Community Foundation of Middlesex County

Social Media Policy  as approved by the Board of Directors, August 30, 2016

I. Introduction
The work of Community Foundation of Middlesex County is easy to identify with and we are all very passionate about the work we do on a daily basis. We encourage our staff, board and committee members, and other volunteers to engage in open communication and tell the world about our work. Internet and email are important communication and information gathering tools. Accordingly, use of these systems is encouraged to improve the quality of work and productivity. Like other tools, however, the potential for inappropriate and/or illegal use exists. In order to reduce this potential as much as possible, it is the purpose of this document to state the general policies that govern the use of the systems (including, but not limited to, computer equipment and software, social media sites, e-mail, and the website) at the Community Foundation of Middlesex County.

In order to communicate freely and openly with donors, grantees, and members of the public, the Community Foundation itself maintains a social media presence through vehicles such as our website, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. The Community Foundation will continue to seek out new and appropriate methods of communication to promote and improve our work. Accordingly, authority has been given to certain staff members and board members to maintain the Community Foundation’s social media presence and may invite others to submit postings. This policy does not cover these activities.

The Community Foundation defines “social media” as personal blogs, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, video or wiki postings, chat rooms, personal websites, online journals or diaries, personal newsletters, conference or field-specific list-serves or exchanges, online forums, or other similar online activities not affiliated with the Community Foundation.

The Community Foundation takes no position on the desire of employees, board and committee members, and other volunteers to start a blog or participate in social media activities privately. However, the Community Foundation must protect itself from unauthorized disclosure of confidential and/or proprietary information and from having employees, board and committee members, or other volunteers indicate that they are speaking on behalf of the Community Foundation when not authorized to do so. Social media may not be used by staff, board and committee members, volunteers or fund representatives to conduct Community Foundation business, speak on behalf of, or to enter into contracts or commitments on behalf of the Community Foundation unless specifically authorized to do so by the Community Foundation.

II. Community Foundation of Middlesex County’s Systems
When using the Community Foundation of Middlesex County’s systems, an employee or volunteer is a representative of the Community Foundation of Middlesex County and, in that connection, such systems should only be used for the Community Foundation of Middlesex County’s purposes.

Prohibited uses include, but are not limited to:
a. Any activity that is contrary to State or Federal law, including distributing or obtaining copyrighted software or information without proper authorization from the copyright holder.

b. Any activity that could damage the Community Foundation of Middlesex County’s reputation or potentially put an employee or volunteer and the Community Foundation of Middlesex County at risk for legal proceedings by any party. For example, libelous or harassing communications or unfair competitive practices are strictly prohibited.

c. Any communication utilizing the systems which could reasonably be considered as offensive or disruptive will not be tolerated. Offensive content may include, but is not limited to sexual comment or images, racial slurs, or any comments that would offend someone on the basis of his or her age, gender, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin or disability.

d. The Internet poses security risks for the Community Foundation of Middlesex County’s network. Employees and volunteers must be aware that information and programs downloaded from the Internet may contain hidden codes (viruses) capable of destroying data or making the entire network unusable. Accordingly, employees and volunteers should verify such programs acquired through the Internet with staff responsible for Information Technology prior to downloading.

e. The Community Foundation owns all items of electronic and telephone communications equipment located on its premises. Employees’ and volunteers’ activities in these media, including voicemail, text, and email messages, may be retrieved and monitored.

In addition, electronic mail should be treated by employees, board and committee members, and volunteers in the same manner as business letters or internal memos, with the same care in composing and the same respect for confidentiality of the Community Foundation’s information.

III. Personal Use of Social Media by Employees, Board and Committee Members, Volunteers, and Fund Representatives

a. Employees, board and committee members, volunteers, and fund representatives are asked to be familiar with and follow the Conflict of Interest Policy and Confidentiality Policy when using social media in cases which may pertain to or connect to Community Foundation activities or information.

b. When employees, board and committee members, volunteers, and fund representatives endorse or promote the Community Foundation or its activities on the Internet, the individual must be identified with the full name and, when relevant, the role at the Community Foundation.

c. Only a select number of people in the organization are authorized to speak on behalf of Community Foundation of Middlesex County. If employees, board and committee members, volunteers, and fund representatives choose to be identified on social media as a Community Foundation employee, board or committee member, volunteer, or fund representative, understand that some readers may view the social media presence as an authorized spokesperson for the Community Foundation. When using social media, please specify that postings and comments are personal and not on behalf of the Community Foundation. Disclaimers such as “The postings on this are my own and do not necessarily represent the position, strategy, or opinion of Community Foundation of Middlesex County” may be used. Always write in the first person and do not use Community Foundation email accounts for private communications.
d. Community Foundation employees, board and committee members, volunteers and fund representatives must adhere to the Confidentiality Policy in their use of social media. This means employees, board and committee members, volunteers, and fund representatives may not discuss any confidential and/or proprietary work-related matter or information on social media.

e. Employees, board and committee members, volunteers, and fund representatives are responsible for personal, independent commentary and posts on their social media accounts. The Internet never forgets. Use common sense and remember that an individual can be held personally liable for commentary that is considered defamatory, threatening, intimidating, harassing, obscene, proprietary, or libelous.

f. When using a personal social media account, an individual must use a personal email address. Community Foundation email addresses may not be used as a means of identification and communication.

g. Please respect work which others have produced and/or copyrighted. Before using someone else’s work, the owner’s permission must be obtained in order to copy or repurpose.

h. Be aware that others will associate an individual with the Community Foundation when that person is identified as an employee, board or committee member, volunteer, or fund representative. Please ensure that personal social media profiles are consistent with how an individual wishes to be represented to colleagues, donors, grantees, and the public.

i. Use of the Community Foundation’s resources to conduct personal social media activities should be kept to a minimum and should not disrupt work activities. Although occasional non-business use of these systems is unavoidable, such use may not adversely affect Community Foundation productivity, workplace standards, professional ethics, or morale. Excessive or inappropriate personal use of these resources will be subject to disciplinary action.

IV. Monitoring
The Internet has no concept of privacy. Please remember that nearly everything posted on social media can be viewed by anyone, including the Community Foundation.

V. Reporting Violations
The Community Foundation understands that all employees, board and committee members, volunteers, and fund representatives will use social media responsibly and uphold the integrity and values of the Community Foundation. However, if any possible violation of the provisions laid out in this Social Media Policy is found, please notify the President and CEO. Board members can notify the President and CEO or Board Chair. If possible, please provide a snapshot or printout of the perceived violation so the Community Foundation can have an appreciation of the entire context.

VI. Discipline for Violations
Violation of this Social Media Policy may result in disciplinary action for employees, depending on the nature and severity of the violation. The Community Foundation reserves the right to take legal action against personnel who engage in prohibited or unlawful conduct. Violations by members of the board or by other volunteers may lead to dismissal from the board or committee on which the volunteer serves.
VII.  Related Documents

- Confidentiality Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Personnel Policy (if relevant)

Upon review of the policy, please sign the Policy Receipt on the following page and return it to the Community Foundation of Middlesex County.

If you have questions regarding this policy, please contact the Community Foundation of Middlesex County at 860.347.0025.
Community Foundation of Middlesex County

Social Media Policy Receipt Form

I have read, understood, and agree to comply with the Social Media Policy of the Community Foundation of Middlesex County.

__________________________________    _____________________
                Print Name        Date

__________________________________
                Signature