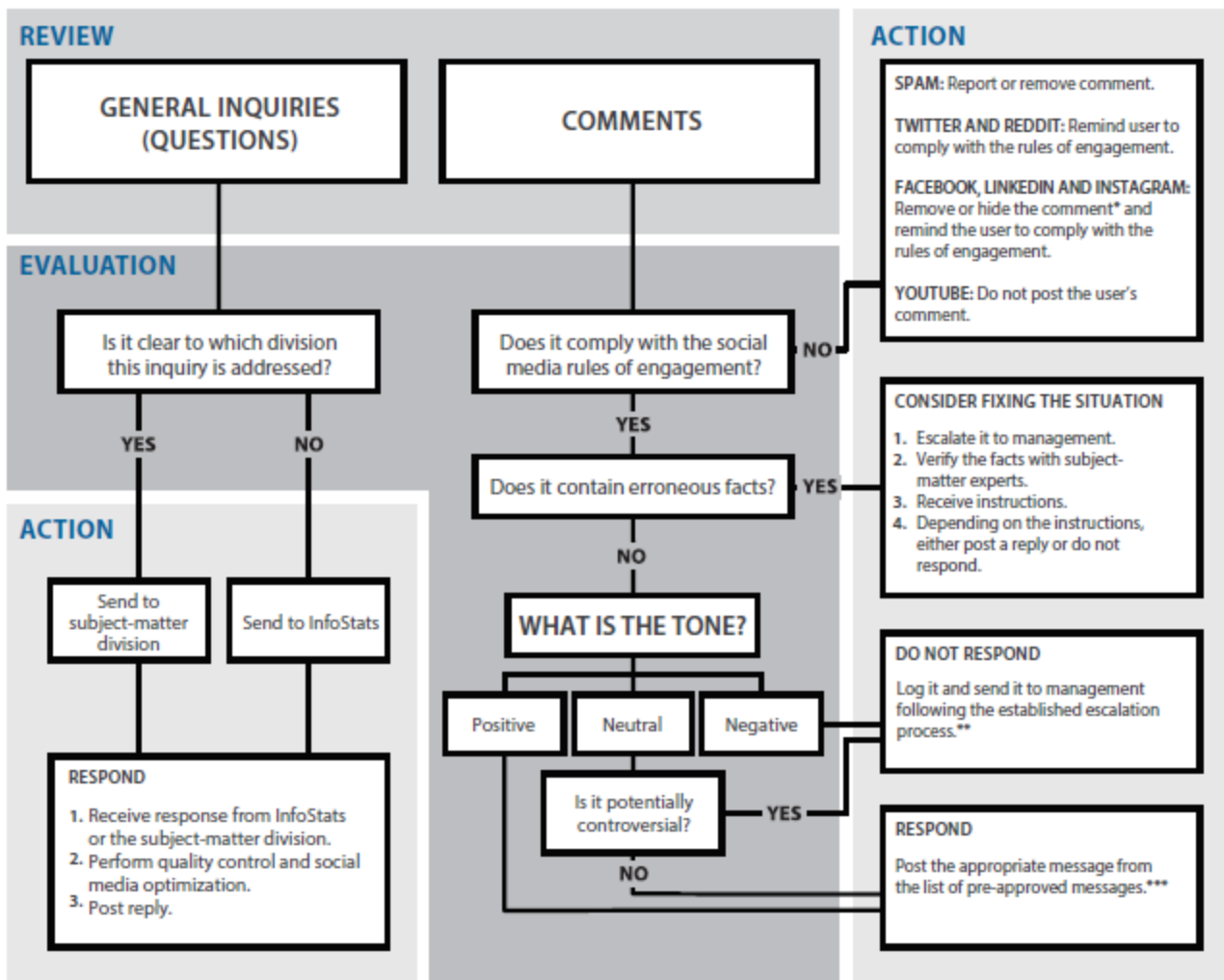
Confidentiality is the most important value at Statistics Canada and should be reflected in your personal and professional networking use of social media. Respect the oath that you took. Stay informed about [confidentiality awareness best practices](#) and take the appropriate measures to ensure that confidential statistical information remains secure.

2.7 Do not 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 only (lunch and breaks).

Remember that all employees have an obligation to adhere to Statistics Canada's [Policy on Network Use](#).

Statistics Canada's SOCIAL MEDIA INTERACTION PROTOCOL



NOTES

- *REMOVE THE COMMENT** – All removed comments are to be entered in an Excel log file before being deleted.
- **ESCALATION PROCESS** – Negative or potentially controversial comments, as well as messages that contain erroneous information, must be escalated to various levels of management.
- ***LIST OF PRE-APPROVED MESSAGES** – Comments that are positive or non-controversial should be replied to with a response from the list of pre-approved messages.

Statistics Canada's social media accounts are managed by the Web2Social team within the Strategic Communications and Stakeholder Relations Division.

If you have questions about the protocol, please contact the social media team at: statcan.web2social-web2social.statcan@canada.ca