

Social Media Policy

Statement of Purpose

The Prospect Heights Fire Protection District recognizes that social media services, such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, have become increasingly common forms of communication among residents, media outlets, government agencies, businesses and others. Using this technology, the Fire District has additional avenues by which to share news releases, inform the public about initiatives and highlight events and positive media coverage. Additionally, social media provides the ability to share other information that supports the goals and mission of the Fire District.

Guidelines and Expectations

“Social media account” shall mean any of the Prospect Heights Fire Protection District’s accounts or online services that allow for interaction with Fire District residents and other stakeholders, including, but not limited to, Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

A. LIMITED PUBLIC FORUM

The Fire District’s social media accounts are limited public forums. The Fire District does not make its social media accounts available for general public discourse, but rather reserves and limits the topics that may be discussed on the social media accounts. Each account may offer a different form of or no public access.

B. CONTENT RESTRICTIONS

Because communication via social media constitutes a limited public forum, the Fire District reserves the right to reject or remove (if possible) any content that is deemed in violation of this policy or any applicable law. Fire District social media account content and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed for posting and shall be subject to removal:

1. Comments unrelated to the purpose and topical scope of the page.
2. Defamatory, threatening or profane language.
3. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.
4. Sexual content or links to sexual content.
5. Solicitations of commerce.
6. Personally identifiable information, such as an address, phone number, social security number or other sensitive information.
7. Information which may interfere with or compromise current investigations, police tactics and the safety or security of public safety staff and/or the public or public systems.
8. Promotion or advertisement in favor of, or in opposition to a political campaign, ballot measure or candidate.
9. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
10. Distribution of copyrighted photographs, music, video, graphics or other content without the express permission of the copyright holder.

C. CONTENT REMOVAL

Content that is deemed not suitable for posting by the administrators of the Fire District’s social media accounts based on the criteria defined above, shall be retained by staff pursuant to the records retention schedule in the form of a screen capture along with a description of the reason the specific content was rejected. The comment will then be removed, as technology allows, from the Fire District’s social media account(s).

D. NOTICE

Users and visitors to the Fire District’s social media accounts shall be notified that the intended purpose of the account is to serve as a mechanism for communication of Fire District news, services and events and that it is a limited public forum. By posting or commenting, users agree to the terms of use outlined in this policy, which will be posted to the Fire District’s website and linked to, as technology allows, from each of the Fire District’s social media accounts.

E. TIME OF USE

The Prospect Heights Fire Protection District’s social media accounts are not monitored 24/7, and as such, posts and responses should not be immediately expected. Accounts are typically monitored on an occasional basis during normal

business hours, designated as weekdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., excluding holidays. Responses will typically be made to the poster within five (5) business days.

F. EMERGENCY NOTICE

As the Fire District's social media accounts are not monitored 24/7, users are advised NOT to use the Fire District's social media accounts to report an emergency situation. Requests for fire, rescue, or emergency medical assistance must be made by dialing 9-1-1.

This policy will be reviewed, at a minimum, annually by the fire chief and will be updated as necessary.