

**TOWN OF TOLLAND
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
*AMENDED DECEMBER 11, 2018***

A. Purpose:

1. The Town of Tolland (Town) may utilize social media tools and websites to further enhance communications with various stakeholder organizations in support of goals, policies and programs. Social media, for purposes of this policy, means the use of online technology to communicate with others. Examples of social media tools and websites include without limitation: blogs and social-networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Flickr and dating websites.
2. As part of their job responsibilities, Town employees will be expected to learn to appropriately use available technological resources in order to assist them in their ability to publish articles, facilitate discussions and communicate information through various social media tools and sites when conducting Town business.

B. Use of Town Sponsored/Created Social Media Sites:

1. All Town-sponsored/created social media sites shall be
 - a. Approved by the Town Manager and the requesting Department Director;
 - b. Administered by a designated Town representative as determined by the Town Manager and the Department Director.
2. Only Town employees (including members of volunteer boards/commissions) specifically authorized to post content on Town-sponsored/created social media sites on behalf of the Town will be permitted to do so. Unless authorized to do so, Town employees do not have permission to speak on behalf of the Town via any social media sites. All Town-sponsored/created social media sites shall not be used by any Town employee for the creation, publication, posting or distribution of any personal and/or non-work related written, visual and/or audio correspondence or materials.
3. All Town-sponsored/created social media sites shall adhere to all applicable state, federal and local laws, regulations and Town policies.
4. Freedom of Information Act requirements and electronic-discovery obligations may apply to the content on all Town-sponsored/created social media sites, and therefore, the Town will manage, store and retrieve such content as may be necessary to comply with these requirements and obligations.

5. The Town reserves the right to restrict or remove any content on any Town-sponsored/created social media sites that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law.
6. Examples of content that shall not be allowed to be posted by anyone (including Town employees and members of the public) on any Town-sponsored/created social media sites are (without limitation) as follows:
 - a. Comments not topically related to the particular site or information posted;
 - b. Profanity;
 - c. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination or harassment on the basis of any legally protected status, including race, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, national origin, disability or sexual orientation;
 - d. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 - e. Solicitations of commerce;
 - f. Content demonstrating participation in or encouraging any illegal activity;
 - g. Content that may compromise the safety or security of the Town or the public; or
 - h. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
7. Employees representing the Town via social media outlets must conduct themselves at all times in a professional manner as a representative of Town and in accordance with all applicable state, federal and local laws, regulations and Town policies.
8. Employees found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.
9. All Town-sponsored/created social media sites shall be branded with the newest version of the Town Seal in the area designated by the Town Manager.
10. User names and passwords of all Town-sponsored/created social media sites shall be shared with the Town IT Department within a week of the creation of the site or within a week of updating an existing site.
11. In the event of any declared emergency only one Town department (to be designated by the Town Manager) shall send out pertinent information via social media while other Town departments may retweet or share the information.

C. Personal Use of Social Media Sites

1. Any conduct, which under the law or Town policy is impermissible if expressed in any other format (such as through a conversation, a memo or an e-mail), is impermissible if expressed by an employee through any personal use of social media as well. Further, any employee who chooses to personally use social media needs to be aware of the following:

- a. The personal use of social media is not allowed while employees are on working time (e.g., excluding break time, etc.), regardless of the equipment used (e.g., either using personal or Town phones or computers). Employees may further not use Company equipment for personal reasons in accordance with applicable policies.
 - b. Employees who use social media shall not post any proprietary Town data, documents or photographs, or any information which would violate any privacy laws applicable to the Town, regardless of whether the posting is done during working or non-working time.
 - c. Unless authorized in writing by a management representative (such as when an employee's job is to send public messages on behalf of the Town), employees do not have permission to speak on behalf of the Town via social media.
 - d. While communicating through social media, if an employee posts any content that has something to do with the work they perform for the Town or subjects associated with the business of the Town, employees must make clear that they are not speaking on behalf of the Town by accompanying their posts with a disclaimer such as: "The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily represent the Town's positions or opinions."
 - e. Employees should avoid sending or accepting "friend" requests from supervisors which could result in violations of any applicable Town policies, including without limitation policies pertaining to conflicts of interest and discrimination/harassment.
2. When an employee's use of any social media violates the law or Town policies (including policies pertaining to employee misconduct or job performance), appropriate discipline up to and including termination of employment will be imposed, regardless of when the information was posted or sent and regardless of the tools or site used to post or send such information.
3. Nothing in this policy (or any other Town policy) will be implemented or should be interpreted in any manner so as to prohibit or inhibit employees from engaging in any personal lawful activities through social media, including exercising any rights they may have to engage in protected concerted activity or political activities.