



## **Board of Election Commissioners**

**Bloomington, Illinois**

Paul Shannon, Executive Director

Carrie Robinson, Assistant Executive Director

ROBERT FELTON, JUDY GREEN, DENISE WILLIAMS, Commissioners

Government Center, 115 E. Washington St., Room 403

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### **BLOOMINGTON BOARD OF ELECTION COMMISSIONERS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

#### **I. Purpose**

This policy establishes procedures for the establishment and use by the Bloomington Board of Election Commissioners (“**BEC**”) of internet resources commonly referred to as “social media sites” as a means of obtaining or conveying BEC information to and from its citizens in furtherance of various goals. This policy also establishes policies and guidelines for employee and election official’s use of BEC social media activities.

The purpose for use of social media sites is to obtain and disseminate information useful to and about BEC, emphasizing voter and registration activities and opportunities to be engaged in BEC activities. BEC encourages the use of social media to further the goals of BEC and the missions of its departments, where appropriate, and subject to the terms and conditions set forth in this social media policy. However, a BEC social media site is not intended to be a public forum and the comments and discussions that take place on the site will be moderated by BEC for compliance with this policy and the terms of use of the respective social media site.

BEC’s predominant and primary internet presence is the office website (<http://www.BECvote.org>), and BEC’s social media sites are intended to be a supplement to the website.

BEC’s computer, Internet systems, social media sites, and electronic devices are very important ways for us to communicate with each other and our patrons. The purpose for use of BEC’s computer system and devices is to conduct public business and to obtain and convey BEC information in furtherance of public goals. For both legal and practical reasons, it is essential that we work together to maintain the integrity of these systems and devices.

#### **II. Approval and Administration**

- A. The establishment and use by any department of BEC social media sites are subject to approval by the BEC Board.
- B. All BEC social media sites shall be administered by the BEC Executive Director or designee (“Administrator”). The Administrator and his or her designees shall be trained regarding the terms of the social media policy, including their responsibilities to review content submitted for posting to ensure compliance with the policy. The Administrator will be responsible for monitoring and managing content on BEC social media sites to ensure adherence to both the BEC social media policy and the interest and goals of BEC.
- C. Wherever possible, BEC social media sites should link back to the official BEC website for forms, documents, online services and other information necessary to conduct business with BEC.
- D. All social networking sites should clearly indicate that any content submitted for posting on the site is subject to public disclosure.
- E. BEC reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this social media policy or any applicable law.



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- F. Any content removed based on these guidelines must be retained by BEC for a reasonable period of time, including the time, date, and identity of the poster, when available.

### **III. Comment and Terms of Use Policy**

- A. Comments containing any of the following inappropriate content shall not be permitted on BEC social media sites and are subject to removal and/or restriction by the Administrator or his/her designees:

1. Electioneering content of any kind, including comments supporting or opposing political campaigns or ballot measures, or endorsing political parties, candidates or political opinions;
2. Comments not related to the original topic, including random or unintelligible comments;
3. Profane, obscene, violent, sexual, or pornographic content and/or language;
4. Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or national origin;
5. Defamatory statements or personal attacks;
6. Threats to any person or organization;
7. Solicitation of commerce, including advertising of any business or product for sale;
8. Conduct in violation of any federal, state, or local law;
9. Encouragement of illegal activity;
10. Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
11. Spam or links to other sites;
12. The promotion of services, products, or activities not related to Government business;
13. Information about a user that is private or personal; or
14. Content that violates a legal ownership interest, such as a copyright or trademark.

- B. A comment posted by a member of the public on any BEC social media site is the opinion of the poster only, and publication of a comment does not imply endorsement of, or agreement by, the BEC, nor do the comments necessarily reflect the opinions or policies of the BEC.

- C. BEC reserves the right to deny access to BEC social media sites for any individual who violates BEC's social media policy, at any time and without prior notice.

- D. Only the Executive Director or Designee will respond to comments, and they reserve the right to remove comments from other staff or affiliated election workers if deemed inaccurate or inappropriate. BEC employees and election officials are requested to not respond to any



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social media comment unless directed by the Executive Director or Designee. If a BEC employee or election official responds to a comment in his/her capacity as a BEC employee, the employee's name and title should be made available, and the employee should not share personal information about himself or herself, or other BEC employees.

- E. All comments posted to any BEC Facebook site are bound by Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities, located at <http://www.facebook.com/terms.php>, and BEC reserves the right to report any violation of Facebook's Statement of Rights and Responsibilities to Facebook with the intent of Facebook taking appropriate and reasonable responsive action.
- F. Users who enter private or personal information on BEC social media sites do so at their own risk, and the BEC is not responsible for any damages resulting from the public display of, or failure to remove, private or personal information.
- G. BEC will post this policy on its website, and provide links to the policy on its social media sites. The social media policy and terms of use may be amended from time-to-time, without further notice.

#### **IV. Compliance with Laws**

- A. All BEC social media sites must adhere to applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and policies.
- B. BEC social media sites and content may be subject to the Illinois Freedom of Information Act. Any content maintained in a social media format that is related to BEC business may be a public record subject to public disclosure. Content related to BEC business must be maintained in an accessible format so that it can be produced in response to a request.
- C. The Illinois Local Records Act may apply to social media content. The Department maintaining a site must preserve records required to be maintained pursuant to a relevant records retention schedule for the required retention period on a BEC server in a format that preserves the integrity of the original record and is easily accessible.
- D. E-discovery laws may apply to social media content and, therefore, content must be able to be managed, stored, and retrieved to comply with these laws.



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**ADOPTED** this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2017.

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**Board Chair**

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**Commissioner**

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**Commissioner**