

Social Media Policy - Borough of Metuchen, New Jersey

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. It also includes other communication medium created by the Borough including but not limited to Nixle, reverse 911 and/or Metuchen TV.

Scope

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

General Policy

1. No Borough of Metuchen social media site shall be established without prior approval of the Borough Administrator. The 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 the Borough Administrator and/or his/her designee.
2. The Borough social media sites shall clearly set forth 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 of Metuchen 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 by, ordinance or regulations such as but not limited notices of claim. Prominent notice of this paragraph shall be displayed on every Borough social media site, along with the appropriate contact information for submitting official communications.
5. This social media policy shall be placed on the Metuchen Borough Website and all social media sites.
6. The Borough Administrator and/or his/her designee shall monitor 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 Borough Administrator and/or her/her designee pursuant to the applicable Borough retention policy, including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available.
7. These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.
8. The Borough will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible, enterprise wide.
9. The Metuchen website at www.Metuchennj.org will remain the Metuchen's primary and predominant internet presence.

10. The Borough social media sites and this Policy are subject to all applicable federal and NJ laws and regulations, as well as applicable record retention requirements.
11. 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.
12. This Social Media Policy may be revised at any time by approval of the Borough Council.

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 Borough Administrator and/or his/her designees.
 - a. 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 and/or provocative situations will be reported to law enforcement.
 - b. 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;
 - c. Defamatory attacks;
 - d. Threats to any person or organization;
 - e. Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale;
 - f. Conduct in violation of any federal, state or local law;
 - g. Encouragement of illegal activity;
 - h. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
 - i. 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.
 - j. Private contact information such as names, addresses and phone numbers no matter how easily obtained elsewhere.
 - k. Personal information of a person other than the poster.
 - l. Spamming or repetitive content.
 - m. 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 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.

Breach of Policy

1 Staff may be required to remove internet postings on Borough social media sites which are deemed to constitute a breach of Policy, as determined by the Borough Administrator subject to applicable archiving and retention requirements.

2. Any social media site created by a Borough employee, Borough official and/or Borough entity and/or commission and/or Borough official 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, or leaves a Borough commission, they must relinquish everything related to the site including user names, passwords and/or access codes or information.

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

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