



Town of Dunstable Social Media Policy

1. Introduction

The Town of Dunstable (the “Town”) permits departments to utilize social media accounts to improve communication with its residents, enhance customer service levels, and inform the public of the work, news, events, and updates from Town departments.

2. Purpose

Establishing general procedures and protocols for the utilization of the Town’s social media accounts to ensure proper and safe use allowing for the effective dissemination of information to the public.

3. General

- A. All employees must be authorized to administer and post to the Town’s social media accounts by the Department Head, Town Administrator, or their designee(s).
- B. All social media postings require approval of the Department Head, Town Administrator, or their designee(s).
- C. All official Town of Dunstable social media accounts shall be listed on the Town’s website: www.dunstable-ma.gov.
- D. Each of the Town’s social media accounts shall include an introductory statement which explains the purpose of the account and link back to the Town’s website. Furthermore, this policy shall be posted on the Town’s website and linked to all social media accounts of the Town of Dunstable.
- E. The Town’s social media accounts shall include a disclaimer to indicate that the site is subject to a third party’s website terms of service, and the site provider may collect and disseminate personal information through the use of the social media site.
- F. All new social media accounts must be approved by the relevant oversight authority, or their designee, in consultation with the Town Administrator.
- G. Content from non-profit or charitable organizations may be posted when it is relevant to the public.
- H. All material posted to the Town’s official social media accounts shall adhere to all applicable law, regulations, and policies including the [Open Meeting Law](#) and is subject to the [Massachusetts Public Record Law](#), including, but not limited to subscriber/follower lists, posts, and direct messages.
- I. The Town’s social media accounts may follow other public entities such as municipal, state, or federal agencies.



4. Social Media Content

- A. The Town's social media accounts shall be utilized for the following purposes:
 - a. Announcement or items of interest to the community;
 - b. Community events and important meetings;
 - c. Emergency notifications;
 - d. Highlighting employees work or introducing employees to the community;
 - e. To direct the public to the Town's website;
 - f. Sharing news items and news articles about the Town.
- B. The Town's social media accounts are not open forums, and comments and content containing the following shall not be allowed for posting, unless otherwise protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution or the Massachusetts Constitution:
 - a. Comments or content in violation of this policy;
 - b. Comments or content not related to the post being commented upon;
 - c. Profanity or obscene language/content;
 - d. Abusive, defamatory, or disparaging content against an individual or content containing personal attacks or insults;
 - e. Comments or content promoting, fostering, or perpetuating discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, disability, maternity leave, genetic information, or active military service;
 - f. Threats or harassment;
 - g. Content violating a legal ownership interest of any other party;
 - h. Comments or content encouraging or conducting illegal activity;
 - i. Information compromising the safety or security of the public;
 - j. Sexual comments, content, or links to sexual content;
 - k. Protected health information or personnel information;
 - l. Comments or content in support or opposition of a political campaign or ballot measure;
 - m. Any other information that is not public record or otherwise privileged from public disclosure.
- C. Once something is posted, it should stay posted unless removed for one of the reasons enumerated in Section 4(B) of this policy, or it is changed to fix spelling or grammatical errors. If a post modification is necessary due to an error, it must be clear that a change was made. Rather than deleting or removing the incorrect content; provide the correct information by a) striking through the error and correct; or b) create a new post with the correct information, and link to it from the post you need to correct or clarify.
- D. On a monthly basis, all social media content shall be retained by printing or storing "screenshots" of all posts on the Town's social media accounts to ensure compliance with the Public Records Law.



5. Employees' Use of Social Media

- A. All employees responsible for managing and posting on the Town's social media accounts shall be provided a copy of this policy and acknowledge receipt.
- B. Only authorized employees shall administer and post on the Town's social media accounts.
- C. Employees shall conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times as a representative of the Town and in accordance with Town policies.
- D. Authorized employees shall not express their personal views or concerns through postings on the Town's social media accounts.
- E. Town social media accounts shall use authorized Town contact information for account set-up, monitoring, and access.
- F. If removal or modification of content is necessary, employees are required to document the original post, the deletion date, and the rationale for removing or modifying the content.

6. Policy Changes

The Select Board reserves the right to change, modify or amend all or part of this policy at any given time.

Approved 5/23/23



SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

This acknowledges receipt of the Town of Dunstable's Social Media Policy and, by signing this form, I agree to abide by the Policy and its Guidelines.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____