



Board of Fire Commissioners - Fire District No. 1
120 Haddon Avenue, Westmont, New Jersey 08108

RESOLUTION #16

May 23, 2019

Whereas the Board of Fire Commissioners, Fire District No.1, Township of Haddon desires to comply with recommendations from our Attorneys and provide a Policy for Social Media concerning the District.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Board hereby adopts Policy 2019-1 Social Media Policy for the District. This will require the individual firefighters to receive a copy and return the confirmation sheet (Last Page) back to the Board by June 30, 2019. Failure to comply will lead to suspension with the District until compliance.

Resolution Introduced by

Henry E. Voigtsberger

Resolution Seconded by

William G. Tessing 3rd

Roll Call:

Aye

Nay

Abstain

Mr. Voigtsberger

Mr. Tessing 3rd

Mr. Jackson 5th

Mr. Tessing 4th

Mr. Piscopio

HADDON TOWNSHIP FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1

Policy 2019-1

Social Media Policy

Purpose: Haddon Township Fire District #1 (the "District") recognizes that its officials, volunteers and employees may use social media, on their own time, and utilizing their own devices, for a variety of reasons, including socialization, business networking, and for public, political and/or civic engagement. However, the District also realizes that the improper use of social media can be detrimental to the District and the public it serves. For example, social media can be used to unlawfully harass, bully, or intimidate employees or residents. Further, in some instances, where the use of social media is subject to the Open Public Records Act and/or violates the Open Public Meetings Act, violations can prove costly to the District. The District is mindful of how comments attributable to volunteers, employees or officials can be used in legal proceedings against the District. In New Jersey, emails, messages, and posts from private social media accounts have been found to be discoverable evidence and been used against public agencies in litigation. Incidents like these can be costly to the District and with care, they are easily avoidable.

While members, officers and elected officials are free to curate personal social media pages as one sees fit, including blocking users from interacting with you and deleting less-than-flattering comments, the same rules do not apply for government pages or the pages of government officials. The District or its officials, create liability for the District when they block users or delete comments from their social media pages.

A personal social media page broadcasting public messages could be classified as an official page creating record retention and other issues demanded of public agencies. Recent court decisions have required that a public official identify individuals that the official blocked from his personal page because that individual used the personal page as a social platform for public business.

Scope: This Policy applies to all forms of social media/social networking, existing now or developed in the future, including, but not limited to: social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Myspace, Instagram, LinkedIn); microblogs (e.g., Twitter, Tumblr); message and bulletin boards; chat rooms; electronic newsletters; blogs and other online journals, forums or diaries; wikis; video or photo sharing sites (e.g., YouTube, Flickr, Photobucket) and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner. This policy shall apply to all volunteers, officers and elected officials serving the District as well as any affiliated government or non-government agency or official permitted by the District to post on District social media sites. This policy also covers actions by volunteers, officers and elected officials that use a personal social media platform as a means of conveying District-related information to residents, volunteers and visitors.

Definitions:

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Social Media: A category of internet-based resources that integrate user-generated content and user participation. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.), micro-blogging sites (Twitter, Nixle, etc.), photo and video-sharing sites, (Instagram, Snapchat, Youtube, etc.), blogs, and similar sites or applications.

Social Networks: Online platforms where users can create profiles, share information, and socialize with others using a range of technologies.

Blog: A self-published online diary or commentary that may allow visitors to post responses, reactions, or comments.

Post: The content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on the site.

Guidelines

1. Except in the performance of an authorized duty, employees are prohibited from posting, transmitting, and/or disseminating any pictures, videos, audio recordings, or content on any personal website, social media website, or networking website while on duty.
2. Except in the performance of an authorized duty, District officials, both elected and appointed, and employees, are prohibited from utilizing social media on District-owned equipment unless authorized by the District and consistent with the District's Communication Media Policy. The District prohibits the use of District email addresses to register on social media websites, blogs, or other online tools for personal use.
3. District officials are prohibited from revealing or publicizing confidential information, or any information not deemed public under the Open Public Records Act. Information is confidential if its revelation would violate any federal, state, or local law or would expose the District to legal liability. Examples of confidential information include: human resources information regarding District volunteers, employees or officials, including the progress or results of investigations, information related to legal proceedings which are ongoing or sealed by the relevant judge, or sensitive information relating to public safety.
4. Volunteers and employees who identify themselves as, or are widely known to be, District volunteers, employees or officials shall add a disclaimer to the front page of a private website, or on any post, relating to District business. The disclaimer should state the content of the website or post does not express the views of the District, and the volunteer, employee or official is expressing only her/his personal opinion. For example: "The views expressed on this website/web log are mine alone and do not

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necessarily reflect the views of the Haddon District Fire District #1.” If in anyway unclear, a volunteer, employee or official should place the disclaimer in a prominent position and repeat it for each posting that is expressing an opinion related to the District or the District’s business. Unless authorized by the District or explicitly stated as part of one’s job duties, a volunteer or employee should neither claim, nor imply, that (s)he is speaking on the District’s behalf.

5. Volunteers, employees and officials are responsible for carefully reading the District’s personnel policies to ensure any social media use is in compliance with same. Volunteers, employees and officials are responsible for their social media activities. In the event any personal social media use results in legal action due to defamation, harassment, libel, or retaliation, or any other violation of the law or another’s rights, the District will not indemnify nor hold harmless, any volunteer, employee or official; and may seek contribution and other relief from said volunteer, employee or official of the District is such and/or found vicariously or otherwise liable. .
6. Be respectful. Always be fair and courteous to fellow volunteers, employees, associates, residents, members, vendors, suppliers or people who work on behalf of the District. Also, keep in mind that you are more likely to resolve District-related complaints by speaking directly with your colleagues or by utilizing the District’s Complaint Reporting Procedure than by posting complaints to a social media outlet.
7. Ensure any social media use respects copyright, privacy, and fair use laws.
8. Volunteers, employees and official should refrain from post any photograph containing the District’s logo, including photographs of members wearing District gear, T-shirts or other clothing without the permission of the District.
9. Volunteers, employees and official should refrain from post any photograph containing the District’s equipment or vehicles without the permission of the District.
10. In addition to following other policies and examples, avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious, obscene, threatening or intimidating, that disparage residents, members, associates or suppliers, or that might constitute harassment or bullying. Examples of such conduct might include offensive posts meant to intentionally harm someone’s reputation or posts that could contribute to a hostile work environment on the basis protected class status or association with a member of a protected class.
11. Always be honest and accurate when posting information or news, and if you make a mistake, correct it quickly. Be open about any previous posts you have altered. Remember that the Internet archives almost everything; therefore, even deleted

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postings can be searched. Never post any information or rumors that you know to be false about the District, fellow volunteers, employees, associates, members, residents, suppliers or people working on behalf of District.

12. The use of all District computer resources is for the express purpose of carrying out the business of the District. Employees' use of the District's electronic communications systems and equipment are to be for business-related purposes.
13. Volunteers and employees may not engage in any social media during shift hours, whether using the District's Internet server or personal devices, unless such social networking is an approved part of an employee's job and the social media is on behalf of the District. Volunteers and employees may access social media sites from their personal devices during their approved breaks.
14. When using social media on personal time, a volunteer or employee must use his or her personal accounts, such as a personal email address or profile. A volunteer or employee may not use a District e-mail address, unless the social networking is an approved part of his or her job and the communication is on behalf of the District.
15. No employee shall post internal working documents to social media sites that are not public records. This includes, but is not limited to, screenshots of computer stations, pictures of monitors and/or actual documents themselves without the prior approval of the Board of Commissioners.
16. All District social media sites shall be administered by the District's Information Technology ("IT") staff or designated third party provider.
17. The District social media sites should make clear that they are maintained by the District and that they follow this Social Media Policy.
18. Wherever possible, the District social media sites should link back to the official District website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the District.
19. The District social media sites and this Policy are subject to all applicable federal and NJ laws and regulations, including the Open Public Records Act, as well as applicable record retention requirements.
20. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to the District's business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure.

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21. Volunteers and employees representing the District's government via its social media sites must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the District and in accordance with all its policies.
22. The purpose of the District's social media platforms is to disseminate information to residents, taxpayers and the general public.
23. This Social Media Policy may be revised at any time.

Reporting Violations of this Policy

1. If a volunteer or employee becomes aware of a violation of this Policy, he or she should report it to the Board of Commissioners. The District will not take negative action against any employee for reporting in good faith a possible deviation from this Policy or for cooperating in an investigation.
2. If a volunteer or employee feels he or she is being harassed, discriminated against or retaliated against for reporting a violation of this Policy, he or she should notify the District's Board of Commissioners.

No Expectation of Privacy

1. Volunteers and employees should be aware that, regardless of privacy settings on various social media platforms, social media may not be private. Volunteers and employees are reminded that they should have no expectation of privacy when using the Internet, including social networking sites, during work time or when using District equipment.
2. The District reserves the right to monitor and review an employee's use of the District's computer systems when it deems it appropriate to do so, without advance notice.

Adverse Action

1. Management may direct a volunteer or employee to cease using social media during working hours.
2. Violations of this Policy and/or volunteer or employee misconduct related to the use of social media will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of membership with the District.
3. Volunteers and employers can be held liable for volunteers' or employees' social media use, such as for a defamatory, discriminatory, or harassing social media message, comment, or tweet. Volunteers and employees should not express, communicate or link to comments

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that are obscene, threatening, pornographic, harassing or defamatory. If the District determines that an employee's postings have created potential criminal or civil liability for the District, it reserves the right to demand the posting be removed and to pursue any other applicable legal remedies.

Retaliation

The District prohibits taking negative action against any person for reporting a possible deviation from this policy, for cooperating in an investigation, or for reporting conduct in violation of the District's EEOC, Anti-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, Whistleblower, and Anti-Retaliation and accommodation policies. Any employee who retaliates against a person for reporting the foregoing will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including membership termination.

Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours, and regardless of whether District equipment or facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach.

Any volunteer or employee suspected of committing a breach of this policy will be required to cooperate with our investigations, which may involve handing over relevant passwords and login.

The Board may be required to remove internet postings which are deemed to constitute a breach of Policy, as determined by the Board, subject to applicable archiving and retention requirements.

Any District social media site created, administered or maintained by a District employee or volunteer remains the property of the District, including all the followers and friends generated by the site. If the person who created the site leaves the employment of the District, they must relinquish everything related to the site including user names and passwords.

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

A. Information Disclaimer

By visiting this site, you understand and agree that the Haddon Township Fire District #1 government site is provided "AS IS". The District makes every effort to provide accurate and complete information on this site. The information contained herein is not official nor in any way shall it be deemed to constitute legal notice where such legal notice is required by law. The information contained in this site is provided as a service and convenience to people needing information about the District. Portions of the information on this site may be incorrect or not current. The District, its officers, employees or agents shall not be liable for damages or losses of any kind arising out of or in connection with the use or performance of information, including but not limited to, damages or losses caused by reliance upon the accuracy or timeliness of any such information, or damages incurred from the viewing, distributing or copying of those materials.

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B. Linking Policy

Links TO External Sites

The District site contains links to outside websites. These websites are not owned, operated, controlled or reviewed by the District. These links are provided solely as a courtesy and convenience to you, the visitor. The District, its officers or employees, exercise no control over the organizations, views, accuracy, copyright or trademark, compliance or the legality of the material contained in these outside websites. The District, its officers or employees, do not sponsor, endorse, or approve the information, content, proceeds, materials, opinions or services contained on such outside websites. The visitor proceeds to these outside websites at his/her own risk. The District specifically disclaims any and all liability from damages, which may result from the accessing of a third-party site, which is linked to the District website or from reliance upon only such information.

C. Endorsement Disclaimer

Reference in this website to any specific commercial products, processes, or services, or the use of any trade firm or corporation name is for the information and convenience of the public, and does not constitute endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the District, its officers, employees or agents.

D. Copyright and Trademark Limitations

The District makes no warranty that materials contained herein are free of copyright or trademark claims or other restrictions or limitations on free use or display. Making a copy of such material may be subject to copyright or trademark laws.

E. Use of Material from this Site

The District has made the content of these pages available to the public and anyone may view, copy or distribute District information found here without obligation to the District for noncommercial, personal use only, unless otherwise stated on particular material or information to which a restriction on free use may apply.

The design of this site, original graphics, and original content are all copyrighted by the District and may not be re-engineered, distributed, modified, transmitted, reused, reposted, or duplicated without the express written permission of the District in each instance. All requests to use any part of the original design, code, graphics or content of this site should be made via e-mail to the District Board of Commissioners.

F. Unauthorized Modifications

Unauthorized attempts to modify or otherwise alter any information or image stored on any District website may result in criminal prosecution.

I confirm that I have received, read and understand the District's Social Media Policy.