

Village of Howard City Social Media Site Posting Policy

1. **BACKGROUND:** The Village of Howard City encourages the use of social media technologies to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange in support of the Village's mission. By openly sharing knowledge, best practices, and lessons learned, we can provide more effective solutions and enhance efficiencies within the business of government. The Village's social media pages, including, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube are intended to serve as another way in which our community can connect and learn about Village services, events, and activities. The purpose of these sites is to discuss matters of public interest in and to the Village of Howard City as identified and raised by the Village of Howard City for discussion. We encourage you to submit comments that are on topic, but please address your comments to the specific topic(s) discussed. This is a forum limited to the specific topics identified and raised by the Village of Howard City. Users who submit content to this site agree they have read, understand, and agree to the following terms and conditions by virtue of such use.

This policy is structured into two sections; the first being a general policy and guidelines for anyone posting to the Village's social media pages, and the second being additional guidelines for Village Employees who post to the Village's social media pages.

As the technology evolves, the policy is to provide guidelines for posting content to the Village of Howard City's social media pages.

2. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for posting content to the Village of Howard City's social media pages.
3. **SECTION I – GENERAL POLICY:** This policy shall apply to all users of the Village's social media pages, including the general public, Village staff, Village Council Members, and members of Village Boards and Committees.

Comments noting the positives about our Village are always welcome of course; but so too are constructive criticisms. The Village actively monitors its social media pages and takes your input seriously; so, we encourage everyone to be respectful and thoughtful in their comments.

You are fully responsible for everything that you submit in your comments, so please remember that all posted comments are in the public domain. Comments may be retained by the Village of Howard City and may be subject to disclosure, if requested, under the Freedom of Information Act. The Village of Howard City reserves the right to delete comments that are generally understood as any of the following:

- a. Comments not related to Village business or not related to the original posted social medium content being commented upon;
- b. Comments in support of, or in opposition to, political campaigns or ballot proposals;
- c. Violent, racist, discriminatory, obscene, or profane language or content;
- d. Sexual or violent content or links to sexual or violent content;
- e. Comments that physically threaten any person or organization;
- f. Comments that contain random or unintelligible text;
- g. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
- h. Copyrighted material or other content that violates the legal ownership interest of another party;
- i. Commercial advertisements for products or services;
- j. Comments that suggest or encourage illegal activity;
- k. Multiple, off-topic posts or repetitive posts that are copied and pasted;

- l. Anonymous postings, or multiple postings by the same user or individual using a fictitious or different name;
- m. Posted content that contains personal information, including, but not limited to, identification numbers, phone numbers, e-mail addresses.

The Village reserves the right to ban users who continually violate the above policy and guidelines.

The Village shall post the content of Section I in a prominent location on the Village's official website and on its social media pages. Placing a link on a social media page linking to the Village's official website meets the requirements of this section.

4. SECTION II – EMPLOYEE POLICY: In addition to the guidelines in Section I, Village employees shall follow the guidelines in this Section II:
 - a. Content: The Village Clerk or his/her designee shall have the sole authority to administer and moderate the content of the Village's social media pages.
 - b. Authority to post on the Village's social media pages as the Official Village Position: For consistent communications practices, all posts as the Village's official position on its social media pages shall be made by the Village Clerk or his/her designee. In the event of an emergency, or any situation deemed appropriate by the Village Manager, the Village Manager or his/her designee may post to the Village's social media pages as the official Village position.
 - c. Other employees posting to the Village's social media pages: Other employees may respond to an official post but must include a disclaimer that reflects that the content contained therein is in no relation to their professional duties as an employee of the Village of Howard City. Employees shall, in no way, attempt to convey their position as the Official Village position.
 - d. Prohibited Content (in addition to that identified in Section I):
 - i. Information about actual or potential claims and/or litigation involving the Village of Howard City.
 - ii. Intellectual property of others, without written permission
 - iii. Personal, sensitive or confidential information about anyone which would constitute an invasion of an individual's privacy.
5. PENALTY FOR VIOLATION: Employees who violate this policy are subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including, termination.

I certify that this policy was adopted by the Village of Howard City Council for the Village of Howard City on October 17, 2022, at a regular meeting held in the Village Council Offices, 125 E. Shaw Street, Howard City, MI 49329.

Melissa Kuzmik, Clerk/Treasurer