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**Policy Title: FRANKLIN COUNTY SOCIAL MEDIA PUBLIC COMMENT POLICY**  
**Policy Number: 107.00** **Effective Date: July 31, 2018**  
**Revision Number:** **Revision Date:**

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**Authority:** Franklin County Commissioners  
David S. Keller, Chairman  
Robert L. Thomas  
Robert G. Ziobrowski

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## **I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of Franklin County social media sites is to present matters of public interest in the county for the benefit of its residents, businesses and visitors. You are welcome to submit your questions, comments and concerns but please note that social media is a moderated online discussion site and not a public forum.

## **II. SCOPE**

To the extent public comments are enabled on a Franklin County social media site, all members of the public will be allowed to comment and public comments shall not thereafter be blocked, filtered, deleted, or otherwise censored, except as provided below or allowed by law. Any comments on the County's social media sites are the opinion of the poster only and the presence of such comments does not imply that the County endorses or agrees with the comments.

Social media is not an official channel for contacting the County of Franklin agencies, employees and officials. While the County may at times respond to inquiries or comments on social media, staffing for that purpose is not 24/7. The County encourages users to utilize the official county website at [www.franklincountypa.gov](http://www.franklincountypa.gov) to learn how to officially contact government offices.

Communications posted on the county's social media pages will not be construed as satisfying requirements for legal notice or service, shall not be considered official public comment and shall not be construed as an official request for records pursuant to the Right-to-Know law.

Franklin County may post links to other organizations on its social media pages. A link does not constitute an endorsement of content, viewpoint, policies, products or services that may exist on that site. Once a user clicks a link to another website not maintained by the County, the user is subject to the terms and conditions of that website.

The following forms of content shall not be allowed on any Franklin County social media website, profile or application and article and comments associated therein.

- Profane and/or vulgar language or content;
- Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of creed, color, age, race, gender, religion, marital status, or status with regard to public assistance, national origin, intellectual or physical disability or sexual orientation;
- Sexual content or links to sexual content, including a poster with a profile picture containing nudity or sexually explicit content;

- Solicitation of commerce;
- Solicitation for donations. This shall not apply to any official Franklin County posting providing the public with information related to fundraisers, activities and projects that are supported or sponsored by the County.
- Conduct constituting or encouraging illegal activity;
- Information that may compromise the safety, security or proceedings of the public, public systems or any criminal or civil investigations;
- Name-calling and/or personal attacks;
- Spam, such as the same content being posted repeatedly;
- Content that violates the legal ownership interest of a party, trademark or copyright laws; or
- Content containing personally private information, including but not limited to identifiable medical information.

Any content removed based upon these guidelines must be retained by the County Administrator, or his or her designee, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available, pursuant to Pennsylvania state law. Unless otherwise addressed in a specific social media standards document or County retention schedules, the County Administrator or his or her designee, shall preserve records required to be maintained for a period of no less than one year on a County server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible.

The County reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law.

Franklin County is prohibited from banning or blocking any user or subscriber to any official Franklin County social media account unless their participation is creating an illegal or unmanageable situation. For example, a poster who repeatedly posts sexual content or links to sexual content may be blocked if it becomes impossible to repeatedly and timely delete such unauthorized content. In such cases, a block must be approved by the County Administrator or his or her designee.

Comments, media or other information posted to or displayed on the County's social media sites, accounts, and content are subject to monitoring and review at all times. Users should have no expectation to privacy with respect to their postings. Monitoring does not occur constantly due to staff resources; therefore, Franklin County is not liable for inappropriate or offensive comments that may be posted.

This policy shall be administered by the County Administrator.

**V. ATTACHMENTS** – None

**VI. CROSS REFERENCE** - None

**VII. CONTACT INFORMATION/PROPONENT OFFICE** – Commissioner's Office

**VIII. ADDENDUMS/AMENDMENTS – None.**

**IX. TERMINATION OR MODIFICATIONS OF THIS POLICY –**

- a. The Board of Commissioners reserves the right to terminate, amend or adjust this process at any time without liability to any person who may be affected by such termination or amendment. Under the at will status, no employee shall have any vested right to the continuation of this policy or to have the same continued for any reason.
- b. Employees whose terms and conditions of employment are covered by a collective bargaining agreement will be covered by such terms and conditions of the contract. This policy is not intended to supersede or override any provisions of their collective bargaining agreement.
- c. This policy is not intended to supersede or override any provisions of the Courts as a result of inherent and exclusive rights and powers of the judiciary accorded to it by Article V of the Pennsylvania Constitution and Section 1620 of the County Code.

ADOPTED THIS 31<sup>ST</sup> DAY OF JULY, 2018.

FRANKLIN COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



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David S. Keller, Chairman



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Robert L. Thomas



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Robert G. Ziobrowski