

# The Town of Auburn Social Media Policy

Effective July 2013

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### Town of Auburn Social Media Mission Statement

The Town of Auburn wants to encourage the community to share, connect, and discover all that the Town has to offer. The Town of Auburn embraces social media as a forum to educate, increase access to Town services, encourage community engagement and community awareness. Social media provides a real time method for information transmission. The Town of Auburn makes every effort to adhere to social media best practices in order to most effectively meet these goals.

### Town of Auburn Social Media Goals

The Town of Auburn strives to provide quality services, programs and events to our citizens and, through the use of social media, to enhance our outreach efforts. Therefore, the Town of Auburn intends to utilize various forms of social media to enhance its ability to communicate information, updates, news and events to residents, businesses, visitors and the general public. Various forms of social media will be used to provide updates and information regarding Town-sponsored events, activities, and initiatives. The Town may also use social media to feature economic and community development initiatives such as events, activities, new business openings, expansions and projects. Town of Auburn social media sites will not be used to advertise or promote private business, not-for-profit organizations or other non-municipal entities unless the town administration has a role in planning, permitting, licensing, project implementation or activities related to the non-municipal entity.

### Town of Auburn Social Media Guidelines

This policy exists to provide guidance and best practices, rules and regulations for the use of the Town of Auburn's social media sites (including but not limited to Facebook and Twitter). ***The Town of Auburn's Social Media Policy applies to the Town of Auburn Official Social Media Sites. Police Department, Fire Department and Emergency Management Department sites are under the direction of the respective department heads.*** Due to the rapidly evolving world of social media, these guidelines are subject to change. Guidelines are intended to provide engagement between the Town of Auburn and its citizens in order to improve communication and a basis for a consistent and reliable source of correspondence to the community. The intended purpose of establishing an official Town social media presence is to broadcast, announce and share official Town information that is useful to the public and the citizens of the Town of Auburn.

The Town of Auburn social media sites are subject to the approval of the Town Manager or her designees. All town social media sites shall be administered by the Town Manager or her designee. This person(s) will be the administrator for the social media sites and will work directly with department heads. The social media sites are limited to only those departments/committees that have information deemed necessary to share with the public. Departments and the Town Manager or her designee shall monitor social media sites for comments/requests and for comments that violate this policy.

The Town's social media sites should make clear that they are maintained by the Town of Auburn and that they follow the Town's Social Media Policy.

All of the Town of Auburn's social media sites should link back to the official Town of Auburn website.

Access to social media sites is restricted to Town employees performing official Town business.

The Town reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Social Media Policy. Comments and postings not relative to official Town business may be removed at the discretion of the Town of Auburn. Employees representing the Town of Auburn via the Town's social media sites must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the Town in accordance with all Town policies.

This social media account is not the appropriate channel to report issues or concerns or to file a complaint. The Town's web site has a section specifically for reporting issues, complaints or questions titled "Contact Us". The Town expects all conversations to follow the rules of polite discourse and asks that participants treat each other, as well as our employees, with respect.

Comments may be monitored and may be subject to removal at the discretion of the Town of Auburn. Certain comments will not be permitted based on inappropriate comments containing, but not limited to, any of the following:

- a. Comments not related to the original topic
- b. Profane, obscene, violent or pornographic content and/or language
- c. Content that promotes discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin
- d. Defamatory or personal attacks
- e. Threats
- f. Comments relative to political campaigns
- g. Solicitation
- h. Violations of any federal, state or local law
- i. Illegal activity

The town of Auburn reserves the right to deny access to the Town of Auburn social media sites for any individual who violates the Town's Social Media Policy. Any person(s) comment(s) that violate the Town's Social Media Policy will not only be removed but the person posting the comment will be blocked/banned from the social media site at the Town's discretion.

Any comments deemed to be a threat to any town officials, employees, citizens, local business etc. are taken in a serious manor and may be subject for review by the authorities.

### **Release of Information**

Official Town information approved for release should be publicized via official Town of Auburn accounts (including the official Town of Auburn web site, Cable Television, CodeRED, and other outreach mechanisms employed by the Town) and, when appropriate, through the Town's official social media sites, not via an employee's personal account. Employees may share a piece of content once it has originated from the official social media channel.

### **Public Records Retention**

As a general rule, Town of Auburn social media accounts are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law (Chapter 7, Section 4, Clause 26). Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to Town business, or that is developed or used for approved business purposes, including a list of subscribers and posted communication, is a public record and subject to public disclosure.