



Town of
Longmeadow, Massachusetts
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Town Manager
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 Marie Angelides, Clerk
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PERSONAL SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION

This Policy is intended to provide guidance with regard to the personal use of social networking sites during non-work hours and on equipment not belonging to the Town of Longmeadow. Use of such social networking sites during work hours or on equipment owned and/or maintained by the Town of Longmeadow is strictly prohibited, and is governed by the Policy on the Access and Use of Telecommunications Systems distributed to employees. All of the Town's other policies that apply to use of social media remain in full force and effect. Employees should always adhere to them when using social media. Notwithstanding anything herein, nothing in this policy shall be construed to limit, in any way, an employee's rights under any applicable federal, state, or local law.

II. PURPOSE

Because of the Town's substantial interest in maintaining a professional, collegial, confidential, and impartial workplace, it is imperative that all Town of Longmeadow employees who engage in use of social networking sites, such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn, or Bebo, accept the terms of this Policy and any such additional related policies that may be issued by the Town of Longmeadow. Employees are expected to act in a positive manner and contribute to a productive work environment that is free from harassing or disruptive activity that adversely affects the Town. Employees are encouraged to remember that information posted on the internet can be easily traced back to its author, and should think before posting information to any online source. Statements made by employees pursuant to their official duties are not insulated from discipline because they occurred on social networking sites. The list of social networking sites contained above is not intended to be exhaustive, and shall be deemed to include any social networking sites in existence at the time this policy is reviewed by the employee, or created thereafter.

III. GUIDELINES FOR USAGE

A. **Professional Judgment.** Employees are encouraged to use professional judgment at all times with regard to personal use of social networking sites. In using social networking sites, employees should at all times be respectful to co-workers, residents, or persons seeking assistance from the Town of Longmeadow. Employees should not disclose confidential information, engage in any unlawful activity, or convey information that is disparaging or defamatory while using social networking sites, and should refrain from making comments or statements based upon race, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, disability, maternity leave, genetics, active military status, or another basis prohibited under state or federal anti-discrimination statutes. Such statements or comments occurring online and/or through use of social networking sites will not be tolerated.

- B. Improper Practices. It is not possible to list all the circumstances that may constitute violations of this policy. Activities and/or actions which are considered offensive are messages or material which contain nudity, sexual references or implications, sharing demeaning pictures, cartoons, or jokes, racial or ethnic slurs, or other comments that inappropriately address someone's race, color, gender, national origin, religion, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, disability, maternity leave, genetics, active military status, or another basis prohibited under state or federal anti-discrimination statutes.
- C. Disciplinary Action. The department head will evaluate any suspected violations of this policy on a case-by-case basis. A violation of this policy or any attempt to bypass or to circumvent this policy may result in disciplinary action ranging from a verbal warning up to discharge from employment. Violations of this policy may also result in referral of a case to the appropriate authorities for civil or criminal prosecution.

IV. VIOLATIONS OF POLICY

Violation(s) of this Policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against the employee, up to and including termination from employment. Employees shall report violations of this Policy to their supervisor, or in the case of department heads, directly to the Town Manager. Retaliation against another user for reporting a violation or violations of this Policy is strictly prohibited by the Town of Longmeadow.

PERSONAL SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

This acknowledges that I have received and reviewed the Personal Social Networking Policy of the Town of Longmeadow. By signing this form, I agree to abide by the Policy and any Guidelines promulgated thereunder, and I agree to review periodically any changes or modifications. I recognize that the law and associated Policy regarding the personal use of social networking sites are continually evolving. Therefore, I understand that my regular review of this policy is required.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

This signed acknowledgement will become a permanent part of your personnel file.

Adopted October 11, 2011