

Purpose of Communications Policy

The Teachers' Pension Board of Trustees (the Board) formulated this policy to establish protocols to inform stakeholders about issues that may affect the Teachers' Pension Plan (the Plan).

Role of Trustees/Chair

The Chair of the Board (the Chair) will speak on behalf of the Board. If the Chair is unavailable, the Vice Chair will speak on behalf of the Board. The Chair will write to the Plan Partners, on behalf of the Board, to inform them of, or request input on, matters specifically identified by the Board.

This policy and the Trustee's Conflict of Interest policy will govern trustees, as individuals. Specifically, individual trustees:

- a. will speak on behalf of the Board only with the prior approval of the Board or the Chair;
- b. may respond to questions from or report to members, employers and Plan Partners on matters related to Board deliberations where the information has been made public;
- c. may report to members, employers and Plan Partners on matters related to Board deliberations where the information has not been made public, but only with the prior approval of the Board or the Chair;
- d. may use Briefing Notes and other material to discuss with a Plan Partner or the Teachers' Pension Plan Advisory Committee (TPPAC) an issue that is before the Board, unless explicitly restricted by the Board. Standing explicit restrictions include legal opinions/documents, appeals material and personal information of individuals;
- e. may provide reports and other material to a Plan Partner or TPPAC following each Board meeting, unless explicitly restricted by the Board. Standing explicit restrictions include legal opinions/documents, appeals material and personal information of individuals;
- f. will consult the Chair if an issue or situation occurs about which the trustee is uncertain how to respond.
- g. will not speak to the media on plan matters unless authorized.

If trustees are speaking to other parties but not acting on behalf of the Board, they must make it clear that they are doing so in a capacity other than as a trustee and that the information being provided is not information that the trustee is aware of only because he or she is a trustee. A disclaimer statement must be included in any prepared materials.

Stakeholders

The Board has identified the following stakeholders as potential communications recipients:

- a. Plan members:
 - New Plan members
 - On-going or active Plan members
 - Terminating Plan members
 - Retiring Plan members
 - Retired Plan members
 - Deferred Plan members
 - Beneficiaries
- b. Employers
- c. Plan Partners
- d. Regulators
- e. Service Providers of the Board
- f. The general public/taxpayers
- g. Retiree Associations

Standards

Communications will:

- a. incorporate plain language usage and design standards;
- b. be accurate, timely, and complete;
- c. use appropriate and available media;
- d. be evaluated periodically through surveys, focus groups and other means.

Responsibility

- a. The Board is responsible for the establishment, implementation and review of this policy.
- b. The Benefits and Communications Committee of the Board (the Committee) will:
 - monitor and report on the implementation of this policy;
 - develop a 5-year communications strategy for approval by the Board, to be reviewed regularly;
 - provide advice to the BC Pension Corporation (the Plan's Administrative Agent) regarding the objectives and content of communication products;
 - approve communication messages.
- c. The Plan's Administrative Agent will:
 - assist the Committee in the development of a five-year communications strategy;
 - identify communication opportunities, and recommend appropriate products, product revisions, production, distribution methods, and frequency;
 - develop and deliver communications products;
 - maintain the Plan's website;
 - conduct evaluations and report evaluation results to the Committee;

- support the Chair in developing media releases and/or responses, and managing media relations;
 - monitor the media for references to the Plan and other related topics and report to the Board quarterly;
 - report urgent media issues to the Board immediately;
 - assist in the response to public inquiries;
 - maintain an inventory of communication products available for stakeholders.
- d. Communications about post retirement group benefits will be coordinated with the insurance carrier in accordance with the Service Performance Agreement.

Third Party Requests to Service Providers

- a. Service Providers of the Board, including but not limited to the actuary, legal counsel, Plan Administrative Agent and Investment Management Agent, are occasionally approached by a third party to speak on matters related to the Plan. In this case, the service provider will:
- first obtain the Chair’s authorization to speak to the third party on matters related to the Plan;
 - clearly establish with the third party that the service provider does not speak on behalf of the Board.
- b. The Chair will inform the Board when such authorization is granted.

Third Party Requests to Provide Information to Plan Members

- a. The Board may approve a request from a third party to provide information to plan members if the following conditions are met:
- i. The Board remains in compliance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, specifically section 32 on the use of personal information.
 - ii. In the opinion of the Board, the purpose and values of the third party are consistent with those of the Board and the Teachers’ Pension Plan.
 - iii. The information is not of a commercial or lobbying nature.
 - iv. The information does not directly or indirectly imply that the Board endorses a product, service or organization.
 - v. Any direct costs to provide the information to plan members are not borne by the Teachers’ Pension Plan.
 - vi. New communication products and vehicles will not be created solely to disseminate third party information.
- b. The Board will not charge a third party a fee for providing access to plan members through plan related communications products and vehicles, other than to recover any direct costs referred to in a(v).
- c. The Board may approve posting links to third party websites on the plan website subject to the criteria above.

Plan Partner Requests for Information

- a. A Plan Partner may request information, such as member statistics or investment information etc., regarding the Plan from the Board.
- b. Responses for requests for information from one Partner will be shared with both Partners.

Social Media

- a. The Board does not allow official use of social media by individual trustees.
 - Trustees may not post or comment on materials in social media sites in their official capacity as a trustee.
 - The Board acknowledges that trustees may use social media for personal use, and request they consider the *Teachers' Pension Plan Social Media Guidelines* and *Teachers' Pension Plan Social Media Q&As for Trustees*, attached as Appendix A, when engaging in social media.
 - The Chair or Executive Director may respond to comments posted on social media sites.
 - The Board may request the removal of any material posted on a trustee's personal social media site if it feels the material does not support this policy.
- b. The Teachers' Pension Plan website will be the plan's primary internet presence.
 - The Board may approve the use of other internet or social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.
 - Teachers' Pension Plan profiles on social media sites will be branded to ensure they are consistent and accurately represent the plan's identity. The profiles will be maintained for accuracy and will not be actively used, unless approved by the Board.

Policy Review This policy will be reviewed annually.

Approved March 24, 2006

Revised September 13, 2007, March 25, 2010, December 2, 2011, December 6, 2013
March 4, 2016, December 7, 2016, December 9-10, 2019, December 5-6, 2022

Appendix A

Teachers' Pension Plan Social Media Guidelines

- Be responsible—make sure your personal and professional online activity does not conflict with professional commitments. Do not post anything that could potentially threaten the business or reputation of the Teachers' Pension Plan and its members or its agents.
- Be transparent—disclose who you are but remember you are responding in a personal context and not in your capacity as a trustee.
- Be thoughtful—think carefully before posting, and when in doubt, don't post. Take time to understand the culture and rules—explicit and implicit—of the communities with whom you seek to engage.
- Be respectful—do not disclose confidential information or discuss unpublished information about the Board or the pension plan.
- Be personable—use authenticity to highlight your ideas and thoughts but be mindful of the other guidelines in doing so.

Teachers' Pension Plan Social Media Q&As for Trustees

Can I comment on a blog or a news website?

Yes, but remember the distinction between your identity and views as a private citizen and your role as a trustee. It is important that you do not post information that could be interpreted as an official position or statement on behalf of the plan.

If you are participating as a private citizen please respect the guidelines for social media use.

Can I include references to the plan and my trustee position on my Facebook page?

No. It's important that your personal Facebook or other social media profile is clearly marked as your profile and not able to be perceived as an official source of plan information.

Will my use of Facebook or Twitter at work be monitored?

The media monitoring will pick up comments about the Teachers' Pension Plan on Facebook and Twitter.