

## I. Purpose and Scope



### Title: Social Media Policy

Number: POL-CD-2020-1

Updated: 06/16/2020

Review: 2025

Page 1 of 7

- A. Purpose:** The Town of Orange Park recognizes the need and value of social media as an immediate, accessible communication tool to reach a broad audience, share information and engage with the public. Social media channels are used to increase public awareness of the Town's policies, programs, services, projects, accomplishments, meetings, events, and news, as well as to serve as the first line of communication in emergency situations. The Town desires to provide uniform criteria to the public, its employees and elected officials on how official social media channels will be established and utilized as well as acceptable and prohibited use by all.
- B. Scope:** This policy covers all social media channels currently operated by the Town of Orange Park, the Orange Park Police Department, the Orange Park Fire Department as well as any new channels or programs that the Town adopts in the future. This includes but is not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and Twitter. Any Town Department that creates a social media channel in the future shall also be governed by this policy. This policy applies to all individuals and departments posting content on Town social media channels.
- Individual departments may draft a department-specific or supplemental policy in the event more department-specific information is appropriate. In the event of a conflict between this policy and a department policy, this policy shall prevail. All department-specific policies are subject to approval by the Town Manager, his/her designee, and/or the Town Council.

## II. Definitions

- A. Social Media or Social Media Channel** is a term that refers to internet-based digital communication applications and websites that integrate user-generated content and user participation to share information, opinions and other content such as photos, videos, articles, and other publications. Examples include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest, TikTok, etc.
- B. Social Media Account** refers to any registration, login credential, tool, forum, website or network that is created or maintained by a department for the purpose of establishing or perpetuating a social media presence.

- C. **Authorized User** is any employee, or any person acting on their behalf, who has been authorized by the Town Manager or his/her designee to establish, create, edit or maintain any Social Media Account, and the posts it may contain in the transaction of official business of the Town of Orange Park.
- D. **Page** is the specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed and managed by an individual(s) with administrator rights.
- E. **Content** includes any materials, documents, photographs, videos, recordings, graphics and other information that is created, posted, distributed or transmitted using social media sites and/or tools.
- F. **Post** refers to any content and/or communication an individual or entity shares, or otherwise displays or transmits on a social media site.
- G. **Tag or Tagging** someone or some entity means a link is created to that person's or organization's page. The person/organization tagged in a post is automatically notified and the post may be added to their timeline or newsfeed.
- H. **Hashtags (#)** are words or phrases used within a message, post or other content to identify a keyword or topic of interest and facilitate a search for it. Hashtags are preceded by the pound sign (#) and can be a word, acronym or short phrase.

### **III. Roles and Responsibilities**

- A. Authorized Users for the Town of Orange Park include the Town Manager, Town Clerk, Events & Recreation Coordinator, Chief of Police, Fire/EMS Chief, Police Department Public Information Officer and anyone else approved by the Town Manager or his/her designee.
- B. All Authorized Users are responsible for the maintenance and monitoring of any and all social media channels assigned to them in accordance with this policy. All Authorized Users will collaborate with records management to ensure that the Town is adhering to public records laws as they apply to social media.

### **IV. Policy**

#### **A. Use**

- i. Town of Orange Park official social media accounts shall be used for providing information and transparency as it relates to policy information, Town Council business, Town accomplishments, events, programs, news, updates, announcements of official sponsors, to elicit engagement and for emergency alerts.

- ii. Town of Orange Park official social media accounts shall not be used for reporting criminal activity by the public, general advertising/promotion of third-party businesses, except that of official sponsors, or political lobbying.

**B. Content**

- i. Each post on any Town of Orange Park official social media account should be treated as an official statement from the Town. Content must have a professional tone, clearly communicate facts and the impact of each policy decision, program, announcement, or Council business. A conversational tone may be used when posting about more casual topics such as awards, events, parks and recreation programs, etc.
- ii. Any published content is in the public domain. All content should represent the Town's point of view and not that of individual employees, officials, residents or authorized users.
- iii. Anyone may post as a visitor on any of the Town of Orange Park's official pages provided that post or content does not contain inappropriate content as defined by the "Social Media Terms of Use."

**C. Comments and Responses**

- i. Comments and responses on the Town of Orange Park's posts from the public are allowed and will be monitored by the authorized users for inappropriate content.
- ii. Responses from the Town to comments by the public shall be warranted and given when:
  - 1. A specific question is asked about a Town policy, program, service or event and there is a specific answer and/or
  - 2. To correct an inaccuracy when discussion occurs among the public and there is misinformation about a Town policy, program, service or event.
- iii. The Town of Orange Park utilizes strong filters for profanity and other inappropriate content. The Town reserves the right to remove any comments deemed inappropriate without notice. All removed comments will be properly archived prior to removal. The Town reserves the right to block or ban users who repeatedly violate the "Social Media Terms of Use."

**D. Sharing, Liking and Following**

- i. The Town of Orange Park reserves the right to like, share, re-tweet or repost content from another social media account on any of its official social media accounts. Such action does not imply or denote an endorsement of that account.

1. Authorized users may choose to like, share, repost, etc. the content of official partners and sponsors on the appropriate social media account for that sponsor or partner.
  2. The Town will not share content that promotes the fundraising efforts of any outside organization on any of its official social media accounts.
- ii. The Town of Orange Park reserves the right to like or follow any social media accounts it deems appropriate for its individual accounts. This includes but is not limited to industry-specific pages, current elected officials, other counties and municipalities, law enforcement agencies, state and federal agencies, news outlets, businesses, community groups, non-profit organizations, religious organizations and civic clubs. All official Town accounts will like or follow one another. The Town will not like or follow any lobbying organizations or political campaigns.

**E. Purchasing Advertising on Social Media Channels**

- i. Authorized users may purchase advertising or boost posts to increase awareness of, interest in, or attendance at any Town of Orange Park policy, meeting, events, programs, news, and updates. All purchases are subject to the Town's purchasing policy.
- ii. The Town will not purchase advertising on behalf of any other agency, business or organizations unless specified in the context of a sponsor or partner agreement.

**F. Security**

- i. Authorized Users should employ strong passwords that cannot be easily compromised. Passwords should be periodically changed and, in the event of a change, the new password should be provided to all authorized users as appropriate for that social media channel.
- ii. Authorized Users should not share access with anyone other than another authorized user.
- iii. Authorized Users should refrain from adding, installing, attaching or linking to any external services or applications that may potentially grant or enable access to the content, information or posts within a social media account.
- iv. Always protect sensitive and personally identifiable information. Do not publish or report on conversations that are meant to be pre-decisional or internal to the Town unless the Town Manager or his/her designee has authorized the release of such information.

## **G. Elected Official and Candidate Guidance for Participating in Social Media**

- i. Elected Officials must follow applicable state laws, including public record and sunshine laws. Town of Orange Park elected officials' social media accounts should not be used for official Town business.
- ii. Recommendations for Elected Officials:
  1. Post content as desired and appropriate and follow the general content guidelines as outlined in this document.
  2. Like, share, re-post applicable posts from Town of Orange Park official accounts and like and follow Town accounts. Like and follow official Clay County and State of Florida accounts such as Clay County Emergency Management.
  3. Allow the Town's official accounts to post or share official information in emergency situations prior to posting on your accounts.
  4. Do not like or follow campaign accounts.
  5. Do not block or ban users unless there has been a clear and repeated violation of the Town of Orange Park's Social Media Terms of Use.
- iii. Candidates running for election should be aware of applicable laws regarding social media use.

## **V. Social Media Terms of Use**

### **A. Public Comments**

- i. The Town of Orange Park uses social media to interact with residents, businesses, and visitors about public issues, Town programs, events and policies. Please note that this is a moderated online discussion site, or Limited Public Forum, and subject to Florida Public Records Laws.
- ii. The Town reserves the right to remove and/or delete user-generated content or comments deemed inappropriate without notice, after they have been properly archived for public record. The following are examples of inappropriate content and comments. Note: this list is not intended to be exhaustive.
  1. Off-subject or out-of-context comments;
  2. Profane, obscene, threatening or harassing language or content or material that appeals to the prurient interest;

3. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetrates discrimination on the basis of race, color, disabilities, religion, sex, national origin, age or any other constitutionally protected right;
  4. Advertises or promotes a commercial product or service, or any entity or individual;
  5. Incites or promotes violence or illegal activities;
  6. Infringes upon copyrights or trademarks;
  7. Confidential, non-public, personally identifying or sensitive personal information; and
  8. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public, Town employees or public systems.
- iii. The opinions, viewpoints and comments expressed by others on the Town's social media accounts does not necessarily reflect that of the Town of Orange Park, its officers, employees or elected officials.
- B.** Posting on Town of Orange Park accounts constitutes acceptance of these terms.
- C.** Please note: Social media accounts are not monitored 24/7. Emergencies, criminal activity or serious concerns needing response must be directed to the Police Department at (904) 264-5555 or by dialing 911. Non-emergency inquiries needing prompt response should call the Town's main phone line (904) 278-9565.
- D.** Notice of Public Record:

Any communications via Town social media channels (whether by a Town employee or the public) are subject to monitoring and disclosure to third parties. In other words, all content posted or submitted for posting to the Town's social media channels is subject to public disclosure. Relevant Town of Orange Park and State of Florida public records retention schedules apply to social media content. Records required to be maintained shall be preserved for the required retention period in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record.

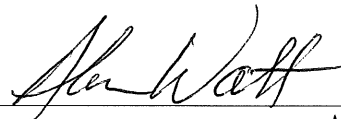
## **VI. General Guidelines for Personal Social Media Use**

- A.** Be thoughtful in how you present yourself on all Social Media platforms, where the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. Understand that what you post online is persistent and may very well become public knowledge. You are personally responsible for the content of your communications.

- B. If you choose to identify yourself as a Town employee on a personal or non-work-related social media site, take care to make sure the reader understands that you are expressing your personal views and not those of the Town, its employees and officials.
- C. Employees' personal social media accounts should remain personal in nature and should not be used for work-related purposes. Employees must not use their Town email account or password in conjunction with a personal social media account.
- D. Employees shall understand that some Town business is protected and should be treated as such.
- E. Refrain from accessing personal accounts while on work time or on Town-owned devices.

**VII. Reservation of Authority**

- A. The authority to issue or revise this Policy is reserved to the Town Council of Orange Park.



---

Alan Watt  
Mayor of the Town of Orange Park