

TOWN OF BUCKFIELD SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The Town of Buckfield, hereinafter referred to as the Town, encourages the use of social media to further the goals of the Town and the missions of its departments, where appropriate. The Town has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on behalf of the Town of social media sites.

The best, most appropriate uses of social media tools fall into two categories:

1. As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible; and
2. As marketing/promotional channels used to increase the Town’s ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.

The Town shall approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible. Rules are necessary to assure that communications made on behalf of the Town are properly authorized, in the correct form, and pertinent. Content posted on social media must relate directly to Town business.

Any pages or sites created and/or maintained by an individual department or program of the Town require prior approval of the Town Manager or designee, and shall comply with this Policy. Only individuals authorized by the Town Manager or his/her designee may publish content to the Town’s website or social media sites. Items, events, and/or news shall only be shared via social media if they are appropriate for the page or in the event of a public safety emergency.

All Town use of social media must comply with applicable federal, state, and county laws, regulations and policies. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, records retention, Freedom of Access Act (FOAA), First Amendment, and privacy laws.

Social media sites are not to be used for making any official communications to the Town. For example, reporting crimes or misconduct, reporting dangerous conditions, giving notice required by statute, ordinance or regulation (e.g. notice of claim), etc. This paragraph shall be prominently displayed on every Town social media site, along with the appropriate information for submitting such a communication.

The Town Manager shall have the authority to hide prohibited content as listed below from any Town social media site at any time. Comments should not be deleted, but hidden from the page, to comply with FOAA and public records retention.

Town Department Heads, at their discretion, may elect to not allow comments or posts. Private messaging shall not be allowed under any circumstances. Department Heads are responsible for notifying the Town Manager of any “flagged” content.

Articles and/or comments containing any of the following content shall not be allowed:

- Comments not related to the particular topic being commented upon;
- Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
- Profane or inflammatory language or content;
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
- Sexual content or link to sexual content;
- Solicitations of commerce;
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity; or
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public.


The Town Manager shall maintain a list of all social media sites and shall have access to edit such sites in the case of an emergency. Department Heads shall be responsible for his/her respective Department’s site and shall monitor content on social media sites to ensure adherence to this Policy for appropriate use, messaging, and branding.

Terms of use for site visitors must be posted prominently, unless prohibited by the site. The Town suggests the use of the following disclaimer: *“Communications posted by visitors to the site may not contain ethnic slurs or profanity; material that is inflammatory, harassing, defamatory, fraudulent, discriminatory, sexually explicit; or any material that infringes copyright, trademark or other intellectual property. Such content will be removed and user may be blocked.”*

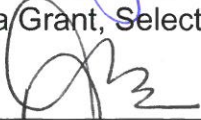
This Policy was enacted by the Buckfield Select Board at a Meeting duly called on September 18th, 2018.



Cheryl Coffman, Select Person



Dona Grant, Select Person



Tina Brooks, Select Person