

**Town of Northfield**  
**Social Media Policy & Guidelines**

**I. Purpose of This Policy:**

The primary mission of Northfield's social media efforts is to provide information on Town services and programs to the general public in a timely manner on a regular and emergency basis. The purpose of this policy is to set guidelines related to social media sites and applications.

**II. Definitions:**

**Social Media:** any blogs, other types of self-published online journals, and/or Web-based discussion forums and networking platforms. The Town supports Social Media as a method to promote its services and resources. Examples are, but not necessarily limited to: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.

**III. Policy:**

It is the policy of the Town of Northfield to ensure that certain standards are set with respect to social media to serve residents in a positive, productive manner. The Town supports the use of social media an effective method to communicate information to its citizens regarding its Town government.

**IV. Procedures:**

- 1) The creation of Town or Town Departmental social media sites, pages, or online communities must be approved in advance by the Board of Selectmen. Participation by Town staff, elected officials or volunteer members of boards and committees, on such media must be approved by the Board of Selectmen or Department Head or their designee. Such approval will be based need, compliance with these guidelines and goals of the proposed social media. All approved sites will be listed as an Addendum to these guidelines.
- 2) Department Heads may assign appropriate personnel to manage their individual social media sites and provide those assigned these tasks a copy of this policy.
- 3) Where possible, each Social Media site should clearly indicate that it is maintained by the Town of Northfield and have contact information for the manager of the site along with a link back to the Town's official website and Social Media Policy.
- 4) Comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall not be permitted on Town of Northfield social media sites and are subject to removal by the Town Administrator or his/her designees.

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- a. Comments not related to the original topic, including random or unintelligible comments.
  - b. Profane, obscene, or pornographic content and/or language.
  - c. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender or gender identity, or national origin.
  - d. Defamatory or personal attacks.
  - e. Threats to any person or organization.
  - f. Comments in support of, or in opposition to, any political campaigns or ballot measures. Postings/comments by Town officials found to be "Electioneering" in violation of RSA 659:44 & 44-a are prohibited.
  - g. Posts that advocate voter action in support or opposition to a particular issue are not allowed. Generic "Don't forget to vote" messages that do not reference a particular issue or race are permitted.
  - h. Conduct in violation of any federal, state, or local law.
  - i. Encouragement of illegal activity.
  - j. Information that may tend to compromise the safety and security of public systems.
  - k. Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as a copyright, of any party.
  - l. Redundant or repetitive comments, with the same or similar content posted multiple times under various posts.
  - m. Content that would violate any other policy of the Town of Northfield.
  - n. Commercial promotions or spam
- V. Opinions, posted by a member of the public on any Town of Northfield Social Media site is the opinion of the commentator or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the Town, nor do such comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the Town.
- VI. The Town of Northfield reserves the right to deny access to Town of Northfield Social Media sites to any individual who violates the Town of Northfield's Social Media Policy at any time and without prior notice.
- VII. Town of Northfield Department Heads shall monitor their Social Media sites periodically for comments requesting responses from the Town and for comments in violation of this policy.
- VIII. Town of Northfield Department Heads and their designees may post content on their respective Social Media pages in their official capacity. Comments made by individuals from their personal accounts are personal expressions and not Town representations. Such comments on personal accounts should clearly state that they are solely the expression of the individual.

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- IX. All comments posted to any Town of Northfield Social Media sites are bound by the respective statements of rights and responsibilities associated with those sites and the Town reserves the right to report any violation of these statements to the appropriate Social Media site with the intent of the site taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.
- X. This policy shall be administered through the Selectmen's Office. Specific questions regarding this policy may be direct to the Town Administrator's office.

XI. **Privacy:**

The Town does not collect, maintain, or otherwise use the personal information stored on any third party site in any way other than to communicate Town-related information with users on that site. Users may remove themselves at any time from the Town's "friends," "follow," or "fan" lists, or request that the Town remove them. Users should be aware that third party websites have their own privacy policies and should proceed accordingly. Users are encouraged to protect their privacy by not posting personally identifying information, such as last name, school, age, phone number, or address.

XII. **Liability for Use:**

The Town of Northfield assumes no liability regarding any event or interaction that takes place by any participant in any Town-sponsored Social Media, and does not endorse content outside of the pages maintained by the Town and the posts created by Town staff in the course of their work duties. The Town reserves the right to use any comments, posts, and messages on the Town's Social Media sites for use in public relations and marketing materials. The Town is not responsible for other people viewing or accessing personal accounts/profiles that are left open on public computers.

XIII. **Participation:**

Participation in the Town of Northfield's Social Media implies agreement with all Town policies and the Terms of Service of each individual third-party service. By posting a comment or other content you agree to indemnify the Town of Northfield and its officers, agents, and employees from and against all liabilities, judgments, damages, and costs (including attorney's fees) incurred which arise out of, or are related to the content that you post.

- XIV. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Town of Northfield is not obligated to take any of the actions contained in this Policy & Guidelines, and will not be responsible or liable for content posted by any subscriber in any forum, message board, or other area within the Town's Social Media.

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- XV. Information posted on a Town social media site is public information. There should be no expectation of privacy in regards to information posted on Town social media sites.
- XVI. If a user does not agree to these terms, they are not to use the services provided.
- XVII. **Ongoing Use Evaluation:**

The role and utility of Social Media in relation to the goals and purposes of the Town of Northfield will be evaluated periodically by the Town staff and Board of Selectmen, and may be terminated at any time without notice to subscribers.

XVIII. **Severability:**

To the extent that any provisions of this policy conflict with State law, then State law shall prevail and the remaining provision of this policy shall remain in force.

Approved this 27<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2018.

Northfield Board of Selectmen

Wayne Emery

Date: 4-3-18

[Signature]

Date: 4-3-18

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Addendum**  
**Officially Approved Town of Northfield**  
**Social Media Sites**  
**Updated March 20, 2018**

1. Town of Northfield website
2. Town of Northfield Facebook page
3. Northfield NH Police Department Facebook page