

# The Village of Howard, Wisconsin

IN THE NAME AND BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE VILLAGE OF HOWARD, WISCONSIN

## RESOLUTION NO. 2010-9

“Village of Howard Social Media & Internet Usage Policy”

**WHEREAS,** Social media sites such as facebook and Twitter have become increasingly popular over the past five years; and

**WHEREAS,** social media sites allow the Village of Howard to provide timely and relevant information to its residents and the general public; and

**WHEREAS,** social media sites are a cost-effective method to deliver information to the public and maintain a social media presence; and

**WHEREAS,** the Village of Howard Board of Trustees desires to regulate the nature of the content posted on Village social media sites, the Village’s website, and the usage of the internet and social media sites by Village employees;

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Village Board of the Village of Howard, Brown County, Wisconsin, hereby approves and adopts the Village’s social media policy as described in the attached document.

**IN THE TESTIMONY WHEREOF,** I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused the Great Seal for the Village of Howard, Wisconsin to be affixed on this 12<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2010.

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Burt R. McIntyre  
Village President

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Joshua Smith  
Village Administrator/Clerk

# Village of Howard



## Social Media, E-mail & Internet Usage Policy

Effective April 13, 2010

## 1. PURPOSE

This policy is established to give direction to Village of Howard employees, elected officials, volunteers and other affiliated organizations that use Village-provided electronic/computer resources to access social media web sites and engage in social networking

## 2. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. It is the responsibility of the Performance and Information Services Department to act as the Village's official spokesperson and maintain the Village's official web presence via social media/networking and the internet.
- B. It is the responsibility of the Village's contracted Information Technology employee to administer security and monitoring measures that support this policy.
- C. All Village employees wishing to engage in social networking on behalf of the Village shall coordinate and seek approval from the Executive Director of Performance and Information Services.
- D. It is the responsibility of social media users and those engaged in social networking to stay informed regarding Village policies related to this activity.

## 3. DEFINITIONS

**Social Media:** Various forms of discussion and information sharing including social networks, blogs, video sharing, podcasts, wikis, message boards, and online forums. Technologies include: picture sharing, wall-postings, e-mail, instant messaging, and music-sharing to name a few. Examples of social media applications include but are not limited to Google and Yahoo Groups (reference, social networking), Wikipedia (reference), MySpace (social networking), facebook (social networking), YouTube (social networking and video sharing), Flickr (photo sharing), Twitter (social networking and microblogging), LinkedIn (business networking) and newsmedia comment sharing/blogging.

**Social Networking:** The practice of expanding the number of one's business and/or social contacts by making connections through web-based applications. Social networking may include joining clubs and organizations or staying connected through phone conversations and written correspondence such as letters. This policy focuses on social networking as it relates to the internet to promote such connections and is only now being fully recognized and exploited, through web-based groups established for that purpose. Web sites dedicated to social networking on behalf of the Village include YouTube, facebook and Twitter.

#### **4. PROCEDURES**

**A.** Access to the internet and/or internet e-mail may be assigned by Department Directors and then set up and supervised by the Administrative Services Department. Employees should follow regulations and policies relating to internet usage and social media/networking as follows:

- 1.** Regardless of the user's location when accessing the internet or internet e-mail, if the account being used is one provided by the Village, employees should conduct official Village business via that access.
- 2.** Use of the Village-provided internet and internet e-mail is a privilege. Unauthorized use will result in the loss of access for the user and, depending on the seriousness of the infraction, may result in disciplinary action as deemed appropriate.
- 3.** Employees should recognize that there are restrictions and limitations to use of the internet and its related technologies. There is a limited amount of personal use that is understood and permissible, but employees should be as conservative as possible in such personal use and understand that public records laws may bring their use under scrutiny by the media and the public.

Examples of what could be considered "limited personal use" include scheduling of personal appointments and communications regarding work-related social events including birthdays, births, retirements, etc. This time should be kept short in duration in terms of time accessed. Short is defined as less time than would be typically taken as a personal break during the workday that would be deemed acceptable by a direct supervisor, or such time as given prior approval by one's supervisor. This time is in lieu of taking regularly scheduled approved breaks.

Restrictions from personal use include, but are not limited to:

- a.** Use for personal or financial gain.
  - b.** Discourteous communication to or about other persons or organizations.
  - c.** Solicitation, including charitable campaigns, except as specifically authorized or part of official Village-sponsored events.
  - d.** Issuing or forwarding chain mail and other frivolous messages such as practical jokes or remarks regarding or relating to a person's class, religion, gender, race, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or any other factor that could offend a reasonable person.
  - e.** Accessing any adult (pornographic), hate group or gambling site. In the event that such access is required for official business, Director approval detailing such access is required.
- 4.** The Village's e-mail and internet communications are not private and will be monitored.

## **B. Use of Social Media Sites.**

- 1.** Personal/private employee blogging or personal/private use of such social media sites including, but not limited to facebook, MySpace or Twitter is prohibited during working hours. It is also prohibited using Village computers or devices such as internet-enabled personal digital assistants (PDAs) such as Blackberries or other “smart phones.” Employees may not attribute personal statements, opinions or beliefs to the Village of Howard when engaging in private blogging. Employees are prohibited against disclosure of confidential information or information that could breach the security of the Village’s computer system in any way. It is also prohibited to use the Village logo and trademarks on personal/private social media blogs. Employees are prohibited against posting any material that would constitute harassment, hate speech or libel. Employees assume any and all risk associated with blogging. The Village may require immediate removal of, and impose discipline for, material that is disruptive to the workplace or impairs the mission of the Village.
- 2.** Blogging or use of such social media sites including, but not limited to facebook, MySpace or Twitter when doing so as the official spokesperson for a Department must be coordinated with and authorized by the Executive Director of Performance and Information Services. The Executive Director of Performance & Information Services will serve as the official spokesperson for the Village in the area of social media/networking.
- 3.** Use of social media of a business nature such as LinkedIn or a “Members Only” site maintained by a Village-approved professional organization may be permitted if limited to a professional rather than personal nature and kept short in duration in terms of time accessed. Short is defined as less time than would typically be taken as a personal break during the workday that would be deemed acceptable by a direct supervisor, or such time as given prior approval by one’s supervisor.
- 4.** The Village of Howard shall maintain one official facebook, Twitter and YouTube page. Content submitted for posting that is deemed not suitable for posting by a Village of Howard’s Executive Director of Performance and Information Services because it is not typically related to the particular social networking site objective being commented upon, or is deemed prohibited content based on the criteria below, shall be retained pursuant to record retention laws along with a description of the reason the specific content is deemed not suitable for posting

Village of Howard social networking content and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed for posting:

- a.** Comments not topically related to the particular site or blog article being commented upon.
- b.** Profane language or content.
- c.** Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.
- d.** Sexual content or links to sexual content.

- e.** Solicitations of commerce, unless specifically authorized by the Executive Director of Performance and Information Services in conjunction with a Village-sponsored program and/or marketing campaign.
    - f.** Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
    - g.** Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.
    - h.** Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
    - i.** Content related to any individual's or group's political campaign.
  - 5.** The Village of Howard reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law.
  - 6.** All Village of Howard social networking sites shall adhere to applicable state, federal and local laws, regulations and policies including all records management policies and other applicable laws.
  - 7.** Freedom of Information Act and e-discovery laws and policies apply to social media content and therefore content must be able to be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with these laws.
- C.** Any use of the internet and/or internet e-mail in violation of this policy may result in discipline up to and including termination. Unlawful use may result in referral for criminal prosecution.