

Borough of Franklin Lakes
Social Media and Public Outreach Policy
Adopted on November 20, 2018

Purpose.

This policy sets forth guidelines for the establishment and use by the Borough of Franklin Lakes ("the Borough") of its social media sites and public outreach tools. For purposes of this policy, "social media" is understood to be websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. "Public outreach tools" is understood to be content created by individuals and published on the Borough's website, e-blast, Nixle, electronic sign, public access television and other Borough communication vehicles. Social media and public outreach tools are a means of conveying Borough-related information to its residents, employees and the general public. The Borough has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is "spoken" on behalf of the Borough on its social media sites and what information gets disseminated through its public outreach tools.

The purpose of this Social Media and Public Outreach Policy ("the Policy") is to establish enforceable rules for the use of social media by Borough officials and employees when engaged in Borough business. Rules are necessary to assure that communications made on behalf of the Borough are properly authorized and in correct form; that communications to the municipality by means of social media which can be viewed by the public are appropriate and pertinent; and that all communications to the municipality is related to the posted municipal information.

General policies.

- No Borough social media site shall be established without prior approval of the Borough Administrator. The Borough social media site and public outreach tools shall be administered by the Borough Administrator or his or her designee.
- Wherever feasible, the Borough social media sites should link back to the official Borough website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with the Borough.
- To the extent feasible, the Policy or a link to the Policy shall be placed on the Borough Website and all Borough social media sites and public outreach tools.
- The Borough Administrator or his or her designee shall monitor Borough social media sites and public outreach tools to ensure adherence to both the Policy and the interest and goals of the Borough. The Borough has the right and will restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of the Policy or any applicable law. Any content removed based on these guidelines will be retained by the Borough Administrator and/or his or her designee pursuant to the applicable Borough retention policy, including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available.
- These guidelines shall be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.

- Employees and volunteers representing the Borough via its social media sites shall conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the Borough and in accordance with the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.
- All Borough presence and activity on social media are part of the Borough's information networks and must comply with all rules and policies governing the Borough's computers and electronic media.
- All Borough policies are applicable to interactions on social media sites when acting in an official capacity and representing the Borough.

Comment policy.

- As a public entity the Borough must abide by certain standards to serve all its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner.
- A comment posted by a member of the public on any Borough 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 Borough.
- The Borough reserves the right to deny access to its social media sites for any individual who violates the Policy at any time and without prior notice.
- All comments posted to any Borough social media site are bound by such social media site's applicable terms and conditions regarding such posting or commenting.
- Persons posting prohibited content are subject to being barred from posting comments on Borough social media.

Prohibited content.

Comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall not be permitted on the Borough's social media sites or public outreach tools and are subject to removal and/or restriction by the Borough Administrator or his or her designee:

- Profane, obscene, violent, or pornographic content and/or language, or sexually suggestive or explicit content 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;
- 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;
- Reference to any political party or activity of a political party;
- Reference to any religious belief;
- Reference to any private interests group or activity of a private interests group;
- Defamatory attacks;
- Threats to any person or organization;
- Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale, except as may be expressly permitted, such as a post on a Shop Local webpage or social media site;
- Conduct in violation of any federal, state or local law;

- Encouragement of illegal activity or illegal activity;
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
- Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as a copyright or other intellectual property rights;
- Private contact information such as names, addresses and phone numbers no matter how easily obtained elsewhere, unless given approval by the individual;
- Spamming or repetitive content;
- 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 social media site, users acknowledge that they are at least 13 years old;
- Content that incites violence;
- Comments unrelated to the particular post being commented upon; and,
- Comments containing vulgar, offensive, threatening or harassing language, personal attacks or accusations.

Persons posting prohibited content are subject to being blocked and barred from posting comments on Borough Social Media.

Terms of use disclosure (to be posted on all Borough social media sites).

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