

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Policy

This policy provides guidance for employee use of social media, which should be broadly understood for purposes of this policy to include blogs, wikis, microblogs, message boards, chat rooms, electronic newsletters, online forums, social networking sites, and other sites and services that may reasonably be construed as constituting “social media”.

This policy applies, as set forth below, to the use of social media both during an employee’s work hours as well as while not being compensated by the employer.

Nothing herein shall be construed to infringe upon Section 7 of the Transport Union Worker’s Labor Contract, the National Labor Relations Act or the rules promulgated by New Jersey Public Employee Relations Commission.

Procedures

Employees must be familiar with, and adhere to Howell Township’s Employee Handbook/Personnel Manual.

Employees must be aware of the effect their actions may have on their image, as well as on Howell Township’s image. Employees must also be aware that Howell Township may observe content and information made available by employees through social media.

Social networking media should have clear disclaimers that the views expressed by the author are the author’s alone and do not represent the views of the Township. Be clear and write in first person that you are speaking for yourself and not the Township.

Employees shall not post information that is harassing, libelous, and defamatory or that can create a hostile work environment.

Employees are not to publish post or release any information that is considered confidential or not public. If there are questions about what is considered confidential, employees must check with Township Manager, Human Resources Administrator, Township Attorney or other delegate prior to posting or releasing such information.

In addition, social media networks, blogs and other types of online content sometimes generate press and media attention and/or or legal considerations. Employees should refer any such comment or inquiry to Township Manager, Human Resources Administrator, Township Attorney or other delegate immediately upon receipt of such inquiry. This shall not preclude any union employees from speaking about union business, regardless of the forum.

Social media use must not interfere with an employee's responsibilities at Howell Township’s computer systems are to be used for business purposes only. Personal use of social media networks during actual time worked is discouraged and could result in disciplinary action.

Subject to applicable law, online activity that violates the Howell Township Employee Handbook/Personnel Manual may subject an employee to disciplinary action.