

**MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP**  
1001 Stump Road  
Montgomeryville, PA 18936  
[www.montgomerytwp.org](http://www.montgomerytwp.org)

<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Social Media Use</b>				
<b>Replaces:</b>	July 2011	<b>Reviewed:</b>	July 2016	<b>Effective:</b>	July 25, 2016
<b>Distribution:</b>	BOS, Staff, Public	<b>Other Policies Affected:</b>	Open Records		

**PURPOSE:**

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet, and the way residents communicate and obtain information online, Montgomery Township departments may consider using social media tools to reach a broader Township-audience. The Township encourages the use of social media to further Township-goals and the missions of its departments, where appropriate. It has an overriding interest and expectation, however, in ensuring that what is communicated on the Township's behalf on social media sites, is also appropriate. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of social media.

**GENERAL:**

1. All Township social media sites to be used by Township Departments will be subject to approval by the Township Manager and/or his/her designee.
2. The Township website ([www.montgomerytwp.org](http://www.montgomerytwp.org)) will remain the Township's primary and predominant internet-presence.
  - a. The best, most appropriate Township social media tools fall generally into two categories:
    - i. As channels for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible (i.e., emergency information, road closures, power outages, cancellations, or re-schedulings).
    - ii. As marketing/promotional channels that increase the Township's ability to broadcast its messages to the widest possible audience.
  - b. Wherever possible, content posted to Township social media sites will also be available on the Township's website.
  - c. Wherever possible, content posted to Township social media sites should contain links directing users back to the Township's official website for in-depth

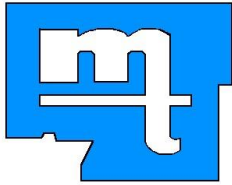
information, forms, documents, or online services necessary to conduct business with the Township.

3. As is the case for the Township-website, a staff member will be assigned to be responsible for the content and upkeep of any social media sites.
4. All posts must be from a Township owned device.
5. Wherever possible, all Township social media sites shall comply with all appropriate Township policies and standards, including but not limited to: (a) Twitter Standards (attached as Appendix 1); and (b) Facebook Standards (attached as Appendix 2). Any exceptions must be approved by the Township Manager or his/her designee.
6. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to Township business, including list of subscribers and posted communication, is a public record. The Public Information Coordinator and Information Technology Director will assist the Township's Open Records Officer and staff with responding completely and accurately to any Open Records request for public records on social media. Content related to Township business shall be maintained in an accessible format and so that it can be produced in response to a request. Wherever possible, such sites shall clearly indicate that any articles and any other content posted or submitted for posting are subject to public disclosure. Users shall be notified that public disclosure requests must be directed to the Township's Open Records Officer.
7. Unless otherwise addressed in a specific social media "standards" document, the Public Information Coordinator maintaining a site shall preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to an applicable Township records-retention schedule, for the required retention period on a Township server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible. Appropriate retention formats for specific social media tools are detailed in Township Twitter and Facebook Standards.
8. Users and visitors to social media sites shall be notified that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a mechanism for communication between Township departments and members of the public.
9. Township social media site content containing any of the following forms of content are prohibited:
  - a. Comments not topically related to the particular Township social media article being commented upon;
  - b. Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures;
  - c. Profane language or content;
  - d. 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;

- e. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- f. Solicitations of commerce;
- g. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- h. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems; or
- i. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained in accord with the applicable Township records-retention schedule, with proper memorialization of the time, date, and identity of the poster, when available.

10. The Township reserves the right to restrict or remove any Township content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law.
11. The Township will approach the use of social media tools as consistently as possible, enterprise-wide.
12. All new social media tools proposed for Township use will be approved by the Township Board of Supervisors.
13. In administering the Township's social media sites, the Information Technology Director will (a) maintain a list of social media tools which are approved for use by the Township; (b) maintain a list of all Montgomery Township social media sites, including login and password information; and (c) ensure, at all times, that the Township, if necessary, is able to immediately edit or remove content from social media sites.
14. For each social media tool approved for use by a Township Department the following documentation will be developed and adopted:
  - a. Operational and use guidelines;
  - b. Standards and processes for managing accounts on social media sites; and
  - c. Township and Departmental Branding Standards.
15. All social media content shall be prepared by the Township for the expressed purposes as defined under this policy. No social media site shall be equipped to receive user content.



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<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Social Media Use</b> <b>APPENDIX 1</b> <b>TWITTER STANDARDS</b>				
<b>Replaces:</b>	July 2011	<b>Reviewed:</b>	July 2016	<b>Effective:</b>	July 25, 2016
<b>Distribution:</b>	BOS, Staff, Public	<b>Other Policies Affected:</b>	Open Records		

**PURPOSE:**

Twitter is a micro-blogging tool that allows account holders to “tweet” up to 280 characters of information to followers, at any given time. By procuring and maintaining a Twitter-account, the Township will be able to communicate directly to their Twitter-followers, alerting them to news and directing them to the Township’s website: [www.montgomerytp.org](http://www.montgomerytp.org) for more information. These standards should be used in conjunction with the Township’s Social Media Use Policy.

**CONTENT:**

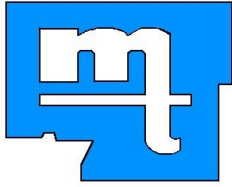
1. These accounts will ultimately be monitored by various Departments, however all content shall be overseen by the Township’s Public Information Coordinator and the Information Technology Director.
2. Creation of Township Twitter-accounts, shall be approved by the Township Manager or his/her designee.
3. Any Twitter-profile will read:  

Montgomery Township, Comments, list of followers subject to public disclosure. This site is not monitored. Call 911 for emergencies.
4. The primary Twitter username will be **MontTwp** unless approved by the Township Manager or his/her designee.
5. Twitter-account backgrounds will share a standardized Township logo.
6. Township Twitter-account shall serve three primary purposes: (a) to transmit emergency information out quickly; (b) to promote Township-sponsored events; and (c) to refer followers to content hosted at the Township’s website: [www.montgomerytp.org](http://www.montgomerytp.org).
7. Information posted on Twitter shall conform to the Township’s policies and procedures. Tweets shall be relevant, timely, and informative.

8. Twitter content shall mirror information presented on the Township's other communication vehicles such as the website, cable channel, and e-news.

**ARCHIVE:**

1. The archival-policy will be to retain the Twitter- postings on a Township server, in accord with the applicable Township records-retention schedule. While the Township-archives will not be visible to the public, they will be accessible by open record requests.



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<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Social Media Use</b> <b>APPENDIX 2</b> <b>FACEBOOK STANDARDS</b>				
<b>Replaces:</b>	July 2011	<b>Reviewed:</b>	July 2016	<b>Effective:</b>	July 25, 2016
<b>Distribution:</b>	BOS, Staff, Public	<b>Other Policies Affected:</b>	Open Records		

**PURPOSE:**

Facebook is a social networking site. Businesses and governments have joined individuals in using Facebook to promote activities, programs, projects, and events. These standards are designed for the Township to drive traffic to the Montgomery Township website: [www.montgomerytwp.org](http://www.montgomerytwp.org) and to inform more people about Township activities. These standards should be used in conjunction with the Township's Social Media Use Policy. As Facebook changes, these standards may be updated accordingly.

**ESTABLISHING A PAGE:**

The format and content of any approved Facebook page will be consistent with the appearance of other Township communication vehicles.

**CONTENT:**

1. Type of Page
  - a. The Township Department will create a "page" in Facebook, rather than a "groups" page. A Facebook-page will offer distinct advantages including greater visibility, customization, and measurability.
  - b. For the "type" description, the Township's classification will be "government."
2. Standard Policy-Text Regarding Public Disclosure and Comments
  - a. The Public Information Coordinator and Information Technology Manager will standardize and provide the Facebook page's image, consisting of a picture and the Township's logo.

- b. All Township Facebook pages will include a mission introduction on the “wall page” and send users first to the wall page to connect them to the most recent content. Standard policy-text regarding public disclosure and comments will be created using the Facebook Markup Language (FBML) application. The Township boilerplate sentence should follow the description:

This is an official Facebook page for Montgomery Township, PA – [www.montgomerytwp.org](http://www.montgomerytwp.org). This page is intended to serve as a mechanism for communication between the Township and the public on the listed topics. Any comments submitted to this page and its list of fans, are public records subject to disclosure pursuant to Pennsylvania Open Records Law. Any open records requests must be made directly to the Township’s Open Records Officer.

3. Link to the Township Website

- a. A link to [www.montgomerytwp.org](http://www.montgomerytwp.org) shall be included on the “information page”.

4. Page Naming

- a. All Township page-names should be descriptive of the Township.

5. Page Administrators

- a. A successful page requires monitoring. Any department hosting a Facebook page shall designate a staff member to be responsible for monitoring the Facebook page. Posts should be approved by the Township Manager, or his/her designated alternative.

6. Comments and Discussion Boards

- a. Comments to the wall page generally will be turned off, but may be allowed on a case-by-case basis with request being submitted to the Township Manager and the Township’s Board of Supervisors (if needed). All discussion Boards shall be turned off.

7. Style

- a. The Township’s Facebook page will be complimentary and consistent with Township-branding in other communication vehicles.
- b. The Township will use proper grammar and standard Associated Press style, avoiding jargon, slang, and abbreviations. While Facebook is more casual than most other Township communication tools, it is still representative of the Township at all times, and therefore, posters must always be mindful of the content and style of a post.

## 8. Applications

- a. There are thousands of Facebook-applications. Common applications can allow users to stream video and music, post photos, and view and subscribe to Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds. While some may be useful to the page's mission, they can cause clutter and security risks.
- b. An application should not be used unless it serves a business purpose, adds to the user experience, comes from a trusted source, and is approved by the Information Technology Manager.
- c. An application may be removed at any time if there is significant reason to think it is causing a security breach or spreading viruses.

### **ARCHIVE:**

1. Content that cannot be retrieved from Facebook via the Application Programming Interface and needs to be retained as a record needs to be printed and maintained according to the Township applicable records-retention schedule.