

Public Information – Section 6

Updates to: 6.8 Social Media Policy

Removed all references to Social Media Handbook

Purpose:

Hamburg Township supports the use of social media technology to enhance communication, collaboration, and exchange of information exchange to further the goals of the Township where appropriate. This policy establishes policies and procedures for social media covering all Township employees, Township Board members, and/or Committee members. This policy may evolve as new technologies and social media offerings change, or are adopted.

Definitions:

Content: Words, Video, Audio, or any combination of these things, which are used to relay a message to the public through Social Media Networks.

Social Media Networks: Examples of this are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Cable Channel, Website, etc.

Social Media Specialist(s): Staff member and/or Township Board or Committee member who has been granted authority by the Social Media Director to perform the duties as outlined in this policy as relates social media for their particular category.

Social Media Director: Township Official, or designee, who has been granted authority by the Township Board of Trustees to oversee, or perform, all social media activities of the Social Media Specialist, and approve content for the category they have been assigned. They work with the Township Clerk for all press releases no matter the category of content.

Emergency Management Director: Township Official, or staff member, as listed in the Emergency Management Plan Resolution, who is authorized to direct staff to post on any platform, for purposes of relaying timely information to the public in an emergency situation.

Social Media Activities: Include, but are not limited to: Social Media Posts, Advertising, Township Newsletter, Local Newspaper Articles, Cable Channel Programming, Printed Media, Public speaking engagements and/or presentations.

Technology Director: Head of the IT Department, or designee, who maintains a list of approved social media networks and sites for official use. Has final authority to edit or remove official social media sites, and any content therein, should there be a security issue, or at the direction of the Township Board.

Township Clerk: Maintains all record of public comment, backups, and is main point of contact for all Press releases.

Responsibilities

The Social Media Specialist will:

- Develop and distribute social media posts on assigned mediums, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and/or the Township website or cable channel.
- Assist Clerk in developing press releases, newsletter articles, printed materials, presentations, etc.
- Ensure all social media sites and channels are kept current.
- Have authority to respond to comments for all posts.
 - Informational questions that can be easily responded to.
 - Sensitive questions/comments, or that the specialist is not comfortable responding to, will be referred to the assigned Social Media Director for suggested response, if any. The Director may in turn refer to the Technology Director for final action.
 - Monitors sites daily and responds to comments in a polite and respectful tone.
 - Ensures that all content is appropriate, professional, and consistent with Township Policy and branding.
 - Ability to make comments via their own devices after hours as authorized/approved by their Department Head and the Social Media Director.
- Stay current with social media networks, and have the ability to measure performance metrics.
- Have a familiarity with the ads platform for each medium, if any (useful).
- Keep the Social Media Director informed of the used social media sites and activities.
- Provide available reports, or copies of posts/comments, as requested through F.O.I.A. or by the Hamburg Township Board of Trustees.

The Social Media Director(s) will:

- Approve the Social Media Activity plans for their category, as well as the addition of any new platforms, with approval from the Technology Director.
- Oversees and is responsible for content posted by the Social Media Specialist(s).
- Authorizes Advertising Budgets, if any, for media campaigns and boosted posts.
- Designate a Social Media Specialist and back-up responsible for overseeing the category's social media activities, policy compliance, and responding to comments completely, accurately and in a timely manner.
- Designate appropriate usage levels including identifying what social media accounts individuals are approved to use, as well as defining roles.
- Monitor Google Information Panels and ensure accurate information is reflected and post responses to comments as needed.

The Technology Director will:

- Have final authority to edit or remove official social media sites, and any content therein, should there be a security issue.
- Maintain a list of approved social media networks, passwords, registered email addresses, and list of authorized site users for the purpose of emergency management.
- Provide training opportunities to staff on best practices and provide samples of acceptable content.

- Work with the Emergency Management Director to draft and distribute content in an emergency situation.
- Ensure all social media sites have the correct security settings with the assistance of Social Media Specialist and their assigned Director.

Procedures

While the content for each Department within the Township varies, the overall theme, tone, and professionalism must be carried through. Examples of typical posts, as well as ones used for media blasts/promotions, will be by the Social Media Director . The Technology Director and each Social Media Director will ensure that the staff member given the responsibility for the public face of the Department is:

- Familiar with the content allowed based on applicable Federal and state laws, ordinances, regulations, and Township policies. This includes but is not limited to laws regarding personally identifiable information, copyright, records retention, First Amendment, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), The Privacy Act, and employment related laws.
- Is responsible and equipped to carry-out social media activity in accordance with the current Township Social Policy.

Departments who choose to utilize social media for things other than typical posts, such as media blasts/promotions, shall:

- Submit a Social Media Action Plan to their assigned Social Media Manager, for public events/advertising, that identifies the department's mission, goals, objectives, audiences, and measures of success.
- Request, and have approved, a "not to exceed" budget for their efforts. Advertising and boosted posts can be successful in reaching beyond organic reach, and can target specific demographics for things such as: completing surveys, public meeting announcements, important safety related posts.
- May approve the distribution/advertising through a vendor hired for specific purposes such as planning, engineering, etc. The social media plan would be developed by the vendor/contractor and submitted to the Social Media Director and Technology Director for approval.

Authorized Use

Hamburg Township respects the right of any employee to engage in online social networking using the Internet, other technology, and social media networks during their personal time. This includes instant messages, text, video, photos, and audio. While we respect the employee's right of self-expression, in order to protect the Township's interests and ensure employees focus on their job duties, employees must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Employees may not engage in such activities during work time, or at any time with Township equipment or property, without Social Media Director's approval, or within the confines of the expected duties of Social Media Specialist.
- Information published on social media networks that has to do with any aspect of work must comply with all confidentiality requirements, HIPAA, and Township Policies. Information related

to persons receiving services from the Township must not be disclosed. Privacy rights of fellow employees and Township Board members must be respected.

- Township Departments or employees may not create a social networking site or service to conduct Township business without a Social Media Action Plan and approval from the Social Media Director assigned to their category, with review by the Technology Director.
- If the employee mentions the Township while engaging in social networking and also expresses a view or opinion regarding the Township's actions, the person must specifically note that the statement is his/her personal view or opinion and not the view or opinion of the Township. This standard disclaimer does not by itself exempt program supervisors, managers, coordinators, and the Township Board from special responsibility when using personal social networks.
- By virtue of your position as a Hamburg Township Employee, you are held to a higher standard than general members of the public, and your online activities should reflect professionalism.
- Users must immediately report violations of this policy to their program manager or supervisor, as well to the Human Resources Director.
- All program managers and supervisors are responsible for enforcing this policy. Employees who violate this policy are subject to discipline up to and including termination from employment, professional discipline, or criminal prosecution, in accordance with the Hamburg Township Personnel Policy and Procedure Manual.

Approved Social Media Networks, Cable Channels, Websites

Departments shall only utilize Township approved social media networks for hosting official Township social media sites. A list will be maintained by the Technology Director, and made available to the Social Media Director(s). Networks may vary for use depending on the category of content.

- Social Media Action Plans, for anything other than approved daily use, will be reviewed and approved by the Social Media Director and Technology Director prior to public release.
- Social media sites that are created on behalf of any Township Department that are not approved by the Technology Director and Social Media Director, will be in violation of this policy. Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual.
- For each approved social media network, usage guidelines will be relayed by the Social Media Director.
- The Social Media Specialist is responsible for the creation of Hamburg Township's social media sites, at the direction of their Social Media Director and/or the Technology Director.
 - Social media sites will be created using official Township email accounts, or other approved email such as Gmail, on file with the Technology Director.
 - Passwords will be created and maintained by the Social Media Specialist, with copies on file with the Technology Director, and will conform to password requirements. Passwords shall be promptly reset when authorized access is removed.
 - Social Media Directors shall notify the Technology Director immediately in the case of termination for any employee with authorized use of any social media networks used by the Township.

Authenticity Establishment & Site Content

Hamburg Township's social media sites shall be created and maintained with identifiable characteristics of an official Township site. Both creation and maintenance of sites, and the content there in, shall comply with procedures as outlined in the Social Media Handbook. Wherever possible, links should direct users back to the Township's official website for more information, forms, documents, or online services. Social Media should not serve as a duplication of efforts, but as a way to further the goals and mission of the Township.

A list of undesirable content and/or words posted by external and authorized users will be provided to the Social Media Specialist who may remove them at their discretion, and/or by the direction of the Social Media Director, as outlined in the Social Media handbook. This includes, but is not limited to, removal of public comments using profanity and/or inappropriate images.

All Township content will be informational and non-partisan in nature. Resident and visitor comments on posts, including the request to remove inappropriate, insensitive, or misleading information, will be responded to in a timely manner.

Security Compromise

If a compromise is identified on any official Township social media site, the managing Social Media Director and the Technology Director, must be notified immediately. The Social Media Specialist will change appropriate passwords immediately to isolate the incident, and archive compromising content as outlined in the Social Media Handbook.

The Technology Director has final authority to edit or remove official social media sites, and any content therein, should there be a security issue, or at the direction of the Township Board.

Record of Updates

This policy will evolve as new technologies and social media sites change.