



# Village of Westchester

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Village President and Board of Trustees

**FROM:** Village Manager Barry Krumstok

**DATE:** July 25, 2023

**SUBJECT:** RESOLUTION NO. 2023-933 A RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE OF WESTCHESTER, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS, AUTHORIZING AND APPROVING THE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR THE VILLAGE OF WESTCHESTER

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### **BACKGROUND**

Attached for Village Board consideration is the Social Media Policy for the Village of Westchester. Applicable for employees, elected officials, and appointed representatives of the Village, this policy aims to maintain a balance between the right of self-expression and the organization's reputation.

In general, this policy emphasizes discussions should be respectful to the Village, employees, businesses, patrons, our partners and affiliates, and others. In addition, discussions should not reveal confidential information or matters not publicly known. If individuals choose to discuss Village-related matters on personal websites or social media platforms, they should exercise caution and discretion as their posts may be perceived as representing the Village.

For employees, the policy highlights the potential impact of their online activities on job performance, staff morale, teamwork, and the Village's reputation. Employees are expected to be respectful, avoid posting offensive or objectionable content, and refrain from using Village computers for social media communication unless it is part of their job. Employees are regarded as ambassadors of the Village, and their actions should align with the organization's best interests. Failure to adhere to the guidelines may result in disciplinary action, including termination.

Similar expectations are set for elected officials and appointed representatives, emphasizing the potential influence their online presence can have on the Village's reputation. They should maintain respect, avoid offensive content, and seek permission before using the Village logo or reproducing Village material on their sites. Violation of the guidelines may lead to discipline by the Village President and Village Board.

The policy encourages individuals to use good judgment, consider the consequences of their actions, and take personal responsibility for their online posts. Questions or concerns regarding guidelines should be directed to designated Village personnel. The policy explicitly states that it does not intend to limit or restrict protected speech or communications as provided by law. The Village Board reviewed this policy at the July 11, 2023 Committee of the Whole, providing direction to proceed.

**BUDGET INFORMATION**

**Budgeted Item:** Not applicable

**Budgeted Amount:** Not applicable

**Proposed is (Please circle one):** Not applicable

**Budget Account Code(s):** Not applicable

**RECOMMENDED ACTION**

Staff recommends the Village Board approve the proposed Social Media Policy.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Social Media Policy

Resolution No. 2023-933 Authorizing and Approving Social Media Policy

# VILLAGE OF WESTCHESTER

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Date: July 25, 2023

### A. Purpose

In general, the Village respects the right of employees to use social media, personal websites and blogs as a medium of self-expression. Unless otherwise allowed by law, employees, elected officials and appointed representatives of the Village should not discuss matters not already available or publicly known to individuals outside of the organization. Keeping this in mind, if an employee, elected official or appointed representative chooses to identify themselves as a Village employee, elected official or appointed representative of the Village and discuss matters related to the Village, Staff, or patrons on their website, blog, or other online social network (i.e., Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram), please proceed with caution and discretion. Although posts may be a personal project conveying an individual's expression, some people may nonetheless view the employee, elected official or appointed representative as a de facto spokesperson for the Village. This is why Village computers and other electronic devices should not be used for social media communications unless this is a specified job function of the employee.

### B. For Employees

For employees, such activities at or outside of work also may affect their job performance, the performance of others, staff morale, teamwork, and/or the reputation or business interests of our Village. Consider these possibilities, employees must observe the following guidelines:

- a) Since the postings are in a public space, be respectful to the Village, our employees, our patrons, our partners and affiliates, and others. For example, refrain from posting personal insults or obscenity, or engaging in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the workplace. Show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable, inflammatory, or counterproductive to morale or teamwork.
- b) An employee may provide a link from their site to the Village website. However, the employee will require permission to use the Village logo or reproduce any Village material on their site.
- c) When using Village computers, social media sites and other websites such as Slack, Facebook Messenger, Snapchat GCat, WhatsApp, or other tools hosted outside of the Village's protected intranet environment should not be used for internal communications among fellow employees.

## Village of Westchester, Illinois Social Media Policy

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- d) Recognize that both during working hours and non-working hours, the employees are an ambassador of the Village. Employees are expected to conduct themselves at all times in the best interest of the Village. Further, all employees are expected to promote teamwork and inspire trust and confidence. For example, if their views negatively impact the reputation and integrity of the Village, hurt staff morale, and/or create friction among staff, the employees may be disciplined, up to and including termination of employment.
- e) Lastly, use good judgment. Your actions both in and outside the workplace reflect on your judgement, decision-making, professionalism, maturity, and commitment to the Village. If you are about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, review the guidelines above and consider the potential consequences of your actions. Ultimately, you have sole responsibility for what you post to your blog or publish in any form of online social media.

If any employees have questions about these guidelines or any matter related to their site that these guidelines do not address, please direct them to the Assistant Village Manager or Village Manager or his/her designee.

There is nothing in the policy that is intended to limit or restrict the rights of any employee engaged in speech or communications that are concerted or protected under the law.

### **C. For Elected Officials and Appointed Representatives**

For elected officials and appointed representatives, such activities at or outside of the Village also may affect the performance of others, staff morale, teamwork, and/or the reputation or business interests of our Village. Consider these possibilities:

- a) Since the postings are in a public space, be respectful to the Village, employees, businesses, patrons, our partners and affiliates, and others. For example, refrain from posting personal insults or obscenity, or engaging in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the workplace. Show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable, inflammatory, or counterproductive to morale or teamwork.
- b) An elected official or appointed representative may provide a link from their site to the Village website. However, the individual will require permission to use the Village logo or reproduce any Village material on their site.

## Village of Westchester, Illinois Social Media Policy

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- c) When using Village computers, social media sites and other websites such as Slack, Facebook Messenger, Snapchat GChat, WhatsApp, or other tools hosted outside of the Village's protected intranet environment should not be used for internal communications among fellow employees.
- f) Recognize that you are an ambassador of the Village. You are expected to conduct yourself at all times in the best interest of the Village. Further, all elected officials and appointed representatives are expected to promote teamwork and inspire trust and confidence. For example, if their views negatively impact the reputation and integrity of the Village, hurt staff morale, and/or create friction among staff, the elected official or appointed official may be disciplined by the Village President and Village Board.
- d) Lastly, use good judgment. Your actions both in and outside the Village reflect on your judgement, decision-making, professionalism, maturity, and commitment to the Village. If you are about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit uncomfortable, review the guidelines above and consider the potential consequences of your actions. Ultimately, you have sole responsibility for what you post to your blog or publish in any form of online social media.

If any elected official or appointed representative have questions about these guidelines or any matter related to their site that these guidelines do not address, please direct them to the Village President or Assistant Village Manager or Village Manager or his/her designee.

There is nothing in the policy that is intended to limit or restrict the rights of any employee engaged in speech or communications that are concerted or protected under the law.

RESOLUTION NO. 2023-933

A RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE OF WESTCHESTER, COOK COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
ADOPTING A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR THE VILLAGE EMPLOYEES,  
ELECTED OFFICIALS AND APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE  
PRESIDENT AND BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
THIS 25<sup>th</sup> DAY OF JULY 2023

Published in pamphlet form by  
Authority of the Corporate  
Authorities of Westchester, Illinois  
the 25<sup>th</sup> day of July 2023

**RESOLUTION NO. 2023-933**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE VILLAGE OF WESTCHESTER, COOK COUNTY,  
ILLINOIS ADOPTING A SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR THE VILLAGE  
EMPLOYEES, ELECTED OFFICIALS AND APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVES**

**WHEREAS**, the Village of Westchester, Cook County, Illinois (the “*Village*”) is a duly organized and existing municipal corporation created under the provisions of the laws of the State of Illinois and under the provisions of the Illinois Municipal Code, as from time to time supplemented and amended; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village desires to adopt a social media policy for employees, elected officials, and appointed representatives of the Village to maintain a balance between the right of self-expression and the organization’s reputation (the “*Policy*”), a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof, as Exhibit A; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Westchester (the “*Corporate Authorities*”) deem it advisable and in the best interest of the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Village to adopt the Policy.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Village President and Board of Trustees of the Village of Westchester, Cook County, Illinois as follows:

**Section 1:** The preambles set forth hereinabove are incorporated herein and made a part of this Resolution.

**Section 2:** The Policy, a copy of which is attached hereto and made a part hereof as Exhibit A, is hereby adopted by the Corporate Authorities of the Village.

**Section 3:** The Village President and Village Clerk are hereby authorized and directed deliver the Policy and any and all other document necessary to implement the provisions, terms and conditions thereof, as therein described.

**Section 4:** The officials, officers and employees of the Village are hereby authorized to take such further actions as are necessary to carry out the intent and purpose of this Resolution and the Policy.

**Section 5:** If any section, paragraph, clause or provision of this Resolution shall be held invalid, the invalidity thereof shall not affect any other provision of this Resolution.

**Section 6:** All ordinances, resolutions, motions or orders in conflict with this Resolution are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

**Section 7:** The Village Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to publish this Resolution in pamphlet form and this Resolution shall be in full force and effect immediately after its adoption, approval and publication to ensure the public health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Village.

*(Intentionally Left Blank)*



**PASSED** this 25<sup>th</sup> day of July 2023, pursuant to a roll call vote as follows:

Gia Marie Benline	_____	Evelyn Slavic	_____
Peter Marzano	_____	Nicholas C. Steker	_____
Robert Morales	_____	Victoria M. Vann	_____
President Greg Hribal		_____	

**APPROVED** this 25<sup>th</sup> day of July 2023.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Greg Hribal, Village President

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sophia Collins, Village Clerk

Exhibit A

*Policy*

(see attached)