

Town of Waterboro

Social Media Policy

This policy provides guidance for employee use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that permit users to share information with others in a contemporaneous manner.

An employee, as used in this policy, means all hired personnel, elected and appointed persons, including committee members, interns and volunteers.

I. Guidelines and Procedures. The following principles apply to all employee use of social media.

- A. Employees should be aware of the effect their actions may have on their images, as well as the Town of Waterboro's image. The information that employees post or publish on social media may be public information for a long time.
- B. The Town of Waterboro's Personnel Policy, Employee Handbook, and other Town policies, including but not limited to all harassment, discrimination, confidentiality and code of conduct provisions, apply to all employee use of social media.
- C. Employees may not publish, post or release any information that is considered confidential or is otherwise protected from public disclosure by statute. If there are questions about what is considered confidential, employees should check with his/her supervisor and/or the Town Administrator.
- D. The Freedom of Access Act ("Right-to-Know" Law) provides a right of public access to municipal agency records, including any information created or maintained by the Town of Waterboro (except that which is specifically exempted by statute). Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to Town business should be treated as a public record under the Right-to-Know Law and must be managed, stored and able to be retrieved to comply with applicable laws.
- E. Any activity using municipal government equipment to access the Internet or Town network is governed by the Town of Waterboro's Internet Usage Policy.

II. Required Work-Related Use. When an employee is sanctioned to use social media as part of his/her job responsibilities, the following additional rules apply:

- A. All social media venues used by the Town for purposes of Town business shall be coordinated and approved by the Director of Information Systems and the Town Administrator.
- B. An employee acting in his or her professional capacity must be authorized by the Town Administrator prior to posting to Town administered social media sites and may not post his/her personal opinion on Town social media sites.
- C. If employees encounter a situation while using social media that threatens to become antagonistic, employees should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of a supervisor.
- D. Employees using social media as part of their job functions must abide by the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others.
- E. Social media networks, blogs and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention or legal questions. Employees should refer these inquiries to the authorized Town of Waterboro spokesperson.
- F. All accounts administered by the Town of Waterboro, the associated usernames, passwords and the content therein shall remain the property of the Town.
- G. The Town Administrator shall reserve the right to monitor and/or remove content that is posted in violation of this Policy on a Town administered social media site by members of the public or by an employee acting in his or her professional capacity. This right shall not include the ability to edit or alter content and is subject to the provisions of Maine's Freedom of Access Act, Rules for Disposition of Local Government Records and related e-discovery laws. Examples of content that may be considered to be in violation of this Policy are:
 - 1. Vulgar or profane language
 - 2. Personal attacks
 - 3. Comments or content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, genetics, status with regard to public assistance, national

- origin, physical or intellectual disability or sexual orientation
4. Spam or links to other sites
 5. Comments that are not topically related
 6. Comments that advocate illegal activity
 7. Solicitations of particular services, products, or political organizations
 8. Infringements on copyrights or trademarks
 9. Personally identifiable medical information
 10. Information that may compromise the safety, security or proceedings of public systems or any criminal or civil investigations.

Non-Official Use of Social Media and Social Networking.

- A. *Personal Use at Work is Prohibited.* The Town of Waterboro's computer systems are to be used for Town-business purposes only. When using the Town of Waterboro's computer systems, use of social media for business purposes is allowed (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, the Town of Waterboro blogs and LinkedIn), but personal use during work time of social media networks or personal blogging of online content is prohibited and could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- B. *Personal Use Outside of Work.* An employee's personal use of social media should not be attributable to the Town or the employee's job function at the Town. If an employee publishes content while off-duty that involves work or subjects associated with the Town of Waterboro, a disclaimer should be used, such as: "The postings on this site are my own and may not represent the Town of Waterboro's positions, strategies or opinions." Employees are prohibited from posting official Town information on a social media site not authorized by the Town. Employees may not use Town of Waterboro email addresses to create personal social media accounts and must keep Town of Waterboro social media accounts separate from personal accounts. Subject to applicable law, after-hours online activity that violates the Town of Waterboro's Personnel Policy, Employee Handbook, or other Town policies may subject an employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Nothing in this policy shall be construed to interfere with, restrain or prevent employee communication regarding wages, hours or other conditions of employment.

Adopted: February 11, 2014

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY REVIEW ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please Note: All Town of Waterboro Employees, Board Members, Committee Members and Commission Members must read, sign and return this page to the Town Administrator's office.

I, _____ acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Town of Waterboro Social Media Policy. I understand that a failure to follow the set forth policy may result in discipline, suspension, termination or removal from town boards, committees or commissions.

Employee/Board/Committee/Commission Member

date

Town Administrator or Designee

date