

**TOWN OF MILTON
TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE
AND MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

1. Purpose.

The Town of Milton (“town”) recognizes the ever-increasing importance of the effective use of technology in the day-to-day operations of the town. As the town becomes more technologically advanced, the need for policies and procedures regulating employees’ use of technology owned and operated by the town increases. These policies and procedures are intended to establish and clarify procedures and acceptable uses of social media by the town, as well as procedures and acceptable uses of town-owned technology by employees. Furthermore, the town recognizes the importance of the accurate and timely dissemination of information to media outlets and seeks to outline the appropriate channels for communicating with the media. The town is committed to respecting each employee’s right to speak as a private citizen on matters of public concern when an employee is not acting in his or her capacity as a town employee (*see Garcetti v. Ceballos*, 547 U.S. 410 (2006)). The town is establishing these policies pursuant to rulings by the U.S. Supreme Court that regulations affecting the speech of employees are justified by the need to maintain discipline among employees, create harmony amongst co-workers, protect the disclosure of confidential information, and foster appropriate relationships between subordinates and superiors (*see Pickering v. Bd. of Ed. of Twp. High School Dist.*, 391 U.S. 563, 570 (1968)).

2. Media Communications.

- a. Town Administrator Official Town Spokesperson. The Town Administrator shall be the official spokesperson of the Town of Milton responsible for providing official statements on behalf of the town. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2(b), town employees receiving inquiries from members of the media seeking interviews or official statements of the town shall direct such inquiries to the Town Administrator.
- b. Police Chief Authorized to Speak on Investigations and Emergencies. The Police Chief shall be authorized to speak with members of the media regarding specific police investigations and/or arrests. During emergency situations that threaten the health, safety, and/or welfare of the residents of the town, the Police Chief may respond to requests for interviews from members of the media when the Town Administrator is unavailable to respond to such requests or when the Town Administrator has designated authority to the Police Chief to speak with the media on that matter.
- c. Interviews of Town Employees. No town employee shall allow himself or herself to be interviewed by the media or make statements on behalf of the town to any

media representative without the consent of the Town Administrator. Where an individual employee possesses unique knowledge, information, or perspective regarding a particular situation, the Town Administrator may authorize an employee to make a statement or be interviewed by the media.

- d. Confidential Information. In discussing sensitive town matters including, but not limited to, litigation in which the town is an active party or on-going criminal investigations or arrests, the Town Administrator, Police Chief, and all other town employees authorized to speak with the media shall not reveal any confidential information involving the matter at issue.
- e. Right to Express Personal Opinions. All employees are authorized to speak as individual private citizens on matters of public concern. When engaged in such speech, and when it may be reasonably assumed that the speaker is an employee of the town, the individual is required to disclose that such opinions are personal opinions and in no way represent the official position of the town. Additionally, when engaged in speech on behalf of an entity that is not the town, such as a trade organization, and when it may be reasonably assumed that the speaker is an employee of the town, the individual is required to disclose that such speech does not represent the official position of the town, but rather represents the position of the entity being represented.
- f. Discipline. Employees violating these procedures may be subject to discipline as outlined in Section 26-14 of the Milton Town Code.

3. Town-Owned Technology Usage.

- a. Definition. For purpose of this policy, “town-owned technology” includes, but is not limited to, all computer equipment and software owned or leased to the town, “land line” telephones and cell phones paid for by the town, websites, blogs, Facebook pages, or other social media sites hosted by the town, internet services paid for by the town, emails, text messages, and all information transmitted or stored through the town’s network or equipment.
- b. Prohibited Uses. Town-owned technology is provided by the town for purposes of enhancing employee efficiency and performance in carrying out the town’s business operations. Employees are prohibited from using town-owned technology for any purposes not related to the town’s business operations or the employee’s professional development (continuing education, professional associations, etc.), irrespective of whether the usage occurs before, during, or after an employee’s scheduled working hours.
- c. No Privacy Expectation. Employees have no expectation of privacy, confidentiality, or ownership in town-owned technology (i.e. emails, text messages, internet browsing history, etc.). The Town may audit town-owned

technology used by an employee based on a reasonable suspicion of a violation of this policy or based on any other legitimate work-related rationale or protocol.

4. Social Media Policy.

- a. Definition. For purposes of this policy, “social media” includes, but is not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, blogs, social networking sites, and all other media websites of a similar nature and use.
- b. Use of Town Website and Social Media by Town. The Town of Milton website and social media sites hosted by the town shall be maintained and updated by the Town Administrator and/or his or her designated web administrator. All information posted by the town to the town website or social media shall receive prior approval by the Town Administrator and/or the designated web administrator.
- c. Use of Social Media by Police Department. Any social media sites hosted by the Police Department shall be maintained and updated by the Police Chief and/or his or her designee. All information posted by the Police Department to any of these social media websites shall receive prior approval by the Police Chief and/or his or her designee.
- d. Dissemination of Information. The Town of Milton shall use social media for the purpose of disseminating information. Social media sites hosted by the town shall not be used to create discussion forums. All methods of allowing users to comment or post on social media sites hosted by the town and Police Department shall be disabled. The prohibition on disclosing confidential information outlined in 2(d) above applies fully to the use of social media and the town website. Wherever possible, links should direct users back to the town’s official website for more information, forms, documents or other services involving the town.

I, THE UNDERSIGNED, employee of the Town of Milton, do hereby certify and acknowledge that I have read and have agreed to abide by the policies contained herein and that failure to do so may result in discipline including and up to termination of employment.

Date: _____

By: _____

Print name: _____

