

TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON
RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE READINGTON TOWNSHIP SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

WHEREAS, the Township of Readington has determined that it is necessary to adopt a Social Media Policy to support the Township's efforts to maximize appropriate and timely dissemination of information regarding Township operations, events and other pertinent information; and

WHEREAS, the Township Administrator and Governing Body has determined that there is a need to adopt a Social Media Policy to regulate and govern the use of the Township's social media accounts to ensure that they are operated and administered in an appropriate and consistent manner; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Township Committee of the Township of Readington, that attached Social Media Policy is hereby approved and adopted effective immediately.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Policies and Procedures Manual is hereby updated to include the attached Social Media Policy, which shall supersede and replace all prior such policies, effective immediately.

CERTIFICATION

I, **ANN MARIE LEHBERGER**, Clerk of the Township of Readington, County of Hunterdon, State of New Jersey, do hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Township Committee on the 1st day of June 2026.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal of this Township on this 2nd day of June 2026.



Ann Marie Lehberger, RMC
Municipal Clerk

**SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY
TOWNSHIP OF READINGTON, NEW JERSEY**

PURPOSE

This policy sets forth guidelines for the establishment and use by the Township of Readington ("The Township") of its social media sites as a means of conveying strategic Township-related information to its residents and visitors. The purpose and the scope of this Social Media Policy is to address and regulate official use of the Township's social media platforms. This policy does not address Township employees' personal social networking. The Township has an overriding interest and expectation in deciding what is posted on behalf of the Township on its social media sites.

The purpose of this Social Media Policy is to establish enforceable rules for the use of social media by Township officers and employees when engaged in Township business in their official capacity. Rules are necessary to assure that communications made on behalf of the Township are properly authorized and in correct form; that communications to the municipality by means of social media which can be viewed by the public are appropriate and pertinent; that all communications to the municipality are related to posted municipal information; and that the sender is clearly and fully informed that a message received by means of social media is not a substitute for required reporting procedures.

For purposes of this policy, "social media" is understood to be content created by individuals, using accessible, expandable, and upgradable publishing technologies, through and on the Internet to facilitate the easy sharing of information, pictures, videos, and news articles. Examples of social media include Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. For purposes of this policy, "comments" include responses to posts, as well as related information, articles, and pictures. It also includes other communication mediums created by the Township, including but not limited to Nixle.

SCOPE

This policy shall apply to all Township agencies, employees, officials and departments, as well as any affiliated governmental or non-governmental agency or official and/or board, committee, or sub-committee permitted by the Township to post on Township social media sites.

GENERAL POLICY

The objective of the use of social media by the Township or its departments is to expand and facilitate the dissemination of information from the Township to its residents, businesses, and the general public.

1. No Township social media site shall be established without prior approval by Ordinance or Resolution of the Township Council. The following social media sites are approved under the direction of the Township Council:
 - a. Facebook "Readington Township, NJ"
 - i. Closed to comments from the public.
 - ii. Page ID 100229963001582
 - iii. Creation Date February 8, 2023

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- b. Facebook – Readington Township Police Department
 - i. Closed to comments from the public
 - ii. Page ID 2190998947891282
 - iii. Creation Date September 20, 2018
 - c. Instagram – Readington Township Police Department
 - d. Facebook – Readington Township Office of Emergency Management
 - i. Closed to comments from the public
 - ii. Page ID 258433691516485
 - iii. Creation Date November 12, 2018
2. The Township recognizes that certain departments, committees, advisory boards, and affiliated groups may require the use of social media platforms as tools to communicate information to the public. The following social media accounts are officially recognized by the Township as authorized information and communication channels:
 - a. Facebook – Readington Museums
 - i. Closed to comments from the public
 - ii. Page ID 605598506250366
 - iii. Creation Date January 30, 2015
 - b. Facebook – Readington Recreation
 - i. Closed to comments from the public
 - ii. Page ID 1686253681619637
 - iii. Creation Date November 4, 2015
 - c. Facebook – Preserve Rural Readington
 - i. Closed to comments from the public
 - ii. Page ID 713913291814829
 - iii. Creation Date September 17, 2025
3. The creation of additional social media sites (Facebook, Instagram, X, Twitter, etc.) will require approval by the Township Committee via resolution or ordinance. New pages/profiles should be created with an official township-established and controlled email address.
4. The Township social media site, named “Readington Township, NJ” Facebook page, shall be administered by the Township Administrator or his/her designee(s). Facebook account administration access must be maintained using a Township-established and controlled email address. Log-in credentials must be securely maintained and promptly updated upon staffing and volunteer changes.

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- a. The Township Administrator may designate additional social media administrators with the privilege and ability to post content or send messages. These additional social media administrators will not be given access to the main page email or account log-in. This privilege can be revoked at any time, without notice.
 - b. At the direction of the Township Administrator, additional social media administrators will be required to create a profile using their designated Township-established and controlled email address. The profile should be set to privacy settings that prevent others from searching for or locating it. A generic picture should be used to protect an individual's privacy.
5. The Township social media platforms shall clearly set forth that they are maintained by the Township, that they follow this Social Media Policy, and shall clearly post a link back to the official Township website.
 6. The Township social media platforms shall not be used for making any official communications or notifications whatsoever to the Township, for example, reporting crimes or misconduct, reporting dangerous conditions, requesting an inspection, or giving notice required by any statute, ordinance, or regulation, such as but not limited to notices of claim. Prominent notice of this paragraph shall be displayed on every Township social media site, along with the appropriate contact information for submitting official communications.
 7. The Township recognizes that social media can be used as a tool to disseminate emergency or time-sensitive information. During emergencies, information must be verified and approved by appropriate Township officials. Messaging will be coordinated with emergency management and public safety personnel as applicable.
 8. This Social Media Policy shall be placed on the Township Website and on all Readington Township social media pages listed above in section 1 of the General Policies above.
 9. The Administrator's designee(s) shall monitor all the Readington social media pages to ensure adherence to this Social Media Policy. The Township has the right to, and will, restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Social Media Policy or any applicable law, as determined by the Township Attorney. Any content removed based on these guidelines will be retained by the Administrator's designee pursuant to the applicable Township retention policy, including the time, date, and identity of the poster, when available.
 10. These guidelines must be displayed to users or made available by hyperlink.
 11. The Township website at <https://www.readington.gov/> will remain the Township's primary internet presence.

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12. The Township social media sites, their use, and this Policy are subject to all applicable federal and New Jersey state laws and regulations.
13. Employees, Officials and Volunteers representing the Township's government via its social media sites shall conduct themselves at all times as a representative of the Township and in accordance with all its policies for employee behavior in the Township of Readington.
14. This Social Media Policy may be revised at any time with formal action by Ordinance or Resolution by the Township Committee.
15. This policy governs all social media use by or on behalf of the Township and/or its departments.
16. No Township employee may use a Township social media site(s) either to "friend" or otherwise establish social networking relationship between the employee and a third person.
17. Social media platforms are operated by a third party separate from the Township, and social media sites occasionally become inoperable. The Township reserves the right to disable its social media accounts, temporarily or permanently, at any time. There is no guarantee that the social media accounts will be active for a specific period of time. The disabling of the site or platform can be done by the authorized designee of that site.
18. The Township of Readington is committed to providing accessible communication. When practicable, images will include alternative text, videos will include captions, and content will be written in clear, plain language.
19. Readington Township may share or repost content from other Facebook pages or Instagram accounts when:
 - a. The content relates directly to Township services, programs, public safety, or community information
 - b. The original source is clearly identified or tagged
 - c. The shared content does not imply Township endorsement of political positions, opinions, or commercial products
 - d. The source is a governmental agency, recognized community organization, or trusted partner
 - e. The content complies with applicable copyright laws and platform terms of service.
 - f. Content from private businesses shall not be shared unless it is strictly informational, non-promotional, and necessary to communicate a Township policy, regulation, or public notice.The Township reserves the right to remove shared content if it is later determined to be inaccurate, inappropriate, or inconsistent with this policy.

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20. Content from affiliated pages should be posted for a reasonable amount of time before another page's content is shared on the main Township page. Emergency communications shall be posted as needed. All affiliated pages requesting their content be shared on the main Facebook page understand that their content is subject to approval and timing availability.

COMMENT POLICY

1. Comments will be disabled on all Township social media accounts. No comments will be permitted.

PROHIBITED CONTENT

Content containing any of the following inappropriate subject matter shall not be permitted on the Township's social media sites and are subject to deletion and/or restriction by the appointed designee(s):

1. Profane, obscene, violent, or pornographic content and/or language, or sexually suggestive or explicit content links to such materials. Any image or link containing minors or suspected minors in sexual and/or provocative situations will be reported to law enforcement;
2. Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, or national origin, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity or any other characteristic protected by state or federal law;
3. Content containing vulgar, offensive, threatening, or harassing language;
4. Threats to any person or organization;
5. Solicitation of commerce, including but not limited to advertising of any business or product for sale. This prohibition does not apply to advertising Township's activities.
6. Conduct in violation of any federal, state or local law;
7. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
8. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
9. Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as a copyright, of any party;
10. Content that incites violence;
11. Political advocacy or campaign-related material, except as permitted by law.

BREACH OF POLICY

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1. The Township Administrator, or their designee(s) shall be required to remove internet postings on Township social media sites which are deemed to constitute a breach of Policy, as determined by the Administrator or their designee(s) subject to applicable archiving and retention requirements. The Township's social media records will be preserved pursuant to all relevant records schedules and for the required retention period pursuant to applicable law. The records will be preserved in an authentic format along with metadata. Social media records will be indexed based on criteria such as date, content and keywords, to facilitate their easy retrieval. The Township of Readington will use an automated archiving solution to comply with applicable public records law and fulfill its retention requirements.
2. Any social media site created by the Township remains the property of the Township, including all the followers and friends generated by the site. If the person who created the site leaves the employment of the Township, they must relinquish everything related to the site including usernames, passwords and/or access codes or information.
3. Violations of this policy may result in revocation of social media access privileges, disciplinary action consistent with Township personnel policies and legal action where appropriate.

TERMS OF USE DISCLOSURE

1. Information Disclaimer - The Township of Readington, and its officers, employees, or agents shall not be liable for damages or losses of any kind arising out of or in connection with the use or performance of information, including but not limited to, damages or losses caused by reliance upon the accuracy or timeliness of any such information, or damages incurred from the viewing, distributing, or copying of those materials.
2. Linking Policy - Links to External Sites - The Township of Readington social media sites may contain links to outside websites and may not be controlled or maintained by the Township. These websites are not owned, operated, controlled or reviewed by the Township of Readington. These links are provided solely as a courtesy and convenience to the visitor. The Township of Readington, its officers or employees, exercise no control over the organizations, views, accuracy, copyright or trademark, compliance or the legality of the material contained in these outside websites. The Township of Readington, its officers or employees, do not sponsor, endorse, or approve the information, content, proceeds, materials, opinions or services contained on such outside websites. The visitor proceeds to these outside websites at his/her own risk. The Township of Readington specifically disclaims any and all liability from damages, which may result from the accessing of a third-party site, which is linked to the Township of Readington website or from reliance upon only such information.
3. Endorsement Disclaimer - Reference in this website to any specific commercial products, processes, or services, or the use of any trade firm or corporation name is for the information and convenience of the public, and does not constitute endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by Township of Readington or its officers, employees or agents.

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4. **Copyright and Trademark Limitations** - The Township of Readington makes no warrant that materials contained herein are free of copyright or trademark claims or other restrictions or limitations on free use or display. Making a copy of such material may be subject to copyright or trademark laws.

5. **Use of material from this site** - The Township of Readington has made the content of these pages available to the public and anyone may view, copy or distribute information found here without obligation for non-commercial, personal use only, unless otherwise stated on particular material or information to which a restriction on free use may apply. The design of this site, original graphics, and original content are all copyrighted by the Township of Readington and may not be re-engineered, distributed, modified, transmitted, re-used, reposted, or duplicated without the express written permission of the Township of Readington in each instance. All requests to use any part of the original design, code, graphics or content of this site should be made via e-mail to the Township Administrator or Township Clerk.

6. **Unauthorized Modifications** - Unauthorized attempts to modify or otherwise alter any information or image stored on any Township of Readington website may result in criminal prosecution.