

Communication and Social Media Policy & Guidelines

The Town of Jaffrey strives to provide its citizens and the general public accurate and timely information, communicated in a professional manner and in accordance with public access laws. The Town has several objectives when doing so:

- To effectively inform citizens and municipal officials about the Town of Jaffrey.
- To provide timely notice and information regarding municipal meetings, events or issues of importance to our citizens.
- To demonstrate the value and services the Town of Jaffrey provides.
- To engage the community and foster an effective relationship between the Town and its citizens.

This policy provides guidelines for all external communications from the Town of Jaffrey using various media including:

- Electronic information tools such as the Town of Jaffrey website, municipally related websites or social media sites.
- Printed materials produced by the town for citizen education efforts.
- Media relations such as requests for interviews, news releases and media inquiries.
- Direct contact with citizens or other members of the general public.

General Guidelines for All Communication

Town of Jaffrey employees have a responsibility to help communicate accurate and timely information to staff and the public in a professional manner. Any employee who identifies a mistake in reporting should bring the error to the attention of the author or other appropriate staff.

Handling General Requests: Staff is responsible for communicating basic and routine information to the public in relation to their specific job duties. Requests for private data or information outside of the scope of an individual's job duties should be routed to the appropriate department or to the employee's supervisor.

Handling Media Requests: Except for basic information that is readily available to the public, requests for interviews or information from the media should be routed to the appropriate Department Head or Town Manager. Media requests include contact from those who say they represent any form of media, including print publications, television, radio and informational websites.

Electronic and Social Media Communication

The Town of Jaffrey communicates to citizens and the public via its website.

www.townofjaffrey.com is our primary internet presence. Social media includes sites such as Facebook, Twitter and others. The town recognizes members of the public increasingly gather

information through these and other electronic sites. Therefore, it is necessary to use these tools to communicate effectively and fully.

The best and most appropriate use of social media generally fall into three categories:

- Disseminate time-sensitive material quickly.
- Enhance the Town of Jaffrey's ability to put its messages before the widest audience possible.
- Initiate transparent conversations among the town, the media and citizens.

The Town of Jaffrey recognizes the instantaneous, yet permanent, nature of these electronic tools can pose risk without effective controls. The key point for consideration is information and statements posted on websites and through social media directly reflect on the Town of Jaffrey. Therefore, great care should be exercised when posting. The Town of Jaffrey will post its Facebook page as a non-interactive, public & government service page where outside posts are limited.

Communication via electronic and social media on behalf of the Town of Jaffrey can only be done by Department Heads or designated staff.

Personal Communication

It is important for employees to remember that some personal communication may reflect on the Town of Jaffrey, especially when commenting on anything political in nature; federal, state or local government activities; or, Town of Jaffrey business. The following guidelines apply to personal communication including various forms of social media, letters to the editor of newspapers, or personal endorsements:

- What you write is public and may be for a long time. It may spread to large audiences. Use common sense when using email or social media sites. It is a good idea to refrain from sending or posting information you would not want your supervisor or other employees to read, or that you would be embarrassed to see in a newspaper or on a prominent website.
- The Town of Jaffrey expects its employees to be truthful, courteous and respectful toward coworkers, citizens, customers and other people associated with the town. Do not engage in name-calling or personal attacks.
- In the workplace, town employees should always identify themselves as such during official communication.
- Town of Jaffrey resources and working time should not be used for personal profit or business interests, or to participate in personal political activity.
- Personal social media account names or email names should not be tied to the Town of Jaffrey.

This guideline does not supersede the Employee Handbook's Electronic Usage Policy.