

TOWN OF MIDDLETOWN

Approved by Burgess and Commissioners on March 11, 2019

Revised - September 13, 2021

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Purpose:

This policy establishes guidelines for the Town of Middletown to establishment and use social media sites (including but not limited to Facebook and Twitter) for government communication, a means of conveying information to its residents, businesses, and guests.

The intended purpose of establishing and using the town of Middletown's social media sites is to disseminate information about the Town of Middletown's events, news, and information that is pertinent to the Town of Middletown's residents, businesses, and visitors.

Definitions:

Social Media: the various web sites and activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation. By way of example, but not limitation, some commonly use social media sites are Facebook and Twitter.

Town email account: an email account provided or approved by the Town of Middletown, which is used for official business.

Town Social Media/Networking Site: a website or social media tool which has been created, reviewed and approved for use by the Burgess and/or designee.

Post: a message/blog submitted by the Administrator including, but not limited to text, videos, photographs, graphic links, computer applications, etc.

Administrator: the individual designated by the Town of Middletown to submit posts for official purposes.

General Policy

The official Town of Middletown web site found at <http://www.middletown.md.us> will remain the Town's predominant internet presence for official information. Whenever possible, social media sites should link back to the Town of Middletown web site for information to conduct business and communicate with the Town of Middletown.

Any comments or questions can be emailed to office@ci.middletown.md.us or called to the town office at 301-371-6171. All social media postings will contain the above contact information for comments and questions.

The establishment and use by the Town of Middletown of social media sites are subject to approval by the Burgess or his/her designees. All Town of Middletown social media sites shall be administered by Town of Middletown staff.

Social media sites maintained by the Town of Middletown should make clear that they are maintained by the Town of Middletown, that they follow the Social Media Policy and adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies.

Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to the Town of Middletown business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record subject to public disclosure. Freedom of information Act laws and policies apply to social media content and therefore content must be able to be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with these laws.

The Social Media Policy may be revised at any time.

Employee Conduct

Every effort will be made to keep postings on Social Media factual and accurate. When possible, links to credible sources of information will be provided.

Any communication that is later found in error will be publicly corrected.

Comments posted by Town of Middletown employees on their personal social media sites regarding Town of Middletown matters must specify the following statement "the postings on this site are my own and do not reflect or represent the opinions of the Town of Middletown for which I work".

Elected/Appointed Official's Guidelines

Elected and Appointed officials who choose to have a social media presence should create separate accounts for:

1. Personal use and opinions
2. Public use in representing the Town of Middletown
3. Campaign use in elections.

Elected/Appointed officials also need to be aware that participation of a quorum of members in a social media posting may constitute a meeting and could be a violation of the Open Meetings laws.

Ethics Compliance

Employees, elected and appointed officials recognize that the content and messages they post on social media sites are public and may be cited as official Town statements. Town employees, elected and appointed officials may not publish information on town social media sites that include:

- Confidential information
- Copyright violations
- Profanity, racist, sexist or derogatory content or comments
- Partisan political views
- Commercial endorsements or SPAM

If you would like to learn about the Town of Middletown, Maryland, please visit our website:

www.middletown.md.us. If you have specific questions or concerns, please contact the Town Office at 301-371-6171 or e-mail office@ci.middletown.md.us.

Town of Myersville Social Media Management Policy

Introduction

This policy sets forth guidelines for the Town of Myersville's (The Town's) use of social media sites as a means of conveying the Town's information to the public. The intended purpose behind the use of the Town's social media sites is to disseminate information from the Town, about the Town, to the public in a civil manner. This policy is in addition to and compliments any existing or future Town policies regarding the use of technology, computers, smart phones, e-mail and the internet.

Nothing in this policy shall be applied to prohibit or infringe upon any communication, speech or expression that is protected or privileged under law. This includes speech and expression protected under State or Federal constitutions as well as labor laws or other applicable laws.

Policy


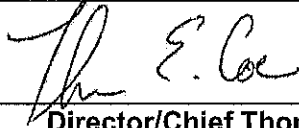
"Social media" means the various websites and activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation that is accessible through the internet. By way of example, but not limitation, some commonly used social media sites are Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, and LinkedIn.

"Town's social media sites" means a website or social media tool which has been created, reviewed and approved for use by the Mayor and Council.

"Administrator" means the individual designated by the Town to submit posts for official purposes and to review comments to assure compliance with this policy.

"Post" or "postings" means a message/blog submitted by the Administrator including, but not limited to, text, video, articles, photographs, website links, computer applications, or other forms of communication posted on a Town social media account.

"Comments" means a visitor submitted statement, replying to a post or offering from an administrator post.

	Frederick County, Maryland Division of Fire and Rescue Services STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE	
	1.00.10	Social Media
Effective Date: October 1, 2023		Page 1 of 3
Revised From: December 13, 2016		Related Forms:
Approved:  Director/Chief Thomas E. Coe		

SECTION I: PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define and regulate the use of social media, and to mitigate associated risks from the use of this technology where possible. This policy may, in conjunction with Frederick County Government's or any Frederick County Volunteer company's social media policy, providing the policies are not in conflict.

SECTION II: APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all personnel of the Frederick County Division of Fire and Rescue Services (DFRS).

SECTION III: DEFINITIONS

- A. Blog – A self-published diary or commentary on a particular topic that may allow others to post responses, reactions, or comments.
- B. Page – The specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed and managed by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.
- C. Profile – Information that a user provides about him or herself on a social networking site.
- D. Protected Health Information (PHI) – Individually identifiable health information held or maintained by a covered entity, or its business associates acting for the covered entity, that is transmitted or maintained in any form or medium. This includes identifiable demographic or other information collected on an individual from a health care provider relating to the past, present, or future physical or mental health or condition of the individual, or the provision or payment of health care to an individual that is created or received by a health care provider (i.e. Patient name, address, birth date, etc.).
- E. Social Media – forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content. The term social media includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Twitter, SnapChat and YouTube.

5. Personnel are individually responsible for the content they publish online, whether in a blog, social media site, or any other form of user-generated media. Be mindful that what you publish is public and can be searchable and accessible by others, and, are subject to being re-published on other social platforms.
6. The use of vulgar or profane language, threatening or personal attacks of any kind, comments or 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 intellectual disability or sexual orientation; and/or advocacy of illegal activity may be deemed violations of County and/or departmental policies and procedures.
7. Personnel are prohibited from posting, transmitting, or otherwise disseminating any confidential information or PHI about emergency runs, incident responses, or patients' images or videos, to which they have participated in or observed as a result of their Frederick County Fire and Rescue affiliation.
8. Personnel shall not post topics or statements that may be interpreted as representing an organizational position, interfere with or discuss confidential departmental investigations, or attempt to or actually coerce or intimidate members into inappropriate actions or behaviors.
9. The use or display of departmental logos, uniforms or similarly identifying items must be in compliance with departmental policies and procedures.

D. Violations

1. DFRS will impose sanctions in accordance with the Employee Discipline policy of the Standard Operating Procedures.
2. Member Companies of FCVFRA will impose sanctions to the degree necessary to correct improper behavior.
3. A failure by a member company of FCVRA to enforce the provision of this policy may result in an enforcement by the Director/Chief of the Division of Fire and Rescue Services.