

Village of West Jefferson Social Media Policy

Purpose

This policy establishes guidelines for the creation and use by the Village of West Jefferson of social media sites (including but not limited to Facebook and Twitter) as a means of conveying Village of West Jefferson information to its residents, corporate citizens, and guests.

The intended purpose of establishing Village of West Jefferson social media sites is to disseminate information about Village news and events. The Village does not intend in any manner to create a forum or other means by which public discourse, exchange of opinions, or discussion on issues of any nature may occur. Only responses to questions for clarification purposes shall be allowed.

For purposes of this policy, “social media” is understood to be a category of internet-based resources that integrate user-generated content and user participation. For purposes of this policy, “comments”, “speech”, “speak” and “state” include information, articles, photographs, videos, and/or any other communicative content posted on a Village of West Jefferson social media site.

The Village of West Jefferson has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is posted on behalf of the Village on social media sites.

The Village’s Social Media Policy shall be posted on the Village Website and referenced on each social media site.

General Policy

Prior to creating any social media account each site shall establish goals in accordance with the General Policy. These goals must be approved by the appropriate authority. Goals are parameters, which are meant to provide direction for Village employees while posting and/or commenting. These goals shall be reviewed periodically, but no less than annually.

- The establishment and use of Administrative Department’s social media sites are subject to approval by the Mayor or his/her designee.
- The establishment and use of Legislative social media sites are subject to recommendation by Council Special Events Committee and approval by Council.
- Except in the case of an emergency, Village Social Media sites shall be maintained during normal business hours.
- All Village social media sites shall be administered by Village of West Jefferson staff.
- Employees representing the Village through social media sites must conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the Village in accordance with all Village policies.
- The social media sites maintained by the Village should make clear that they are maintained by the Village of West Jefferson and they follow the Social Media Policy.
- Wherever possible, social media sites should link back to the official Village of West Jefferson website for forms, documents, online services, and other information to conduct business with the Village.
- The Village reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law. Comments on topics or issues not within the jurisdictional purview of the Village of West Jefferson may be removed.
- These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.

- The Village of West Jefferson’s website found at <https://www.westjeffersonohio.gov> will remain the Village’s primary and predominant internet presence for official information.
- All social media sites maintained by the Village shall adhere to applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations, and policies.
- The Village’s social media sites are subject to the Ohio Public Records Act. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to Village business, including a list of subscribers, posted communication, and communication submitted for posting, may be a public record and subject to public disclosure.

Comment Policy

- As a public entity, the Village of West Jefferson must abide by certain standards to serve constituents in a civil and unbiased manner.
- Comments containing any of the following inappropriate forms of content shall not be permitted and are subject to removal:
 - Profane, obscene, violent, or pornographic content and/or language;
 - Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, national origin, or any personal characteristics of a person;
 - Defamatory or personal attacks;
 - Threats to any person or organization;
 - Comments in support of, or in opposition to, any campaigns or ballot measures;
 - Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale;
 - Conduct in violation of any federal, state, or local law;
 - Encouragement of illegal activity;
 - Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
 - Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as a copyright of any party.
- A comment posted by a member of the public, on any Village social media site, is the opinion of the commenter, or poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by the Village of West Jefferson, nor do such comments reflect the opinions or policies of the Village of West Jefferson.
- The Village of West Jefferson reserves the right to deny access to Village social media sites for any individual, who violates the Village of West Jefferson’s Social Media Policy, at any time and without prior notice.
- The Village shall monitor their social media sites for comments requesting responses, and comments in violation of this policy.
- When a Village of West Jefferson employee responds to a comment, in his/her capacity as an employee, the employee shall not share personal information about himself/herself, or other Village employees, and/or any information deemed as confidential.
- All comments posted to any Village of West Jefferson Facebook sites are bound by Facebook’s Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, and the Village reserves the right to report any violation to Facebook with the intent of Facebook taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.