

**Report to / Rapport au:**

**OTTAWA POLICE SERVICES BOARD  
LA COMMISSION DE SERVICES POLICIERS D'OTTAWA**

**26 July 2021 / 26 juillet 2021**

**Submitted by / Soumis par:**

**Chief of Police, Ottawa Police Service / Chef de police, Service de police d'Ottawa**

**Contact Person / Personne ressource:**

**Executive Director of Strategy & Communication John Steinbachs / Directeur  
Exécutif Stratégie & Communication John Steinbachs  
*SteinbachsJ@ottawapolice.ca***

**SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO INQUIRY I-21-16: OPS SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT  
POLICY AND BLOCKING**

**OBJET: RÉPONSE À LA DEMANDE DE RENSEIGNEMENTS I-21-16:  
POLITIQUE RELATIVE AUX COMPTES DE MÉDIAS SOCIAUX DU  
SPO ET BLOCAGE**

**REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Ottawa Police Services Board receive this report for information.**

**RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

**Que la Commission de services policiers d'Ottawa prenne connaissance du  
présent rapport à titre d'information.**

**INQUIRY**

Please describe the social media policies in place for OPS accounts. What would prompt the OPS to block someone from their social media accounts? What legislation governs this, and are the OPS in adherence?

**RESPONSE**

The Ottawa Police Service (OPS) has multiple social media accounts associated to the OPS and our Corporate Communications and Media Relations team monitor them daily.

The OPS social media policy, as it relates to the public, is located on our website here: <https://www.ottawapolice.ca/en/about-us/Privacy.aspx>.

Social media provides important opportunities for two way communication and feedback with members of the public and overall the OPS experience with these tools has been positive. However, like many organizations, we monitor, remove and delete offensive comments, racist, sexist, foul language or disruptive behavior. In fact, the CBC recently advised that they were turning off the ability for users to comment on its Facebook posts (Annex A).

While monitoring social media, we find inappropriate content on a daily basis. In more serious instances, we document comments, posts or private messages through screenshots and continue to monitor the activity of that user on our social media platforms. Rarely, a decision is made to block a user from one or more of our platforms.

We have looked into the account in question with this inquiry following complaints that certain accounts were blocked unfairly. We have unblocked those users.

Documentation of social media policy violations did not take place and we have not been able to determine any activity that would contravene our policies or the policies of the social media platforms.

OPS members administering social media accounts on behalf of the OPS have been reminded to document questionable comments, messages, replies, etc. and seek advice from Corporate Communications to see if further action is appropriate, such as blocking a user.

We continue to monitor this issue to determine next steps and are conducting a best practices of large companies and police services related to comments.