

# CANDIA POLICE

## - DEPARTMENT POLICY –

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**\*\*NOTE:** This written directive is for the internal governance of the Candia Police Department, and as provided by RSA 516:36, is not intended and should not be interpreted to establish a higher standard of care in any civil or criminal action than would otherwise be applicable under existing law.\*\*

### **TOPIC: Agency Social Media Accounts**

**Effective Date: February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

#### **I. PURPOSE**

To establish protocol and guidelines on the use of Candia Police operated social media accounts.

#### **II. POLICY**

The assigned officer of the department social media accounts, or whomever is tasked with acting as an administrator of the department social media accounts, shall use this policy as a guideline for conducting administrative functions of department social media accounts.

#### **III. DEFINITIONS**

**Comments:** Responses to a blog post, news article, social media entry or other social networking post.

**Page:** the specific portion of a social media website where content is displayed and managed by an individual or individual with administrative rights.

**Post (noun):** An item inserted into a blog, or an entry to any type of computerized bulletin board, forum or social media site.

**Post (verb):** The act of creating, uploading, editing or adding to any social media outlet. This includes text, photographs, audio, video or any other multimedia file.

**Profile:** Any information that a user provides about them on a social networking site.

**Social Media:** On-line sources that allow people to communicate, share, and/or exchange information with others via some form of on-line or cellular network platform. Information may include, but is not limited to, text, photographs, video, audio, and other multimedia files.

#### **IV. CURRENT SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS**

# **CANDIA POLICE - DEPARTMENT POLICY –**

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As of the effective date of this policy, the Facebook account, John Smith and the Facebook page, “Town of Candia Police Department,” are the only two social media accounts associated with Facebook, and with the department. Any new social media accounts associated with the department, shall be reviewed and approved by the Chief of Police.

## **V. APPROVED USES**

The Facebook account, “John Smith,” shall only be used for investigative purposes to assist with identifying potential participants in criminal activity or to assist with identifying a person of interest relating a to police call for service. The use of Facebook Marketplace under the name of “John Smith,” shall only be used for searching items intended to be used for the department. The use of Facebook Messenger under the name of, “John Smith,” shall only be used for police related communications.

The Facebook page, “Town of Candia Police Department,” page, shall only be used for sharing information, photos, and videos, relating to police calls for service or community outreach events/holidays. Images and videos of people can be published, with the first name or last name of the individuals captured. The use of Facebook Messenger under the name of, Town of Candia Police Department, shall only be used for police related communications.

Furthermore, the Facebook page, “Town of Candia Police Department,” shall continue to allow the monthly posting of police activity, which lists recently arrested individuals. As of the effective date of this policy, previously mentioned postings, shall include the following statement at the bottom of the posting, “the above mentioned individuals are presumed innocent, until found guilty in a court of law.”

## **VI. UNAPPROVED USES**

The Facebook account, “John Smith,” shall not be used for non-investigative purposes or non-police calls for service, such as personal use. The use of Facebook Marketplace, under the name of “John Smith, shall not be used for searching items not intended for the use of the department. The use of Facebook Messenger under the name of, “John Smith,” shall not be used for non police related communications.

The Facebook page, “Town of Candia Police Department,” page, shall not be used for sharing information that could impede or compromise the integrity of an active investigation. Furthermore, information in posts shall not include the full names of individuals captured in posts. Juvenile names shall not be included in postings. The use of Facebook Messenger under the name of, “Town of Candia Police Department,” shall not be used for non police related communications.

# **CANDIA POLICE - DEPARTMENT POLICY –**

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The department social media administrator shall not comment on subject matters that are beyond their professional expertise or on which they are not authorized to represent the department. Additionally, the department social media administrator shall not engage in conversations under the Facebook account, “John Smith,” or the Facebook page, “Town of Candia Police Department,” that could engage in a manner that could incite negative opinions or actions against the department.

## **VII. POLICING OF COMMENTORS ON POSTINGS**

The administrator of the Facebook page, “Town of Candia Police Department,” shall allow comments or messages that follow the policies and guidelines set forth by Facebook and that are also covered under the First Amendment of the US Constitution.

The administrator shall remove comments or messages that portray or threaten criminal activity not relating to the topic of the post. Comments or messages that slander, harass, bully, depict hate speech, violence, spread false information, threaten the integrity of an active case or privacy of a victim, spam or advertise unauthorized sales shall also be removed. Comments or messages about department employees and others commenting on page postings shall be treated equally.

The administrator shall also block individuals commenting or sending messages to the Facebook account, “John Smith,” or the Facebook page, “Town of Candia Police Department,” after more than one documented incident.

In the event comments or messages found on the Facebook account, “John Smith,” or the Facebook page, “Town of Candia Police Department,” are deemed to be grounds for removal, said comments or messages shall also be reported to Facebook.

Furthermore, any incident shall be documented via a report and the Chief of Police shall also be notified of users being blocked by Facebook account, “John Smith,” or the Facebook page, “Town of Candia Police Department.”

The following shall be posted on the Facebook page, “Town of Candia Police Department,” so that viewers can see, “Posted comments will be monitored and the department reserves the right to remove comments at its discretion such as obscenities, off-topic comments, personal attacks, any comments that jeopardize an ongoing investigation or prosecution, or that otherwise impair the department’s ability to provide effective law enforcement services to the community. The opinions expressed by viewers/commenters to the Candia Police Department pages do not reflect the opinions of the Candia Police Department.”

Per order of:

Chief Michael McGillen