Policy:	6.10.2
Approved By:	Trust Council
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Amendment Dates:	2025-09-17; 2026-09-10
Policy Holder:	Director of Trust Area Services

COMMUNICATIONS

Purpose

1. To define policies and procedures for effective, accessible and consistent communications in accordance with related policies of Islands Trust Council.

2. To enhance appropriate internal communications among staff and trustees.

3. To facilitate proactive Islands Trust communications with island communities, First Nations, other levels of government, non-government organizations and the public at large.

4. To ensure that the information provided by Islands Trust is accurate.

A. Definitions

n/a

B. Policy

1. General

1.1 The Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) will be responsible for the Islands Trust communications policies and procedures.

1.2 There are internal and external types of communication policies and procedures. Internal communications relate to communications among staff and trustees. External communications refer to communications that staff and trustees have with islanders, First Nations, other levels of government, non-government organizations, and the public at large.

2. Internal Communications

2.1 The Islands Trust Council encourages positive and proactive communications within the organization.

2.2 Internal staff communication tools include regular staff, management, unit, and focus group meetings, ongoing electronic communications (intranet, email and electronic newsletters), as well as written and verbal communications including tele-conferencing.

2.3 All staff and trustees will have access to the appropriate level of technology in order to complete their work-related responsibilities.

2.4 Administrative Services will provide new employees with an Orientation Handbook before they begin their Islands Trust work responsibilities. The Orientation Handbook is also available to all staff through the Islands Trust intranet site.

2.5 Administrative Services will consolidate and update organizational telephone and contact lists to enhance customer service and internal referrals.

2.6 All trustees will be provided with technology orientation information to enable them to participate in electronic communications.

3. External Communications

3.1 The Chair of the Islands Trust Council, or acting chair, is the designated spokesperson for Islands Trust Council and the Executive Committee. From time to time, the Chair may request an Executive Committee member, or the CAO, to speak on behalf of the Islands Trust Council. In the event of an issue regarding specific technical background and knowledge, the Chair may appoint a staff spokesperson.

3.2 The CAO is the authorized spokesperson on behalf of Trust Council regarding matters affecting the administration of the Islands Trust.

3.3 All members of a local trust committee (LTC) are spokespersons for their LTC. Members of a LTC should identify if they are speaking for themselves as an individual, or as a LTC member. If the personal opinion of a trustee differs from the resolutions of the LTC, or of the Islands Trust Council, then the trustee should identify the difference.

3.4 In all communications, staff and trustees should identify whether they are representing a LTC, the Executive Committee, Trust Council, or the Islands Trust Conservancy Board.

3.5 Staff is authorized to speak regarding adopted policy and technical planning matters or matters related to their work program.

3.6 Staff and trustees will forward inquiries to the designated spokesperson(s) where appropriate.

3.7 Staff and trustees will notify the CAO immediately if staff or trustees become aware of any incorrect information that significantly influences the public's perception of an Islands Trust matter. If the incorrect information relates to a LTC, then the Chair of the LTC should consult with the LTC before deciding whether to act. The Chair with the CAO, will decide on whether a correction will be requested, or if Islands Trust response is necessary and under which format.

3.8 There are various means to enhance communications and provide information to the public about the activities of the Islands Trust and the use of them as follows:

3.8.1 Notices published in newspapers as part of a statutory requirement under the provisions of the *Local Government Act,* or any other government statute, will not be subject to prior Trust Council approval;

3.8.2 Staff is authorized to advertise routine operations and LTC business information in newspapers;

3.8.3 Staff is encouraged to use news releases to communicate recent activities, decisions, projects, and services. Staff is to submit a draft news release to the CAO, or other designated staff, for approval and verification before publishing. If the news release includes a quotation from an individual trustee, then staff should obtain the trustee's approval in advance. News releases are to be created using the current Islands Trust template and are to be copied to staff, trustees, and the media and then posted on the Islands Trust website;

3.8.4 Islands Trust will produce an electronic newsletter for distribution and website publishing to keep staff, trustees, and the public up-to-date on the activities pertaining to Trust Council; and

3.8.5 Staff and trustees are encouraged to use the Islands Trust and the Islands Trust Conservancy pamphlets when distributing background information about the Islands Trust.

3.9 The Islands Trust will maintain an Islands Trust website and an Islands Trust Conservancy website for public access to up-to-date user-friendly information such as Islands Trust meetings, activities, decisions and resources (www.islandstrustconservancy.ca and www.islandstrust.bc.ca). In addition, Islands Trust will maintain a third website for internal use by staff and trustees.

3.10 The following publishing procedures apply to all of the Islands Trust websites:

3.10.1 The appropriate staff in each unit will post routine information to the website by sending information directly to website publishing. For any non-routine information, staff are to submit a draft to the CAO, or other designated staff, for approval and verification before sending the information to the staff responsible for website publishing;

3.10.2 Staff is to set an expiry or follow-up date for all website publishing requests;

3.10.3 Meeting agendas and meeting minutes older than two terms, and the corresponding meeting webpage, will be removed from the Islands Trust external website by staff. These meeting materials will be made available on request;

3.10.4 Public hearing notices and community information meeting notices for meetings that have already taken place will be removed from the Islands

Trust external website by staff. These meeting materials will be made available on request;

3.10.5 Staff will ensure that the information appearing on the Islands Trust website is published in accordance with the Islands Trust Information Systems Reference documents; and

3.10.6 Information appearing on the Islands Trust website will not promote an individual political philosophy, an individual business or a type of business over any other, but will always strive to promote the mandate of Islands Trust.

4. Branded Clothing

4.1 Financial and Employee Services will provide eligible new employees with Islands Trust branded clothing. Staff must ensure they use branded clothing in accordance with procedures established by management.

4.2 Trustees may submit a request for branded clothing to the Chief Administrative Officer who may authorize provision of branded clothing items at their discretion, in accordance with the approved budget.

4.3 Trustees must not wear branded clothing when participating in election campaign activities.

4.4 Trustees must return all items of branded clothing when they leave elected office.

5. Program Costs and Fees

5.1 Trust Council will provide the CAO support in implementing the communications policy subject to budgets.

5.2 At the discretion of the CAO, other staff may continue to assist in implementing the communications policy.

C. Related Legislation and Islands Trust Policies

- Trust-Wide Administrative Procedures - Section 11 – Policy 2.1.7
- Council Meeting Preparation – Policy 2.2.2
- Islands Trust/Islands Trust Conservancy Board Communications – Policy 6.10.4
- Administrative Fairness Principles – Policy 7.1.1

D. Attachments or Links to Supporting Forms, Documents, and Websites

None