

TOWN OF SCITUATE

Social Media Policy

The Town of Scituate ("Town") depends on a respectful work environment to achieve its goal of serving the residents of Scituate. While social media can be a fun way to share one's life and opinions with others, its use presents certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. The Town has established these guidelines for appropriate use of social media to assist with making responsible decisions about the use of social media.

The purpose of this policy is to help ensure that the social media activities of Town employees and agents, conducted in both their official and personal capacity, conform to applicable laws, industry guidance, legal and regulatory restrictions, and privacy and confidentiality requirements.

This policy is designed to promote appropriate social media use and avoid uses that: (1) breach confidentiality by revealing protected information about the Town, its residents, or its employees; (2) expose the Town to legal liability for employer or employee behavior that may be harassing, offensive, or maliciously false; or (3) interfere with Users' productivity and their ability to perform the duties and responsibilities of their positions with the Town.

1. Scope of Policy

This policy applies to all Town employees, board members (elected or appointed), contractors, agents or remote users, while at work or away from work, engaging or causing others to engage in social media. To the extent that laws and regulations' applicability are unclear, Town management will make reasonable judgments regarding applying existing print rules to social media forums, and will conform to prevailing industry practices to the greatest extent possible and in all events to the requirements of the law.

Town personnel working with third parties are responsible for assuring that such third parties are properly trained on this policy, and for monitoring their activities to ensure the third parties adhere to this policy.

This policy shall in no respect apply to preclude, impair or limit the right or ability of Town employees under M.G.L. c. 150E to communicate about terms and conditions of employment, and issues directly related thereto.

2. Definitions

Social Media: All forms of electronic communication, including online forums where users communicate or post information or content of any sort, including web logs, blogs, personal websites, journals or diaries, social networking or affinity websites, web bulletin boards or chat rooms, and file sharing sites. Social media does not include static web-

based media that does not facilitate collaborative information sharing or user-generated content, such as websites that do not allow for user comments or content contributions.

Examples of social media include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, Google Plus+, YouTube, Snapchat, Pinterest, Meetup, Friendster, RSS feeds, Classmates.com, Match.com, and Instagram.

Social Network: An online social structure or forum of friends, colleagues, acquaintances, and other personal contacts where users create profiles to share information and socialize with others.

Blog:: A self-published diary or commentary on a particular topic that may allow readers to post responses, reactions or comments.

Page: The portion of a social media website where content is displayed and managed by an individual or group of individuals with administrator rights.

Post: Content an individual shares or publishes on a social media site or page. A post may also be referred to as a Comment.

Profile: Information that a user provides about him or herself on a social networking website.

Speech: Expression or communication of thoughts, opinions, or ideas in spoken or written form, through expressive conduct, photographs, video, symbolism, or other related forms of communication.

Tag: Externally visible demarcations published by users that are used to identify content by associating it with a keyword.

Tweet: A post or status update on Twitter.

Users: Employees, officials or agents of the Town who use, direct, or control a social media account.

3. General Provisions

While Users may use any form of social media for personal use while off-duty, their status as employees or agents of the Town requires that the content of any social media postings not be in violation of existing Town by-laws, policies, directives, rules or regulations.

The same basic principles and guidelines found in the Town's policies apply to employee activities online. Ultimately, Users are solely responsible for what they post online. Before creating an online account or profile, Users should consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Users should keep in mind that any conduct that adversely affects job performance, the performance of other Town employees or otherwise

adversely affects co-workers, residents, officials, suppliers, people who work on behalf of the Town or the Town's legitimate business interests may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. While Town employees have the First Amendment right to free speech, that right is not absolute and extends only to matters of public concern.

4. Using Social Media at Work

The Town of Scituate's Information Technology Network/Systems Acceptable Use Policy prohibits the use of Town equipment for personal social networking purposes. Users should refrain from using social media while on work time or on equipment provided by the Town, unless it is work-related as authorized by your manager or consistent with the Town's Information Technology Network/Systems Acceptable Use Policy.

5. Know and Follow the Rules

Carefully read this policy and review the Town's other policies concerning Information Technology, Network/Systems Acceptable Use, Non-Discrimination, and the Town's Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy and ensure your postings are consistent with these policies. Inappropriate postings that include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and/or threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action up to and including termination. All Users shall comply with the following:

- Online postings that harass or threaten other Town employees or officials are expressly prohibited. Harassing or discriminatory posts or comments may be deemed inappropriate in violation of this Policy, even if the Town or the names of any of its employees are not posted or "tagged" in the comment.
- Online postings that disparage others based on race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, disability or religion are not permitted under any circumstances, regardless of the time, place, form or manner in which the information is posted or transmitted.
- Maintain the privacy of confidential information. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal confidential communications. Users are prohibited from posting nonpublic items that are gained as a result of their position with the Town.
- Users may not use social media to engage in any activity or conduct that violates federal, state, or local law. Examples include, but are not limited to, software piracy or child pornography.

6. Be Respectful

Always be respectful of fellow co-workers, residents, suppliers and vendors. Also, remember that you are more likely to resolve work-related disputes by speaking directly with your co-workers than by posting complaints to a social media outlet. Nevertheless, if you decide to post complaints or criticism, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that might constitute harassment or bullying, or that disparages fellow co-workers, residents, suppliers or vendors.

7. Be Honest and Accurate

Always post honest and accurate information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be honest about any previous posts you have altered or edited. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore even deleted postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors you know to be false -about the Town, Town officials, fellow co-workers, residents, suppliers or vendors.

8. Do Not Post on Behalf of the Town Without Prior Authorization

Do not use your Town email address to register on social networks, blogs or other online tools utilized for personal use.

Do not create a link from a social networking site, blog, or other website to a Town website without identifying yourself as a Town employee.

Express only your personal opinions. Never represent yourself as a spokesperson for the Town. If you are writing about the Town, make it clear that you are not speaking on behalf of the Town. Specifically express that while you are an employee of the Town, your views do not represent those of the Town, fellow co-workers, citizens, suppliers, vendors, or anyone working on behalf of the Town. Include a disclaimer, such as "The postings on this site express my own views, positions and opinions, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Town of Scituate."

Employees should not speak to the media on the Town's behalf without contacting the Town Administrator. Employees should not post a message that is in the Town's name or may be attributed to the Town without first obtaining prior authorization.

9. Expectation of Privacy

Users should presume that all social media postings, regardless of privacy settings, are public and use their best judgment when participating in social media. Users of social media are cautioned that they should have no expectation of privacy while using the Internet. Online postings can be reviewed by anyone, including the Town.

Pursuant to the Town's Information Technology Network/Systems Acceptable Use Policy, the Town may monitor a User's Town provided equipment and all electronic communications and records, at any time, with or without notice, including individual user folders, browser history and other information stored on the Town's electronic communications systems.

10. Violations and Discipline

Employees are solely responsible for the information or images they communicate and/or post online. This Policy shall be read and interpreted in conjunction with all other Town policies and procedures.

Failure to comply with the Town of Scituate's Social Media Policy may result in either the suspension or pennant loss of the privilege to use the Town's technology resources. Users shall report violations of this Policy to their supervisor or, in the case of department heads, directly to the Town Administrator and/or Human Resources.

Violations of this Policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. Such violations include online conduct that adversely affects the User's job performanc, the performance of fellow ell}ployees or otherwise adversely affects the residents, suppliers, vendors, people who perform work on behalf of the Town, or the Town's legitimate interest in serving the residents of the Town of Scituate. Additionally, Users shall be personally liable for any losses, costs or damages incurred by the Town related to violations ofthis Policy.

11. Retaliation is Prohibited

The Town prohibits taking adverse action against any employee for reporting a possible violation of this Policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any employee who retaliates against another for reporting a possible violation of this Policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

12. Acknowledgement

Town emplo)ees and Users must sign a written acknowledgement that they have received, read, understand, and agree to comply with the Town of Scituate's Social Media Policy.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I have received a copy of the Town of Scituate's Social Media Policy.

I understand that this Policy replaces any and all prior verbal and written communications regarding Town policies relating to the use and access and Town monitoring of the use of social media, as defined in the Social Media Policy.

I have read and understand the contents of the Social Media Policy and agree to abide by its terms.

I understand that if I have questions or concerns at any time about the Social Media Policy, I will consult my immediate supervisor, my supervisor's manager, the Human Resources Department, or the Technology Department for clarification.

I understand that the contents of the Social Media Policy may change at any time.

Declaration

I have read, understand and acknowledge receipt of the Town of Scituate's Social Media Policy. I will comply with the guidelines set forth in this policy and understand that failure to do so may result in disciplinary or legal action.

SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINTED NAME