

Missanabie Cree First Nation



Communications Policy

**Approved by Chief and Council
Date: January 30, 2020**

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Date of Acceptance

This policy has been duly accepted with amendments by a quorum of the Missanabie Cree First Nation Council, this, 30th Day, of January, 2020, by Motion # 20.03.07.05.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Missanabie Cree First Nation has the obligation to ensure that there is a clear, coordinated and consistent approach to internal and external communications.
- 1.2 The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines to facilitate open and responsive communications about matters concerning Missanabie Cree First Nation such as annual audits, election information, financial decisions, and programs and services.
- 1.3 All communications of the Missanabie Cree First Nation with its membership, staff, and the public contribute to an effective open, unified, and accountable governance.

2. Objectives

- To have an informed membership regarding policies, programs, services and initiatives.
- To provide information to the membership in plain language.
- To ensure that all modes of communication are consistent with the messages, direction, and vision of the Missanabie Cree First Nation.

3. Definitions

Internal Communication

Communication within the Missanabie Cree First Nation community.

External Communication

Communication with entities outside of Missanabie Cree First Nation, such as other First Nations, First Nation organizations, government agencies, businesses, and the general public.

Social Media

Is a term used to describe a wide array of different applications or tools that enable individuals to create, share, and exchange ideas and information on the Internet through the use of words, pictures, audio and video (excluding websites). This includes but is not limited to, Facebook groups, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, and YouTube accounts.

Website

Include but is not limited to World Wide Web addresses such as www.missanabiecreefn.com.

4. Internal Communications

- 4.1 Communication with Membership
 - 4.1.1. To ensure pro-active and inclusive communication with membership, a variety of formats e.g. newsletter, social media, as well as the more traditional means, such as oral and group discussions should be utilized.
 - 4.1.2. Information should be released to the membership on a timely basis and prior to being released to the general public.
- 4.2 Community Engagement
 - 4.2.1 To facilitate a process whereby the MCFN membership can participate in the affairs of the First Nation, various levels of engagement that range from the provision of information to final decision making shall be utilized.
 - 4.2.2 When community engagement is being contemplated for a policy, program, or decision-making process, a communications plan should be developed clearly identifying the appropriate level of engagement required.
 - 4.2.3 Levels of community engagement can range from:

- Consulting with the MCFN membership concerning codes, policies, and economic and community development initiatives by providing opportunities for comments/feedback.
- Involving the membership through processes that ensure their concerns and aspirations are understood and considered in decision-making.
- Collaborating with the membership by seeking advice and recommendations to address issues or provide services.
- Empowering the membership through inclusion in decision-making processes.

4.2.4 A communications plan includes the necessary tools to undertake whatever level of engagement is required. The following table (Figure 1) illustrates the different levels of engagement, and examples of the tools that would be required.

Fig. 1 Levels of Community Engagement *

	<i>Informing</i>	<i>Consulting</i>	<i>Involving/ collaborating</i>	<i>Empowering</i>
Membership Expectations	To share information to assist membership in understanding program/services; progress in MCFN ongoing initiatives such as economic development	To get feedback from the membership on codes/policies and other initiatives	To work with membership to develop plans/strategies/positions/policy on issues of importance to the community	To provide membership with the opportunity to make decisions on codes/by-laws, and major investments as a collective group.
Leadership and Administration Commitments	To ensure information will be clear, timely, and provided on a regular basis.	To acknowledge comments/concerns To acknowledge how feedback influenced final decision.	To work with committees/boards/focus groups in the development of plans, etc.	To ensure that a ratification process takes place on important issues. To implement the majority decision of the community
Examples	Events/gatherings Updates on social media and in the community newsletter	Feedback solicited on codes / policies Open band meetings/Surveys/ Telephone calls A report on what was said by membership	Governance Coordinating Committee; Comprehensive Community Planning Committees	Ratification of the Election Code Community Benefit Agreements
Tools Examples	Newsletter Social Media Press releases	Feedback forms	Committee Terms of Reference	Services of an Electoral Officer Info / Voting Package Notice of Voting

*developed from the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation (<https://www.iap2.org>)

4.3 Communication with Staff

4.3.1 Strategies for communication among staff should address the need to share information about band business on a consistent basis.

5. External Communications

5.1 Representatives of MCFN will communicate with external stakeholders in a professional manner, upholding the interests of the First Nation, and in accordance with the vision and values of the First Nation.

5.2 Any media inquiries shall be directed to the Chief and Council. Chief and Council have the option to designate a person to respond to the inquiry.

6. Website/Social Media

6.1 Electronic communication is essential for sharing news and information about Missanabie Cree First Nation.

6.2 The Official Website/Social Media Policy (Schedule A) will ensure that communication will be timely, appropriate and related to the business of the First Nation.

7. Email

7.1 Email is a business communication tool, and should be used responsibly in a courteous, professional, and lawful manner.

7.2 The purpose of the MCFN Email Guidelines and Procedures (Schedule B) is to ensure the proper use of Missanabie Cree First Nation's email system.

8. Publications

8.1 The Bear Fax Newsletter

8.1.1 The purpose of the Bear Fax newsletter is to communicate with MCFN members and family's information about MCFN affairs and initiatives.

8.1.2 Its secondary purpose is to act as a vehicle for the sharing of news and events between members and families.

8.1.3 The Guidelines for the Bear Fax newsletter are outlined in Schedule C of this policy.

9. Minutes and Annual Reports

9.1 Chief and Council minutes and annual reports to community shall be made available to the membership on the Official website in the Members Only section.

9.2 Members may make a request to the band administrator in writing to view board minutes and committee minutes.

10. Privacy and Communication

10.1 The privacy and personal information of members is protected under Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA) (May 2019).

11. Amendments

11.1 This policy shall come into effect on the date it has been approved by a quorum of MCFN Chief and Council.

11.2 Amendments to the Communications Policy shall be approved by a quorum of MCFN Chief and Council.

Schedule A - MCFN Official Website/Social Media Policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Electronic communication is essential for sharing news and information with MCFN members. This policy will ensure that communication will be timely, appropriate and related to content as outlined in 4.1.1 of this communication policy.
- 1.2 This policy will help to protect members' privacy and maintain clear boundaries so that bullying, defamation, and harassment do not occur.

2. Adherence

- 2.1 Anyone who is admitted to membership of an official MCFN social media group editor of the official Facebook page, or wishes to post to the MCFN website shall agree to abide by this policy.

3. Process

- 3.1 Social media administrators/editors are appointed by the Band Administrator and are accountable to the Band Administrator.
- 3.2 Social media administrators have control over and are responsible for material published on the MCFN website and any related discussion groups or social media websites, such as Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter.
- 3.3 Members are admitted to social media groups by the social media administrator.
- 3.4 Members are encouraged to send positive feedback to the social media administrators about ways to improve the group, or page.

4. MCFN Website

- 4.1 The official MCFN website will include current information on programs and services, community events, culture, governance, and other Indigenous matters in general.
- 4.2 Offensive content or photos will not be published.
- 4.3 Copyrighted images and materials cannot be used without permission or the appropriate approvals.
- 4.4 Permission for the use of photographs or videos must be obtained prior to posting by staff.
- 4.5 To be granted access to the member's only area, a member must request to join.
- 4.6 To verify that the applicant is registered on the Missanabie Cree band list, the website administrator will ask additional identifying questions. Questions include: name, address, phone number, registration band number found on their Certificate of Indian Status. After verification, the administrator will confirm the details with the registration clerk to grant access to the Member's Only site.

5. Social Media Accounts

- 5.1 Social media administrators will be required to approve materials prior to being posted to social media accounts.
- 5.2 Members may post comments to a social media group.

- 5.3 Anything posted to official MCFN social media sites, such as Facebook, YouTube, or Twitter shall be considered a public comment. MCFN social media group/page shall carry a disclaimer that any views and opinions expressed on this site are those of the authors and do not reflect the official policy or position of MCFN.
- 5.4 Care will be taken to ensure that:
- No personal information about our members will be disclosed.
 - No statements will be made that are misleading, false or likely to injure a person's reputation.
 - No statements will be made that might bring our First Nation into disrepute.
- 5.5 Abusive, discriminatory, intimidating or offensive comments will be removed and those responsible will be blocked from the site. Facebook publishes a detailed Community Standards page at <https://www.facebook.com/communitystandards/>.

6. MCFN Facebook Groups

- 6.1 Facebook groups are closed groups with administrators appointed by the MCFN Band Administrator.
- 6.2 Administrators will be responsible for updating, admitting members, maintaining and reviewing content posted to the Facebook groups.
- 6.3 All content posted to the Facebook groups will be considered in the public domain.

7. MCFN Official Facebook Page

- 7.1 The Missanabie Cree First Nation has the following official Facebook page named: *Missanabie Cree First Nation*
- 7.2 Administrators are appointed by the MCFN Band Administrator.
- 7.3 The Facebook Page moderators are individuals within the Band Office who are approved by the MCFN Band Administrator.
- 7.4 The administrators and moderators will be responsible for updating, maintaining, and reviewing content posted to the Facebook page.
- 7.5 Anything posted to the Facebook page will be considered in the public domain.

8. Code of Conduct

- 8.1 Any member/administrator/moderator of an official MCFN social media group/page is expected to conduct themselves according to our cultural traditions of honesty, truth, and respect.
- 8.2 Members/ administrators/ moderators are expected to conduct themselves appropriately when using electronic communication to share information with other members or posting material on public websites and social media platforms connected to the First Nation.
- 8.3 Electronic communication:
- Should be restricted to Missanabie Cree matters, Indigenous issues, and other issues that impact First Nations people.
 - Must not offend, intimidate, humiliate, or bully another person.
 - Must not be misleading, false, or injure the reputation of another person.

- Should respect and maintain the privacy of members.
 - Must not bring the First Nation into disrepute.
- 8.4 An individual of an official MCFN social media group may lose their membership for sending inappropriate electronic communication or posting online content or comments that harass, offend, intimidate or humiliate another member, as outlined in our code of conduct.

9. Public Posting

- 9.1 This policy shall be posted to the MCFN official website and any current and future official social media websites.
- 9.2 If a member violates the provisions of this policy, then their membership can be revoked by the social media group administrators and be blocked from the site.
- 9.3 If an editor of the Official Facebook Page violates the provisions of this policy, then their posting privileges can be revoked by the social media page administrators.

Schedule B: MCFN Email

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To ensure the proper use of Missanabie Cree First Nation's email system.
- 1.2 Email is a business communication tool, and should be used responsibly in a courteous, professional, and lawful manner.

2. Application

- 2.1 This policy applies to all individuals with a MCFN email account ending in @missanabiecree.com.
- 2.2 This policy pertains to all MCFN communication devices, such as desktops, laptops, cell phones, tablets, and all portable devices while being used both in and out of the office.

3. Usage

- 3.1 MCFN Email is for business purposes, not for personal use.
- 3.2 Emails should be responded to as soon as is possible.

4. Liability Issues

- 4.1 Offensive or disruptive messages, including messages containing pornography or offensive comments about race, gender, age, sexual orientation religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability are strictly prohibited.
- 4.2 If an email is received with statements that could be considered slanderous, racist, obscene or offensive, the Band Administrator must be notified.

5. Ownership and Access

- 5.1 All emails, accounts, and passwords maintained on the MCFN email system are Missanabie Cree First Nation property.
- 5.2 Emails may be monitored, and account holders shall have no expectations of privacy.

6. Security

- 6.1. All those who hold an email account with the domain @missanabiecree.com shall password protect all devices used for email purposes.
- 6.2. All email account passwords must be made known to the MCFN Band Administrator to ensure business continuity.

7. Legal Issues - Confidentiality

- 7.1 Confidential emails shall be flagged as confidential and written within the subject line.
- 7.2 Every outgoing message should include a disclaimer authorized by the Band Administrator.

8. Implementation

- 9.1 All those who hold a MCFN email account shall be provided with a copy of the MCFN Communications Policy.
- 9.2 MCFN Communications Policy shall be included in orientation packages for all staff and members of Chief and Council.

9. Enforcement

- 9.1 If a staff member fails to abide by MCFN Email Guidelines and Procedures, the infractions shall be dealt with according to the disciplinary process as set out in the MCFN Employment Policy.
- 9.2 If a member of Chief and Council fails to abide by MCFN Email Guidelines and Procedures, the infractions shall be dealt with according to the provisions outlined in the MCFN Chief and Council policy.
- 9.3 Notwithstanding 10.1 & 10.2, all those who hold a MCFN email account that fail to abide by the Email Guidelines and Procedures may have their email account revoked.

Schedule C: Bear Fax Newsletter

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Bear Fax newsletter is to communicate to members and family's information about MCFN affairs and initiatives. A secondary purpose is to act as a vehicle for the sharing of news and events between members and families.
- 1.2 The Bear Fax is published monthly via PDF and uploaded to the Official MCFN website and is emailed and or mailed by written request.

2. Submission Process

- 2.1 Articles must be submitted via email to the editor at bearfax@missanabiecree.com before the designated due date determined by the editor.
- 2.2 Articles submitted without the author's name will not be published.

3. Approval

- 3.1 The Band Administrator has the responsibility for final approval of the content of the newsletter.