

## CONTEXT

As a federal institution, the NFB is subject to certain regulations from the Treasury Board Secretariat of Canada (TBS) on the use of social media.

TBS published a directive on social media use in 2011, with the aim of helping Canadian government institutions develop their own specific policies. The 2011 directive was replaced in March 2025 by the Directive on the Management of Communications and Federal Identity.

This is the context within which the NFB has decided to update its own Code of Conduct on social media use, to maximize the benefits of using these tools while reducing the risks associated with their misuse.

## OBJECTIVE

All NFB staff can use social media. However, we expect that they understand the importance of complying with the Code of Conduct below when doing so. These guidelines aim to ensure that social media is used respectfully and appropriately, to avoid damaging the reputation of the NFB and to be consistent with both the letter and the spirit of applicable standards.

Although social media is seemingly informal and intimate in nature, it's essential to remember that these spaces are considered to be public.

## SCOPE OF THE CODE

This Code of Conduct applies to all NFB staff members who use social media personally or professionally, posting in their own name or on behalf of the NFB. The code applies to you whether you are publishing content to social media yourself or are only commenting on posts by other users.

It equally applies to those using social media for the purpose of networking—in other words, for non-official communications linked to work, including participation in the activities of a professional association, knowledge sharing and professional development.

If you're using social media for purely personal reasons not related to your work, you still have certain responsibilities, both as an NFB staff member and as a civil servant. For these reasons, we expect all staff to be familiar with the Code of Conduct below.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

1. As a civil servant for the Government of Canada and as an NFB staff member, it is incumbent on you to respect the requirements of both the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector and the NFB's Code of Values and Ethics, in order to maintain the confidence of the public and the credibility of the government. These requirements apply at all times, including when you share information on social media and even if you do not identify yourself as a civil servant. Others may know that you are in the Government of Canada's public service or can easily find out.

In brief, as an NFB staff member you must:

- respect your Duty of Loyalty to the Government of Canada;
  - maintain your employer's good reputation;
  - retain your own integrity and impartiality;
  - continue the tradition of political neutrality in the public service.
2. Be aware of your possible influence and role within the NFB and the public sector. If you occupy a high-level or highly visible position, your messages may carry more weight and reach a larger audience. If you have a large social media following, your messages can likewise have broader reach and are more likely to be closely examined. This includes messages made on the NFB's internal communication channels and collaboration tools (e.g., Teams, the Intranet, GC Exchange, etc.).
  3. Always think before sharing. Statements, opinions and jokes can be taken out of context, copied, reproduced and reshared—even if you delete the original post. Ensure that content you post is relevant and respectful, and avoid sharing unverified information and inappropriate or offensive material. Remember that as an NFB staff member, you have a duty of discretion, and you are responsible for your actions and statements in both real and virtual spaces.
  4. Personal statements or messages should not give the impression that you are publishing them in your capacity as a civil servant for the Government of Canada. If you post messages on your personal accounts that refer to your position as a civil servant, you must clearly indicate that you are not publishing them in your official capacity (unless you have been given authorization to do so). It might be helpful to add a disclaimer noting that your posts are yours alone—but this does not necessarily protect you, as people may nevertheless think that your opinions are those of the government.
  5. Keep your personal accounts distinct from official NFB accounts by not associating your personal accounts with your NFB email address or using official-seeming NFB naming conventions. Never use NFB or Government of

Canada symbols or signatures for personal reasons or for professional networking; they are to be used for official communications only.

6. If you publish content about the NFB or its work in a personal capacity, use your real name from the start, say that you work at the NFB, and clearly indicate your role in the organization. Others online will appreciate your transparency.
7. Avoid making any false or misleading representations of yourself or the NFB.
8. Find a balance between your personal values and your professional responsibilities. Impartiality in the civil service ensures that Canadians receive equitable treatment, regardless of their political opinions. This stability is important, as governments change, but civil servants continue to support them.
9. Stick to the facts in messages concerning your work, and share only information that is publicly available. Any content you publish that is related to your work must be appropriate. If your post concerns your current work, ensure that it is authorized before publishing. You may want to vent or get frustrations off your chest, but social media is not the place to do it. Instead, take advantage of internal resources available to you, which will respect your confidentiality, such as the Employee Assistance Program.
10. Be courteous and demonstrate good judgment. Make sure your transparency efforts do not contravene any guidelines or any of the NFB's legal responsibilities concerning the protection of personal and confidential information.
11. In the event of disagreement, express yourself respectfully and politely.
12. Do not participate in any debates on controversial subjects while using the NFB's social networks. Remember that any comment, even those posted anonymously, can be traced back to you. Inform the Director of Communications and Public Affairs of all activity related to controversial topics on the NFB's social media.
13. Protect yourself. Do not disclose personal information or any of the NFB's confidential information. Anything you post will be accessible for a long time. Check the content of your posts carefully because the Internet has an infinite memory!
14. Respect copyright. If you share material that does not belong to the NFB on the NFB's social networks, make sure you have previously received any required permissions from the creators, as well as from NFB Communications. If the material belongs to the NFB but requires a particular legal disclaimer, ensure that it is clearly visible.

15. The NFB does not tolerate crude, obscene or inappropriate content on its social media, and neither will it tolerate hateful, defamatory, racist or sexist material.
16. Messages—including links—that promote products or services not directly linked to NFB productions will be removed from its social networks.
17. Posts promoting political opinions on the NFB's social networks will also be removed, unless they relate to the content of an NFB production. In such cases, the political opinion must be contextualized with a clear reference to the production so that the opinion cannot be ascribed to the NFB employee posting it. If you have questions about political content on your personal social media, please speak with Human Resources or the NFB's Legal Counsel. According to the *Public Service Employment Act*, you must not engage in any activity that threatens the principles of objectivity and impartiality in the public service.
18. NFB social media should not be used to negotiate, promote a union's or employer's position, or debate labour relations at the NFB or other government organizations. Similarly, an employee should not use their own social media accounts to negotiate, criticize or debate their employer's positions or offers in the course of collective-bargaining negotiations.
19. Anything that is confidential must remain confidential. Have some information you're itching to share that isn't public yet? Gotten wind of some gossip that your colleagues are sure to love? Think before posting. The information you have may be confidential. When in doubt, refrain from posting, or check with management in the NFB's Communications team.
20. Ensure that your social media activities do not create any conflicts of interest. If you have another job or carry out professional activities outside of your role in the public service, if you're a business owner, run a blog or channel or are a social media influencer, you must make sure that these other activities do not create real or perceived, actual or potential conflicts of interest with your role as a public servant.
21. Go through your timeline and regularly check your social media footprint. This is particularly important when you enter the public service, change jobs or are promoted. If you're worried about some of the older posts in your timeline, ask your manager or staff responsible for values and ethics at the NFB for advice.

## RESOURCES

Directive on the Management of Communications and Federal Identity:

<https://www.tbs-sct.canada.ca/pol/doc-eng.aspx?id=30682>

Best practices for public servants using their personal social media:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/government/publicservice/values/best-practices-public-servants-using-personal-social-media.html>

## CONTACT PERSONS

As a federal institution, the NFB is subject to a number of communications policies, which also apply to social media. If you have any questions, please consult with your colleagues with expertise in the following areas:

Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector: **François Tremblay**

NFB Code of Values and Ethics: **François Tremblay** and **Dominique Aubry** for Conflicts of Interest

*Public Service Staff Relations Act*: **François Tremblay** and **Cynthia Miller**

*Public Service Employment Act* (for political activities): **François Tremblay** and **Cynthia Miller**

Protection of personal information: **Duygu Barbaros**

Access to information: **Duygu Barbaros**

Official NFB communications: **Magalie Boutin**

Official languages: **Amélie Saint-Germain**