DRAFT Village of Northport

Social Media Policy

1. Purpose
This policy establishes guidelines for the creation, management, and use of official Village of Northport social media accounts. The objectives are to:

- Disseminate accurate and timely information to the public.
- Enhance transparency and community engagement.
- Ensure compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including the Michigan Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Open Meetings Act (OMA).

2. Scope
This policy applies to all official social media accounts operated by the Village of Northport and its departments. It does not govern personal social media accounts of employees or officials unless their use implies official Village representation.

3. Definitions
Social Media: Internet-based platforms that facilitate the sharing of information, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and LinkedIn.

Administrator: An individual authorized to manage and post content on official Village social media accounts.

4. Account Management

- The Village Manager or a designated Communications Officer shall approve the creation of any official social media account.
- Each account must have at least two designated administrators to ensure accessibility and oversight.
- Account credentials shall be stored securely and updated regularly to maintain security.

5. Content Guidelines

- Posts should be relevant to Village operations, services, events, and public announcements.
- Content must be accurate, respectful, and free from personal opinions unrelated to official duties.
- All posts should include links to the official Village website when applicable for more detailed information.

6. Public Interaction and Comment Moderation
The Village encourages public interaction on its social media platforms. However, to maintain a respectful and informative environment, the following types of content are subject to removal:

- Comments not related to the original topic or Village business.

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- Profane, obscene, or discriminatory language or content.
- Threats or personal attacks against any individual or organization.
- Content that promotes illegal activities or violates any laws.
- Commercial advertisements or solicitations.
- Information that may compromise public safety or security.
- Content that infringes on intellectual property rights.

Users who repeatedly violate these guidelines may be blocked or restricted from the Village's social media platforms.

7. Employee Use of Social Media
   - Employees must not use official Village social media accounts for personal purposes.
   - Personal social media use by employees should not imply Village endorsement or representation.
   - Employees should refrain from discussing confidential or sensitive Village matters on personal social media platforms.

8. Legal Compliance
   - All content posted on official Village social media accounts is considered a public record and subject to FOIA.
   - Social media communications must not violate the OMA. Deliberations or decisions by the Village Council or committees must occur in properly noticed public meetings.

9. Record Retention
   - Social media content must be archived in accordance with the Village's record retention policies.
   - Deleted or removed content should be documented and preserved as required by law.

10. Policy Enforcement
Violations of this policy by employees may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination. The Village reserves the right to modify or amend this policy as necessary.

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