



# Town of Miami Lakes

## Social Media Policy – Community Guidelines

### **Mission Statement**

The Town of Miami Lakes supports the use of social media to advance the goals of the Town and to provide information to the public in order to enhance communication and transparency.

### **Purpose**

The Town of Miami Lakes (the “Town”) has an inherent interest in controlling what is shared, written, and promoted on behalf of the Town through the use of Social Media sites (including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Nextdoor and YouTube). The Town of Miami Lakes Social Media Policy (the “Policy”) as set forth establishes guidelines for the use of Social Media by the Town, as a means of conveying information about the Town, its events and activities to its residents, and the general public.

The Town of Miami Lakes Social Media Policy’s purpose is to disseminate accurate information to its residents and general public.

Nothing in this Policy shall be applied to prohibit or infringe upon any communication, speech or expression that is protected or privileged under the law; this includes freedom of speech and expression protected under state or federal constitutions as well as labor laws or other applicable laws.

### **Ownership**

All social media communications messages composed, sent or received on the Town’s equipment or used in official Town business or representing the Town of Miami Lakes are the property of the Town of Miami Lakes and subject to public records.

### **General Policy**

This Policy establishes guidelines for Town maintained social media sites, pages, and posts on social media networks, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Nextdoor and YouTube. The primary goal of the Town’s use of social media is to increase public awareness of the Town’s programs, policies and services and to maintain open, professional and responsive communications with members of the public regarding the Town.

The Town recognizes and appreciates the rights of all members of our online community to free speech and freedom of expression. Administrators regularly monitor social media pages, content and comments. The Town reserves the right to take other actions to ensure compliance with this Policy.

Comments should be related to the posted topic for the social media page or post. Town administered social media accounts are not meant for comments that do not directly relate to the purpose or subject of the social media website, page or post. This social media page is intended to be for informational purposes only. If a user wishes to contact the Town Council or Administration or to request Town services, the user should visit the Town’s official website: <http://www.miamilakes-fl.gov/>.

By participating on this page, users agree to the terms of this Policy and to only post content that is consistent with this Policy and related to the posting, discussion or forum topic. The following is prohibited on all Town maintained social media pages:

- The use of obscene, crude, defamatory, threatening, sexually indecent or harassing language;
- Misrepresentation of one's person, background, or character
- Personal attacks of any kind or offensive comments that advocate unlawful discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, physical or mental disability;
- Comments or content advocating for, or depicting, illegal activity;
- Personally identifiable information such as social security numbers and dates of birth;
- Sexually explicit speech;
- Non-Town sanctioned commercial solicitations;
- Statements that endanger public health, safety and security or comments that encourage, provide advice for or solicit the Council to commit or become implicit in a criminal act;
- Content that violates intellectual property or copyright laws or posting of material that violates copyrights or trademarks of others;
- Promotion or advertisement of a business or commercial transaction.

#### **Reporting/Removal of Unauthorized Comments**

The Town requires that department-designated Social Media Administrators immediately notify the Communications Director ("Director") if there is any posted material that may be inappropriate, violates this Policy or any Town policy, is illegal, that potentially infringes the copyrights or other rights of any persons. The Director will investigate and respond to all reports of potential violations of this Policy.

The Town reserves the right, at any time and without prior notice, to deny access to the Social Media site to any individual who violates this Policy.

Town maintained social media sites and pages are a public forum. Any content posted is subject to public records retention and disclosure pursuant to Florida law.

Opinions expressed by visitors to this page do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Town, nor the opinions of any of the Town's elected officials or employees.

## Employee Responsibility

The following principles apply to personal use of social media when referencing the Town of Miami Lakes.

- Employees need to know and adhere to the [Town's Code of Conduct, Employee Handbook, and other company policies] when using social media in reference to Town of Miami Lakes.
- Although not an exclusive list, some specific examples of prohibited social media conduct include posting commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, or that can create a hostile work environment.
- Social media networks, blogs and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention or legal questions. Employees should refer these inquiries to authorized Town of Miami Lakes Public Information Officer.
- If employees encounter a situation while using social media that threatens to become antagonistic, employees should disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner and seek the advice of a supervisor.
- Employees should get appropriate permission before you refer to or post images of current or former employees, members, vendors or suppliers. Additionally, employees should get appropriate permission to use a third party's copyrights, copyrighted material, trademarks, service marks or other intellectual property.
- Social media use shouldn't interfere with employee's responsibilities at Town of Miami Lakes. Town of Miami Lakes computer systems are to be used for business purposes only. When using Town of Miami Lakes computer systems, use of social media for business purposes is allowed (ex: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn), but personal use of social media networks or personal blogging of online content is discouraged and could result in disciplinary action.
- If employees publish content after-hours that involves work or subjects associated with Town of Miami Lakes, a disclaimer should be used, such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and may not represent Town of Miami Lakes positions, strategies or opinions."
- Chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes, commonly referred to as the Public Records Law, makes every government record public unless there is a specific exemption approved by the State Legislature. Under this law, computerized public records are treated in the same way as written documents. Any official Town of Miami Lakes electronic files, documents, or electronic transmissions (as defined by law) in an employee's account are considered to be public record and may be subject to inspection. All applicable United States, State of Florida and Miami-Dade County laws and policies will govern any inspection of electronic files, and any action based upon such inspection.
- This policy reaffirms that Town employees have no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to any computer hardware, software, electronic mail, text or instant message, voicemail or other computer or electronic means of communication or storage, whether or not employees have private access or an entry code into the computer or voicemail system, or Town-issued cell phone or iPad/tablet computer.

**Terms of Service**

Each type of Social Media maintains a “Terms of Use” agreement. All comments posted to any Town Social Media Site are bound by these Terms of Use and the Town reserves the right to report any user violation.

This Policy is subject to amendment or modification by the Town at any time.