

What's the tone of the post or comment?

Positive / Neutral

Negative

Is it a direct question?
(about policies, programs or services,

NO

YES

Is it worth responding to?

- Is it an opportunity to share important information or key messages?
- Would a response create or strengthen relationships with stakeholders?
- Is this a central / important matter for my department / organization?
- Is it worth the time it will take to craft a response?

NO

DO NOT RESPOND:
Let it stand.

YES

RESPOND:

Work with your colleagues to craft an accurate and appropriate response. Make sure it is approved by the appropriate person before sending.

Is the comment inappropriate?
Is removal justified under your organization's social media policy?

YES

REMOVE:

Remove the content using the steps outlined in your social media policy or guidelines. If the issue persists, point to your organization's guidelines for inappropriate content.

NO

Is it simply a rant, joke or satirical comment?

NO

YES

DO NOT RESPOND:

Let it stand, but monitor for escalation.

Does it include inaccurate information about your organization?

NO

YES

CORRECT:

Work with your colleagues to verify the correct information. Respond by correcting the information in a timely, positive and professional way.

Is it a complaint or customer service issue?

NO

YES

RESOLVE:

Acknowledge the concern and respect their privacy by inviting them to continue the discussion offline. This could be by phone, email, or other customer service channels, depending on what's outlined in your organization's social media policy.

RESPONSE CONSIDERATIONS

Keep these things in mind when you're crafting your response:

- **Respect Privacy:** Don't share or invite others to share personal information on public channels.
- **Respect Ownership:** Cite your sources. If you're sharing or drawing from someone else's information or material, then say so.
- **Be Credible:** Stick to the facts and avoid value judgments.
- **Be Appropriate:** Your tone should be appropriate to the situation and should reflect positively on your organization.

* Adapted from the United States Environmental Protection Agency's social media response chart.

For more resources, visit www.redbrick.ca.