

Social Media Policy - Borough of Metuchen, NJ

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Purpose

This policy sets forth guidelines for the establishment and use by the Borough of Metuchen ("the Borough") of all social media sites (including but not limited to Facebook and Twitter) as a means of conveying Metuchen-related information to its residents, employees and visitors. The Borough has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is "spoken" on behalf of the Borough on its social media sites.

For purposes of this policy, "social media" is understood to be content created by individuals, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of social media include Facebook, blogs, MySpace, RSS, YouTube, Second Life, Twitter, LinkedIn, Delicious, and Flickr. For purposes of this policy, "comments" include information, articles, pictures ,

Scope

This policy shall apply to all Municipal agencies and departments as well as any affiliated government or non-government agency or official permitted by the Borough to post on Borough social media sites.

General Policy

1. The establishment and use by any municipal department of the Borough's social media sites are subject to approval by the [Borough Administrator?] or his/her designees. All Metuchen social media sites shall be administered by Metuchen's Information Technology ("IT") staff or designated third party provider.
2. The Borough social media sites should make clear that they are maintained by the Borough and that they follow this Social Media Policy.
3. Wherever possible, the Borough social media sites should link back to the official Metuchen website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with Metuchen.
4. The Borough shall designate an employee or volunteer to monitor content (the "Social Media Coordinator") on the Borough social media sites to ensure adherence to both this Social Media Policy and the interest and goals of the Borough. Metuchen has the right and will restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Social Media Policy or any applicable law. Any content removed based on these guidelines will be retained by the Social Media Coordinator pursuant to the applicable Borough retention policy, including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available.
5. These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.
6. The Borough will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible, enterprise wide.
7. The Metuchen website at www.Metuchennj.org will remain the Metuchen's primary and predominant internet presence.
8. The Borough social media sites and this Policy are subject to all applicable federal and NJ laws and regulations, including the Freedom of Information Act, as well as applicable record retention requirements.
9. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to The Borough's business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure.
10. Employees representing The Borough's government via its social media sites must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of The Borough and in accordance with all its policies.
11. This Social Media Policy may be revised at any time.

Comment Policy

1. As a public entity the Borough must abide by certain standards to serve all its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner.
2. The intended purpose behind establishing the Borough social media sites is to disseminate information from the Borough, about Metuchen, to its residents, employees and visitors.
3. Comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall not be permitted on The Borough social media sites and are subject to removal and/or restriction by the [Public Information Coordinator?] or his/her designees:
 - a. Comments not related to the original topic, including random or unintelligible comments;
 - b. Profane, obscene, violent, or pornographic content and/or language, or sexually suggestive or links to such materials. *Any image or link containing minors or suspected minors in sexual situations will be reported to law enforcement.*
 - c. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, or national origin, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
 - d. Defamatory or personal attacks;
 - e. Threats to any person or organization;
 - f. Comments in support of, or in opposition to, any political campaigns or ballot measures;
 - g. Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale;
 - h. Conduct in violation of any federal, state or local law;
 - i. Encouragement of illegal activity;
 - j. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
 - k. Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as a copyright, of any party the Borough does not permit or allow copyright infringing activities and/or infringement of intellectual property rights on its website or social media sites and will remove any and all content and Submissions if properly notified that such content and/or Submission infringes on another's intellectual property rights.
 - l. Private contact information such as names, addresses and phone numbers no matter how easily obtained elsewhere.
 - m. Photographs or videos.
 - n. Personal information of a person other than the poster.
 - o. Spamming or repetitive content.
 - p. Comments from children under 13 cannot be posted in order to comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection ACT. By posting on a Borough media site, users acknowledge that they are at least 13 years old;
4. A comment posted by a member of the public on any Metuchen social media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, The Borough, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the Metuchen.
5. Any attempt to hack or otherwise compromise the Borough's internet or social media sites will be reported to law enforcement and the perpetrator will be denied access to the sites.
6. Metuchen reserves the right to deny access to its social media sites for any individual, who violates the Metuchen's Social Media Policy, at any time and without prior notice.
7. Municipal Departments shall monitor their social media sites for comments requesting responses from The Borough and for comments in violation of this policy.

8. When a Borough employee responds to a comment, in his/her capacity as a Borough employee, the employee's name and title should be made available, and the employee shall not share personal information about himself or herself, or other Borough employees.
9. All comments posted to any Metuchen Facebook site are bound by any applicable terms and conditions Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, located at <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>, and The Borough reserves the right to report any violation of Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities to Facebook with the intent of Facebook taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action. All Borough policies are applicable to interactions on social media sites when acting in an official capacity and representing the Borough.
10. No "friending" or other special relationship between a Township employee and a third person is permitted.
11. Social media sites are not to be used for making any official communications to the Borough, for example, reporting crimes or misconduct, reporting dangerous conditions, giving notice required by any statute, ordinance or regulation (e.g. notice of claim). Prominent notice of this paragraph shall be displayed on every Borough social media site, along with the appropriate contact information for submitting such a communication.

Breach of Policy

1. Breach of this Policy by any Borough employee may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. Any evidence of such occurrence shall be immediately referred to [TBD] for review and prompt corrective action if confirmed.
2. Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours, and regardless of whether our equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach.
3. Any member of staff suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to cooperate with our investigation, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login.
4. Staff may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of Policy, as determined by [TBD], subject to applicable archiving and retention requirements.
5. Any social media site created by a Borough employee or volunteer remains the property of the Borough, including all the followers and friends generated by the site. If the person who created the site leaves the employment of the Borough, they must relinquish everything related to the site including user names and passwords.

Terms of Use Disclosure (to be posted on all Borough Social Media Sites)

A. Information Disclaimer

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