

Town of Scarborough

Social Media Policy

[Adopted February 2016]

PURPOSE

The Town Of Scarborough strives to provide, taxpayers, residents, businesses and the public with accurate and timely information, communicated in a professional manner and in accordance with the laws regarding public access. The Town Of Scarborough has several objectives when doing so:

- To effectively inform citizens businesses about the Town Of Scarborough
- To demonstrate, underscore and clarify the role of the Town Of Scarborough, the administration and elected and appointed officials and their profound importance in managing a community.
- To demonstrate the vital services that Scarborough provides.

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way residents communicate and obtain information online, Town of Scarborough and its departments may consider using social media tools to reach a broader audience. The Town encourages the use of social media to further the goals of the Town and the missions of its departments, where appropriate.

Social media includes sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and others. The Town recognizes that taxpayers, residents, businesses and the general public increasingly gather information through these and other electronic sites, sometimes to the exclusion of traditional media. It is necessary to use these tools to communicate effectively and fully.

The Town of Scarborough recognizes that the instantaneous, yet permanent, nature of these electronic tools can pose risk without effective controls. A starting point for discussion is that information and statements posted on websites and through social media reflect directly on the Town Of Scarborough and require great care. In recognition of these needs, the Town will post to its Facebook page in the Facebook member category listed as non-interactive, business/non-profit page on which the Town will limit outside posts. The exception will be the Police Department's social media presence as two-way communication serves a vital purpose in serving the community.

The Town of Scarborough has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is "spoken" on behalf of the Town on social media sites. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media.

GENERAL

1. All Town of Scarborough social media sites posted by executive departments will be subject to approval by the Town Manager.
2. The Town of Scarborough's official website (<http://www.scarboroughmaine.org>) will remain the Town's primary and predominant internet presence and social media involvement serves to direct attention to the website.
3. The best, most appropriate Town of Scarborough uses of social media tools fall generally into two categories:

- As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (example: emergency information).
 - As marketing/promotional channels which increase the Town's ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.
4. Wherever possible, content posted to Town of Scarborough's social media sites will also be available on the Town's official website.
 5. Wherever possible, content posted to Town of Scarborough social media sites should contain links directing users back to the Town's official websites for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with the Town.
 6. As is the case for website, departmental public information staff will be responsible for the content and upkeep of any social media sites their department may create.
 7. This guideline does not usurp or replace existing policies or guidelines relating to computer usage. Wherever possible, all Town of Scarborough social media sites shall comply with all appropriate and applicable Town of Scarborough policies and standards, including but not limited to:
 - a) Employee Handbook
 - b) Personnel Ordinance, Chapter 303
 - c) Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy
 8. Town of Scarborough social media sites shall comply with State of Maine Ethics and Elections code and administrative rules.
 9. Town of Scarborough social media sites are subject to State of Maine Freedom Of Information Act requirements. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to Town business is a public record. All requests for public records request for public records on social media shall be referred to the Public Information Officer; however the Department responsible for maintaining any social media site is responsible for maintaining public records shall maintain such public records in an accessible format so that it can be produced in response to a request. Wherever possible, such sites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure. Users shall be notified that public disclosure requests must be directed to the Public Information Officer.
 10. State of Maine records retention schedules apply to social media formats and social media content. Unless otherwise addressed in a specific social media standards document, the Department maintaining a site shall preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period on a Town server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible.
 11. Though most social media presence will be designed around one-way communication from the Town, the Police Department Facebook page will be open to allow for communication with the public. When interaction with the public is allowed, users and visitors to social media sites shall be notified that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a mechanism for communication between the Town and members of the public. In these circumstances,

the general rules of decorum shall apply and all participants shall strive to be accurate in their statements and avoid making personal, rude or provocative remarks.

Specifically, Town of Scarborough social media site articles and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed:

- a) Comments intended or perceived as bullying;
- b) Comments not topically related to the particular social medium article being commented upon;
- c) Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
- d) Profane language or content;
- e) 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;
- f) Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- g) Solicitations of commerce;
- h) Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- i) Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
- j) Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available.

The Town reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law.

12. The Town will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible, enterprise wide.

13. For each social media tool approved for use by the Town the following documentation will be developed and adopted:

- o Operational and use guidelines
- o Standards and processes for managing accounts on social media sites
- o Town and departmental branding standards
- o Enterprise-wide design standards
- o Standards for the administration of social media sites