



Newtown Township Policy

Title: Social Media Policy

Policy: 2021-03	Replaces:	Issue Date: Sept. 27, 2021
Section: ADMINISTRATIVE	Distribution: STAFF & BOARD	Effective Date: Sept. 28, 2021
Chapter: TBD	Issued By: Board of Supervisors	Review Date: Sept. 28, 2022

Purpose:

To establish a policy for the Township's social media communications and to provide rules and guidelines to maintain professionalism and appropriate use of all Township social media accounts.

For purposes of this policy, social media includes all means of communications via the internet or another web based site including but not limited to the use of text, documents, photos, videos, GIFs, QR codes, and links. This policy applies to the user's own as well as someone else's social media platforms. These platforms of communication can include but are not limited to web logs, blogs, online journals or diaries, online bulletin boards, photo sharing websites, personal websites, social networking platforms or affinity websites. This policy applies to any and all use of social media regardless if the platform is associated or affiliated with the Township.

Definitions:

Affiliated – officially attached or connected to an organization or entity

Associated – related or connected to an organization, without direct and official ownership from the referenced organization or entity

User – an employee or individual posting, creating, or sharing any content via social media that is affiliated or associated with Newtown Township.

Policy:

The Board of Supervisors recognizes the need and importance of maintaining a wide variety of social media platforms to convey information and communicate efficiently with the community. The Board also recognizes the inherent risks that the use of social media presents. All Township principles, guidelines and policies apply the same to any and all online activity performed by the user. The user is responsible for maintaining their professionalism and acting appropriately online just as they are expected in the

workplace. All users may be held personally responsible accountable for any litigation that may arise should they make unlawful, inappropriate, defamatory, slanderous, or libelous statements or share any form of media depicting the same, against any resident or employee of the Township, or against any entity affiliated or associated with the Township.

Authority:

Newtown Township, Delaware County is the sole owner of all social media platforms and sites mentioned above that are directly affiliated with the Township.

Newtown Township has the right, but not the duty, to inspect, review, or retain electronic communications created, sent, displayed, received or stored on and over its social media platforms and to monitor, record, check, track, log, access or otherwise inspect these same platforms.

In addition, the Township Manager or Administrative Services Director is authorized to access users' postings on public locations and on Newtown Township hard drives, systems, and networks and investigate compliance with this policy.

There is to be no expectation of privacy by the user, as all social media activity pertaining to, affiliated or associated with the Township performed by the individual user becomes public information that is subject to review and investigation if necessary. It is prohibited for any user to hide, delete, cover up, or destroy any physical or electronic records of past or current social media communications created, sent, displayed, received or stored by that user or any other user, unless such permission has been granted.

Procedures:

It is the responsibility of each user to carefully consider his/her behavior and ensure the propriety of any content that he or she posts or otherwise communicates through any and all social media platforms. When utilizing social media, each user is similarly responsible for following all other policies and regulations governing appropriate conduct for employees and guests.

Users must refrain from communicating inappropriate materials or information through social media of any kind, including but not limited to:

1. All postings with derogatory, offensive, or inflammatory remarks, pictures, or other data about an individual or group's race, religion, national origin, physical attributes, gender, disability, or other protected classification.
2. Confidential, personally identifiable or otherwise sensitive information pertaining to Newtown Township, its residents, or employees.

3. Child pornography, sexual exploitation, bullying/cyberbullying, or inappropriate commercialization of childhood experiences.
4. Defamatory or discriminatory statements and images.
5. Proprietary information of Newtown Township and/or a Township vendor.
6. Infringed upon intellectual property, such as materials or information that violate applicable copyright laws.
7. Terroristic threats.
8. Illegal items and activities.

Users may not utilize social media in a way that disrupts the workplace or community environments or in a way that poses a reasonably foreseeable risk of doing so.

Users may not use their own personal computers, devices, services, systems, or networks when acting as a user of a social media platform affiliated or associated with the Township, unless they have been given permission by their direct supervisor or the Township Manager.

Users may not use the name of Newtown Township or its logo or mark in any form in social media, on Newtown Township internet pages or websites, on websites not owned or related to the Township or in forums/discussion boards, to express or imply the official position of the Township without the expressed, written permission of the Township Manager or Administrative Services Director.

Consequences for Inappropriate, Unauthorized and Illegal Use:

Users must be aware that violations of this Policy or other Newtown Township policies, regulations, rules or procedures, statutes, federal, state, and local regulations and laws or unlawful use of social media platforms and information, may result in loss of access to those platforms and other appropriate disciplinary action. These actions include but are not limited to, warnings, usage restrictions, loss of privileges, position reassignment, oral or written reprimands, employee suspensions without pay, dismissal, penalties provided in statutes, regulations, and other laws and/or legal proceedings as determined appropriate by Newtown Township on a case-by-case basis. This Policy, and its accompanying administrative regulations incorporate all other relevant Newtown Township policies, such as, but not limited to, the professional employee discipline policies, Code of Conduct, responsible use, copyright, property, terroristic threat, vendor access, harassment, and discrimination policies.

Responsibilities:

User – create, send, display, receive and/or store social media communications that are directly affiliated or associated with the Township, having been provided the expressed permission by their own supervisor to do so.

Township Manager, Administrative Services Director – review social media communications as needed and to oversee the enforcement of this policy.

Supervisors, Managers, Directors – advise the users of social media communications and provide information so the user may create, share or display the necessary information or communications.

The Township Manager or his/her designee is hereby granted the authority to create additional administrative regulations, procedures and rules that carry out the purpose of this Social Media Policy. The administrative regulations, procedures and rules accompanying this policy may include, among other items, guidance in implementing and using Newtown Township social media platforms and informational sites, and the responsibility of users for their own behavior when communicating via social media.