

Village of Harrison Social Networking Policy

I. Purpose and Scope

The Village of Harrison has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “announced” or “spoken” on behalf of the Village through the use of social media. This policy establishes guidelines for the establishment and use of social media by the Village of Harrison for conveying information about the Village and its events and activities. This policy also establishes guidance for employees acting in a personal capacity when using social media.

The Village’s intent is to create a “government speech forum” or a “limited forum” devoted exclusively to the Harrison’s postings to the public. 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.

II. Policy

a. Village Website

The Village of Harrison website (<http://www.harrison-wi.org>) is the Village’s primary and predominant internet presence. All of Harrison’s website content and social media sites that are posted by departments and offices will be subject to approval by the Village Manager or designee. Social media use should complement rather than replace the Village’s primary website. Only employees authorized by the Village Manager or designee are authorized to post content on the Village website.

b. Social Media Provider Terms of Service

Social media is defined as the various activities that integrate technology, social interaction, and content creation. Through social media, individuals or groups may create, organize, edit, comment on, combine, and share content. Social media providers offer web pages that provide a means for various forms of discussion and information-sharing and include features such as social networks, blogs, video sharing, podcasts, wikis, message boards, and news media comment sharing/blogging. Social media providers are hosted by websites that authorize multiple users to establish, post content on, and operate their own individual social media profile. Technologies associated with social media often include picture and video sharing, wall postings, e-mail, instant messaging, and music sharing. Examples of websites that host social media profiles include, but are not limited to, Facebook (social networking); YouTube (social networking and video sharing); and X (social networking and microblogging).

Each social media provider maintains a terms of use agreement for users. All posts and comments on any Harrison social media profile are bound by these terms and conditions. The Village has the right to report any user violation under the terms and conditions. This policy

does not modify the terms and conditions established by the social media provider. Nor does the Village assume any responsibility or liability for decisions made by the social media provider involving the conduct or absence of conduct by the social media provider or by the user.

The terms and conditions of the social media provider represent a binding contract. No employee may execute such terms of service or enter into an agreement on behalf of the Village without authorization from the Village Manager.

c. Social Media Posting

As a public entity, Harrison must abide by certain standards to serve all constituents in a civil and unbiased manner. Only employees authorized by the Village Manager are authorized to post content on an authorized Harrison social media profile on behalf of the Village. The Program Assistant, under the direction of the Village Manager, will maintain a list of social media profiles, including login and password information, approved for use by departments and employees for communicating the Village's business. Any social media profiles used by the Village, including any login information and passwords, are the property of Harrison, and not the property of an employee or other party. Any social media profile used by the Village must be capable of editing, removing, and archiving content from social media websites.

For each social media profile approved for use by the Village Manager, the following documentation will be developed and adopted:

- A list of authorized employees who may manage the social media profile
- Operational and use guidelines
- Standards and processes for managing accounts on social media sites
- Branding standards
- Design standards
- Standards for the administration of social media sites

Authorized employees representing the Village on social media must conduct themselves at all times as professional and dignified representatives of the Village of Harrison and in accordance with all policies, directives, and professional expectations.

Employees posting content on behalf of the Village must follow these guiding principles:

- Communication must be consistent with the goals, branding, mission, vision, and values of the Village of Harrison.
- Communications must be factual and accurate and not reflect opinions or biases.
- Communicate meaningful, respectful entries that are on topic while also recognizing that postings are widely accessible and not easily retractable.
- Communications must be written in plain business English with proper grammar and vocabulary and should avoid acronyms and jargon.

- Communications must comply with policy, directives, professional expectations, and respect for privacy, confidentiality, and applicable legal guidelines for external communication.
- Ensure that legal right exists to publish all materials, including photos and articles, and comply with all trademark, copyright, fair use, disclosure of processes and methodologies, confidentiality, and financial disclosure laws.
- If identifying yourself, then maintain transparency by using your real name and job title and by being clear about your role regarding the subject. Write and post only about your area of expertise. Remember that your postings are your responsibility.
- Communications must never be for political purposes or in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures.
- Communications must never be for purposes of private business activity or commerce or for personal motivation or sharing of personal opinion or commentary.
- Communications must not promote, foster, or perpetuate discrimination, harassment, or retaliation on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or other protected status.
- Communications must not compromise the safety or security of the public, public systems, or public services.

Authorized employees posting on behalf of the Village may not post content to the Harrison social media profiles or engage in social networking activities related to publishing the Village business during personal time. All social media activity must be made as part of the Employees regular work activity.

An important part of social media use is restraint. While the Village desires to inform the community of the Village's business, the Village is not entering into a debate or discourse with those reading the social media profile. As such, "commenting," "liking," or "non-liking" of a post or comment by any other person is not permitted except in the following limited circumstances:

- An authorized employee may respond to a comment when the employee is providing contact information to the commenter to seek or provide further information.
- An employee may respond to a comment or post to direct the poster to the Village's website or to a previous social media post by the Village.

The employee's name and title should be made available in the responsive comment.

d. Reporting/Removal of Social Media Activity

A post, like, or comment by a member of the public on any Village of Harrison social media profile is the opinion of the commentator or poster only. Publication of a user's post, a like, or a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the Village or reflect the opinions or policies of the Village. The Village of Harrison assumes no liability for any comment, like, or post made by another person.

The general position of the Village is to use social media that promotes one-way communication from the Village to the public and to make clear that the social media platform used is merely reserved for government speech to allow municipal officials to post notices and information.

If a forum allowing for two-way or multi-way communication is created, then an authorized employee may, with the approval of the Village Manager, regulate comments or posts made by other persons on the Village's social media profile as provided herein. The Village requires that authorized employees immediately notify the Village Manager if there is any posted material that may violate this policy, violates the terms of use of the social media provider, is illegal, or potentially infringes the copyrights or other rights of any persons. The Village Manager or designee will investigate and address the potential violation. If the comment or post violates the terms of use established by the social media provider, then the authorized employee may notify the social media provider and report the post or comment. If a comment or post demonstrates or incites unlawful behavior, then the authorized employee may notify law enforcement authorities. If the comment or post contains any of the following content, the comment may be subject to removal or restriction by the Village of Harrison:

- Obscene content;
- Content that is threatening or incites violence;
- Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to, advertising of any non-Harrison related event, or business or product for sale;
- Conduct in violation of any federal, state or local law;
- Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates unlawful activity;
- Content that infringes the intellectual property rights of others;
- Content that is malicious or harmful software or malware.

e. Blocking or Banning a User

When we determine that a user has violated these terms and conditions by delivering prohibited content on three or more occasions within a twelve-month rolling period, we may block or ban the offending user from the social media account where the violations occurred for 12 months. We may also block any other profiles created by that user for the same period. If we block or ban a user, we will reasonably attempt to notify the user and describe the violation. The user has the right to appeal this decision.

f. Record Retention

The Village of Harrison utilizes CivicPlus Social Media Archiving software for all social media content published by the Village for the purposes of public records retention as may be required by applicable law. Records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period in a format that preserves the integrity of the record

and is accessible. Any content removed by the Village based on these guidelines must be retained in accordance with the applicable retention schedule including the time, date and identity of the poster, when available.

g. Open Meetings Law Compliance

All conduct by officials serving on a governmental body must comply with Wisconsin's Open Meetings Law. Officials should refrain from discussing business or actions of the governmental body with one another while using social media. Authorized employees publishing on the Village of Harrison social media profile should not engage officials serving on a governmental body when engaging in the Village's social media activity.

h. Employee Personal Conduct

Like other members of the community, employees may use social media profiles not belonging to the Village of Harrison for the employees' personal social media purposes. Employees must recognize that most uses of personal social media are still part of the public domain, regardless of privacy settings, and are easily replicated and published.

An employee's personal social media profile or use must remain personal in nature and not be used to share the Village's official government positions or views. In addition, employees should never use their Village e-mail account, login, or passwords in conjunction with a personal social media profile. Regardless of whether an employee identifies on a personal social media account that the employee works for the Village, employment with the Village is public record and members of the public may associate the employee with the Village. As such, employees must exercise care when posting and commenting on social media as personal views can be tied back to employment with the Village.

Employees posting personal content on social media must follow these guiding principles:

- When commenting or posting on matters pertaining to the Village, the employee must make clear to other persons that the employee is speaking as a private citizen and not as an employee of the Village.
- Pause and think before posting with the understanding that postings are widely accessible, not easily retractable, easily shared, and replicated.
- Personal activity must comport with the Village policies, directives, and expectations.
- Personal activity is the personal responsibility of the employee, including the consequences that flow from such activity.

Nothing in this policy is meant to prevent an employee from exercising his or her right to make a complaint of unlawful discrimination or other workplace misconduct through the proper processes, to engage in lawful protected concerted activity, or to express a personal opinion on a matter of public concern which may be balanced against the interests of the Village.

i. Compliance with Policy

The Village of Harrison reserves the right to monitor and analyze social media use to ensure compliance with policy, directives and expectations, to evaluate use, and to recommend and implement changes to the use of social media, among other legitimate government interests. Failure to comply with this policy by any employee may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Failure to comply with this policy by any officeholder may result in pursuit of any lawful action against any official in violation of policy.

j. Right of Appeal

If our staff hides or deletes a user's comment or blocks or bans a user pursuant to these terms and conditions, that user has the right to appeal that decision by sending an email to office@harrison-wi.org, or by letter to Village of Harrison, W5298 State Road 114, Menasha, WI 54952, within five business days of our action.

Upon receipt of an appeal, our attorney will determine whether the content at issue is protected by the First Amendment. If the appeal is successful, the content may (if possible) be restored for public view, or the user may be permitted to repost the content. Upon a determination that the content was not protected by the First Amendment, the user will be notified that the appeal was denied. The return correspondence, sent within a reasonable amount of time, will provide the user with a legal explanation for the action taken.

If the appeal is successful and the user has not violated this policy three times within a rolling 12-month period, we will unblock or unban the user from the social media account. If the appeal is not successful, our decision will stand.

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

Employee Acknowledgement Page

I understand that I must have approval from the Village Manager to use, engage, or post on the Village of Harrison's social media profiles and pages on behalf of the Village. I also understand that I am responsible for all postings made by me on the Village's social media profiles and pages, including those made in sections created for replies, comments, or other similar responses. I further understand that the Social Networking Policy applies to postings made by me via personal social media, and I agree to adhere to the guidelines in such Policy.

I acknowledge that all content on the Village of Harrison's social media is considered to be property of the Village and may be monitored by Village Staff. As such, I acknowledge and understand that I am obligated to promptly disclose any log-in names or passwords associated with the Village's social media profiles. I further understand that employees do not have privacy or personal rights in the use of the Village social media, and the postings, data, access to or distribution of such materials is subject to all applicable laws.

I authorize my image, likeness, voice, and work product to be published, used, and disclosed by the Village on its social media, and I waive any and all rights I may have to royalties and compensation. I understand the Village of Harrison retains sole right and discretion as to the use and ownership of information posted, published, used, and disclosed on its social media to the extent permitted by law.

I understand that I am obligated to report any suspected or perceived violations of the Social Networking Policy that I observe on the Village's social media to my immediate supervisor for further review and determination. I further understand that I must be authorized by the Village Manager to regulate comments or posts made by other persons on the Village's media profiles and pages or to regulate the access of private citizens to the Village's social media profiles and pages. To the extent I am authorized to regulate posts or comments made by other persons on the Village's social media profiles and pages or regulate the access of private citizens to the Village's social media profiles and pages, I agree to regulate such matters consistent with the restrictions set forth in the Social Networking Policy.

In complying with the Policy, I will abide by all security procedures as set forth by the Village of Harrison. I am aware that violations of the Policy may result in restriction of use, may subject me to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge from employment, and may subject me to civil or criminal liability.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Policy and have been afforded an opportunity to ask questions regarding the Policy.

I have read and understand this Acknowledgement Form.

Signature of Employee

Date

Signature of Supervisor

Date

**AFTER SIGNING THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM, BRING THE ORIGINAL
EXECUTED COPY OF THIS FORM TO HUMAN RESOURCES FOR PLACEMENT IN
THE PERSONNEL FILE.**

II. Adoption and Approval

The Social Networking Policy shall be formally approved and adopted by the Village Board and reviewed as needed.

Introduced, Approved, and Adopted by the Village Board of the Village of Harrison on this 29th day of April 2025.

By: _____
Scott Handschke, Village President

Attest: _____
Vicki Tessen, Village Clerk