

## RUSSELL TOWNSHIP SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

### Social Media Policy

1. **Purpose.** This Policy establishes guidelines for the establishment and use by Russell Township (the “Township”) of Social Media as a means of conveying information about the Township and its events and activities to its citizens.
  - a. Russell Township has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is “spoken” on behalf of the Township through the use of Social Media.
  - b. For purposes of this policy, the terms “Social Media” and “Social Media Sites” are understood to be content created by individuals, organizations and/or entities, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet. Examples of Social Media that may be used by the Township include, but are not limited to Facebook, blogs, RSS, YouTube Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Instagram, Pinterest, Nextdoor, and Flickr.
  - c. For purposes of this Policy, “comments” include information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communicative content posted on Social Media Sites by the public.
  - d. For purposes of this Policy, “posts” include information, articles, pictures, videos or any other form of communicative content posted on Social Media Sites by Russell Township staff.
2. **General Policy.** Russell Township operates and maintains Social Media sites as a public service to provide information about Township programs, services, projects, issues, events and activities.
  - a. Russell Township assumes no liabilities for any inaccuracies these Social Media sites may contain and does not guarantee that the Social Media sites will be uninterrupted, permanent or error-free.
  - b. The establishment and use by any Township department of Social Media sites are subject to approval by the Township Trustees or their designee, the Website & Social Media Administrator. Use of Social Media on behalf of the Russell Township Board of Trustees shall be administered by the Website & Social Media Administrator, and any Department-designated coordinator, as described in this Policy.
  - c. In approving the use of a Township Social Media site, the Russell Township Website & Social Media Administrator, perhaps in coordination with a Department, shall establish guidelines for the use of the site, including but not limited to the following information:
    - i. The purpose of the site, which may include the dissemination of general information about the Township or the dissemination of information regarding a specific Township Department or

Township Activity, Event or Project.

ii. What Township department will be directly responsible for monitoring of, and creation of content on, the site.

iii. Township Social Media Sites should make clear that they are maintained by Russell Township Local Government and that they follow this Social Media Policy.

iv. To the extent possible, the use of Social Media will link back to the Township's website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with or utilize the services of the Township.

v. Russell Township's website at <http://russelltownship.us> will remain the Township's primary and predominant Internet presence.

vi. This Policy may be revised at any time.

3. ***Comment Policy.*** As a public entity, the Township must abide by certain standards to serve all its constituents in a civil and unbiased manner.

a. The intended purpose behind establishing a Social Media presence is to disseminate information to residents of the Russell Township.

b. The Township does not intend this Social Media presence to be a public forum or limited public forum. Public comments are not intentionally enabled on the Social Media page.

c. Residents are encouraged to communicate directly with Township officials and employees via contact information provided on the Russell Township official website or via the message and email buttons provided through the Social Media page.

d. Oral public comments are accepted at every public meeting held on Russell Township property.

e. When a Russell Township employee responds to a message or email, in his/her capacity as a Township employee, said responses shall be made from an official account established by the Township for such purposes.

4. ***Use of Social Media Sites to Disseminate and/or Gather Information Regarding a Specific Township Department or Township Activity/Event/Project.*** In addition to the general provisions of this Policy, the following provisions shall apply to the Township's use of Social Media to establish an internet presence relating to a particular Department or Township Activity/Event/Project:

a. A Department-designated coordinator will monitor content on Department-specific or Township Activity/Event/Project-specific Social Media sites to ensure adherence to this Policy.

b. The Department-designated coordinator will advise the Website & Social Media Administrator of any concerns regarding content. The Website & Social Media Administrator will advise the Department-designated coordinator whether or not

the content should be removed.

- c. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained by the Department's coordinator for a reasonable period of time. The Department shall follow any applicable requirements of the Township's document retention policy for retaining content.
- d. The Social Media pages shall adhere to applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies.
- e. Employees representing the Township government on the respective Social Media page must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the Township and in accordance with all Township policies.
- f. Communications made through Russell Township Social Media sites in no way constitute legal notices or official notice or comment to Russell Township. To comment about a specific Township project or program, please contact the appropriate department.