

Borough of North Caldwell

Social Media Policy

For purposes of this policy, a social network is defined as a site that uses internet services to allow individuals to construct a profile within that system, define a list of others users with whom they share some connection, and view and access their list of connections and those made by others within that system. The type of network and its design vary from site to site. Examples of the types of internet based social networking activities include: blogging, networking, photo sharing, video sharing, microblogging, podcasting, as well as posting comments on the sites. These websites have large, loyal user bases and are increasingly useful outreach and communication tools for government entities from the federal to the local level. A social networking presence has become an essential component in most communications strategies. The absence of, or lack of explicit reference to a specific site or activity does not limit the extent of the application of this provision.

Social networking improves interactivity between a local government and the public, and it reaches populations that do not consume traditional media as frequently as others do. Therefore, The Borough of North Caldwell may consider using social networking websites to enhance their communications strategies. In doing so, however, the Borough of North Caldwell will take care to choose the types of social networks that make the most sense for their type of information and that give emphasis to tools that provide more information across multiple outlets to the broadest audience. The objective of the use of social media by the Borough or its departments is to expand and facilitate communication between the Borough and its residents, taxpayers and the general public, so that interested citizens may also share Borough information.

I. General:

This policy governs all social media use by or on behalf of the Borough and/or its departments.

1. The Borough shall have a single presence on each social media site approved for use. Any pages or sites created and/or maintained by an individual department or instrumentality of the Borough require prior approval of the Governing Body, and shall comply with this Social Media Policy. All Borough of North Caldwell social media sites will be subject to approval by the Governing Body.
2. The Borough of North Caldwell's website (www.northcaldwell.org) will remain the Borough's primary and predominant internet presence.
 - a. The best, most appropriate uses of social media tools fall generally into two categories:
 - i. As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible; Example: emergency information.

ii. As marketing/promotional channels which increase the Borough's ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.

b. Wherever possible, content posted to Borough of North Caldwell social media sites will also be available on the Borough's main website. The Borough's official website will remain at the forefront for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services necessary to conduct business with the Borough of North Caldwell.

3. As is the case for the Borough's website, one point of contact will be responsible for the content and upkeep of any social media sites the Borough may create.
4. All Borough presence and activity on social media are an integral part of the Borough's information networks and must comply with all rules and policies governing the Borough's computers and electronic media, including but not limited to the applicable Communication Media Policy included in the Employee Policy and Procedures Manual.
5. All Borough use of social media, including use by departments or instrumentalities of the Borough, are responsible for complying with applicable federal, state, and county laws, regulations, and policies. This includes adherence to established laws and policies regarding copyright, records retention, Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Open Public Record Act (OPRA), First Amendment, privacy laws, sunshine laws, and information security policies (if applicable) established by the Borough, its departments, affiliated boards, commissions and authorities. Borough of North Caldwell social media sites are subject to State of New Jersey public records laws. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to Borough business is a public record. The Department maintaining the site is responsible for responding completely and accurately to any public records request for public records on social media. Users shall be notified that public disclosure requests must be directed to the relevant departmental public disclosure officer.
6. Employees representing the Borough government on social media outlets must identify themselves by name, and when relevant, by role at the Borough. All Borough policies are applicable to interactions on social media sites when acting in an official capacity and representing the Borough.
7. The designated municipal webmaster shall monitor content on all social media sites to ensure adherence to the Social Media Policy for appropriate use, message, and branding consistent with the goals of the Borough.
8. Social media sites are not to be used by the public for making any official communications to the Borough, for example, reporting crimes or misconduct, reporting dangerous conditions, giving notice required by any statute, ordinance or regulation (e.g. notice of claim). Prominent notice of this paragraph shall be displayed on every

Borough social media site, along with the appropriate contact information for submitting such a communication.

9. The municipal webmaster shall have the authority to remove any Prohibited Content (Section II below) from any Borough social media site at any time, subject to archiving and retention requirements.
10. The Borough of North Caldwell reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law.
11. The Borough of North Caldwell will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible.
12. All new social media tools proposed for Borough of North Caldwell use will be approved by the Governing Body.
13. The Borough Administrator will maintain a list of social media tools and sites which are approved for use, including login and password information. The Borough of North Caldwell must be able to immediately edit or remove content from social media sites.

II. Prohibited Content

The intended purpose of Borough social media sites is to serve as a mechanism for communication between Borough departments and members of the public. Borough of North Caldwell social media site articles and comments containing any of the following forms of content is prohibited and subject to removal:

- a. Comments unrelated to the particular post being commented upon;
- b. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
- c. Profane, vulgar, offensive, threatening or harassing language or content, personal attacks or unsupported accusations;
- d. 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;
- e. Obscene or sexually suggestive or explicit content or links to obscene or sexual content;
- f. Solicitations of commerce;
- g. Content that incites violence;
- h. Illegal activity or encouragement of illegal activity;
- i. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
- j. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party;

- k. 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 media site, users acknowledge that they are at least 13 years old;
- l. Comments with website, email or Internet links of any kind;
- m. Photographs or videos;
- n. Personal information of a person other than the poster;
- o. Spamming or repetitive content.

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.

Persons posting prohibited content are subject to being barred from posting comments on Borough Social Media. The Borough of North Caldwell reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law.

III. COMMENT POLICY

As a public entity the Borough must abide by certain standards to serve all its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner. The intended purpose behind establishing the Borough Social Media sites and public outreach tools is to disseminate information from the Borough about the Borough to its residents, employees and visitors.

1. 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.
2. Any attempt to hack or otherwise compromise the Borough's internet or Social Media sites will be reported to law enforcement and the perpetrator will be denied access to the sites.
3. The Borough reserves the right to deny access to its Social Media sites for any individual who violates the Borough of North Caldwell's Social Media Policy at any time and without prior notice.
4. All comments posted to any current or future Social Media medium or site shall be bound by such site's applicable terms and conditions regarding such posting or commenting.

5. Persons posting prohibited content are subject to being barred from posting comments on Borough social media.

IV. Applicability

This policy shall apply to all Borough agencies and departments as well as any affiliated government or non-government agency or official permitted by the Borough to post on Borough social media sites.

V. Breach of Policy

Internet postings on Borough social media sites that are deemed to constitute a breach of this Policy as determined by the Borough Administrator shall be removed subject to applicable archiving and retention requirements. If a social media site is frequently in violation of this Policy, it shall be permanently deleted. Any entity found by the Borough Administrator to have violated any aspect of this Policy shall be banned from having a presence on social media for a period of time deemed appropriate by the Borough. Any Borough employee or volunteer found by the Borough Administrator to have violated any aspect of this Policy shall be banned from having a presence on social media for a period of time deemed appropriate by the Borough. Any illegal activity shall be reported to the appropriate authorities.

Any Social Media site created by the Borough remains the property of the Borough, including all the followers and friends generated by the site. If the person who created the site leaves the employment of the Borough, they must immediately relinquish all Borough Social Media information related to the site including user names, passwords and/or access codes or information.

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***FOR INCLUSION IN THE EMPLOYEE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES MANUAL***

The use of the internet and social networking sites is a popular activity; however, employees must be mindful of the negative impact of inappropriate or unauthorized postings upon the Employer and its relationship with the community. This provision identifies prohibited activities by employees on the internet where posted information is accessible to members of the general public, including, but not limited to, public postings on social networking sites.

Specifically, the Employer reserves the right to investigate postings, private or public, that violate work-place rules, such as the prohibition of sexual harassment and other discriminatory conduct, where such postings lawfully are made available to the Employer by other employees or third parties. Employees should use common sense in all communications, particularly on a website or social networking site accessible to anyone. If you would not be comfortable with your supervisor, coworkers, or the management team reading your words, you should not write them.

Be advised that employees can be disciplined for commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or that can create a hostile work environment. You can also be sued by agency employees or any individual who views your commentary, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. What you say or post on your site or what is said or posted on your site by others could potentially be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. However, nothing in this social networking policy is designed to interfere with, restrain, or prevent social media communications during non-working hours by employees engaging in protected concerted activities regarding wages, hours, or other terms and conditions of employment pursuant to the New Jersey Employer-Employee Relations Act or to prevent communications which are protected by the First Amendment freedom of speech clause, unless such communications are made as part of the employees' official job duties.