

## **TOWN OF ARKWRIGHT SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

### **I. PURPOSE**

The Town of Arkwright endorses the secure use of social media to communicate information to the public on emergencies, service updates and general information relating to the goals of the municipality. Social Media sites may not be used as an official channel of communication. Inquiries from the public should be directed to the appropriate official(s).

The policy establishes the Town of Arkwright's position on the utility and management of social media and provides guidance on its management, administration and oversight. In addition, this policy recognizes the personal use of social networking sites by employees, and identifies prohibited activities by employees on such social media sites. This policy is not meant to address one form of social media; rather social media in general, as advances in technology will occur and new tools will emerge.

This policy identifies potential uses that may be explored or expanded upon as deemed reasonable by administrative and supervisory personnel. The Town of Arkwright also recognizes the role that these tools play in the personal lives of some personnel. The personal use of social media can have bearing on personnel in their official capacity. As such, this policy provides information of a precautionary nature as well as prohibitions on the use of social media by personnel.

### **II. DEFINITIONS**

- a. Designated Official – Individual appointed by the Town Board to maintain and provide oversight on all or designated social media sites
- b. Page: The specific portion of social media website where content is displayed and made by an individual or individuals with administrator rights.
- c. Post: Content an individual shares on a social media site or the act of publishing content on a site.
- d. Profile: Information that a user provides about himself or herself on a social networking site.
- e. Social Media: A category of internet-based resources that integrate user generated content with user participation. This includes, but is not limited to, social networking sites (Facebook, My Space), microblogging sites (Twitter, Nixle), photo-and-video-sharing sites (Flickr, YouTube), wikis (Wikipedia), blogs, and news sites (Digg, Reddit).
- f. Social Networks: Online platforms where users can create profiles, share information, and socialize with others using a range of technologies.

g. Speech: Expression or communication of thoughts or opinions in spoken words, in writing, by expressive conduct, symbolism, photographs, videotape, or related forms of communication.

### **III. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Town of Arkwright that official use of social media systems will be strictly regulated and used consistent with applicable laws and that any personnel, to include the personal use of social media by both sworn and civilian personnel, be compliant with all sections of the Town of Arkwright.

### **IV. PROCEDURE**

#### **A. Social Media Presence and Use Guidelines**

1. All Town of Arkwright social media sites or pages shall be approved by the Town Board or its designee and shall be administered by \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Where possible, each social media page(s) shall include an introductory statement that clearly specifies the purpose and scope of the Town of Arkwright's presence on the website.
  - b. Where possible, the page(s) should link to the Town of Arkwright's official website.
  - c. Social media page(s) shall be designed for target audience(s), namely the Town of Arkwright community and residents.
2. Where possible, social media pages shall clearly indicate they are maintained by the Town of Arkwright and shall have the Town of Arkwright's information prominently displayed.
3. Social media content shall adhere to applicable laws, regulations, and policies, including all Town of Arkwright information technology and records management policies.
4. If the site allows for public comment, social media page(s) shall state the opinions expressed by visitors to the page, do not reflect the opinions of the Town of Arkwright.
  - a. The Town of Arkwright retains the right to delete comments that are not in accordance with the town's social media purpose.

#### **B. Personal Use of Social Media – Precautions and Prohibitions**

1. All of the Town of Arkwright's personnel shall abide by the following when using social media for their own personal use:
  - a. Town of Arkwright personnel shall not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate any information to which they have access as a result of their employment without the expressed authorization of the Town Board or its designee. Municipal

policies such as work place violence and harassment apply to all posting in addition to any HIPPA regulations, collective bargaining and confidentiality requirements.

b. Engaging in prohibited speech noted herein, may provide grounds for undermining or impeaching an officer's testimony in criminal proceeding.

c. The Town of Arkwright personnel shall not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate any information to their personal social media accounts while on duty regardless if from a Town of Arkwright computer or other personally owned device without the expressed authorization of the Town Board or its designee.

e. The Town of Arkwright personnel thus sanctioned are subject to discipline up to and including termination. Personnel will not divulge information gained by reason of their authority; make any statements, speeches, appearances, and endorsements; or publish material that could reasonably be considered to represent the views or positions of the Town of Arkwright without expressed authorization of the Town Board or its designee.