

Butler County Amateur Radio Public Service Group, Inc.
Social Media Policy

Intent - This policy document has been developed specifically for and applicable to all the members of the Butler County Amateur Radio Public Service Group, Inc. (here after referred to as “the Group”) This document is published in order to help protect personal privacy, personal actions and the integral relationship of the Group to any clients / organizations the Group may choose to work with or provide communication services to.

This policy is NOT intended to restrict in any way an individuals 1st Amendment right to free speech, only to remind Group membership of the restrictions and liabilities involving the release of information the Group and or client / organization considers as privileged or for official operational use only!

Defined - Social Media is any web site designed to allow multiple users to publish content themselves. This information may be on any subject and may be consumed by friends, mates, employers, employees, etc. These sites typically allow users to create a "profile" or personal description and allowing them to exchange public or private messages and may have links to other users or groups they are connected to in some way. The site may include editorial content or the may be entirely user-driven.

The following are, but not limited to, some of the more common social media examples:

- Blogging
- Twitter/Tweeting
- Facebook/Posting
- Flickr
- Google Plus
- LinkedIn
- YouTube
- Instant Messaging

Legal Liability - When you choose to go public with your opinions via any form of social media you alone bare individual legal responsibility for your commentary. Individuals can be held personally liable for any commentary deemed to be defamatory, obscene, proprietary or libelous, whether pertaining to the Group, a Group member, client / organizational information. For these reasons individuals who utilize any form of social media, exercise extreme caution with regards to exaggeration, colorful language, guesswork, assumptions, copyrighted materials or false representations. Individual misrepresentation, situational misrepresentation, or representing oneself as an individual or Group’s authority, derogatory remarks or false characterizations have no place in social media communications. In essence, you should communicate through / with social media at your own assumed risk. Inaccurate or false information linked back to you can / may motivate outside parties to actually pursue legal action against you personally, as well as the organization you represent.

Press Inquiries - Social media communication in any form may generate local or national media interest and or coverage. If a member of the local or national media contacts you about the Group or client / organizational communication or activities, you should IMMEDIATELY inform them that you are NOT authorized to release any information relating to the Group or the client / organization serviced. You may however, refer them to a member the Group’s Executive Committee or the designated public relations representative of the client / organization serviced by the Group. (Ref: FCC Part 97.113.5.b.)

Privileged Information - Any and all Group information deemed confidential or proprietary is off-limits for any and all social media interactions. Information relating to Group policies, finances, individual members, membership relations, communication procedures and or guidelines is considered absolutely inappropriate for all social media venues. Additionally, any and all information relating to or associated with the organizations the Group works with or provides communication services to, is also considered off limits to any and all social media communication. Any infraction of this social media policy is punishable up to and including immediate termination of Group membership for “just cause” in accordance with Group Bylaws, Amended October 8, 2014, Article 3, Section’s 5 and 6.

The following are specific examples but not limited to, inappropriate social media communication:

- Treasurer’s report or any financial issues
- Member(s) personal information or data
- Client / Serviced organizational data of any type such as names, medical information, shelter information and or other organizational issues
- Client / Serviced organization and Group relationship information
- Operational readiness, guidelines or procedures
- Operational locations, limitations or issues there of

Social Media Infractions - Any alleged violation resulting in possible disciplinary action of this Group Social Media Policy will be reviewed and investigated at a gathering of the Executive Committee in accordance with Group Bylaws, Amended October 8, 2014, Article 5, Section 3, this gathering shall have at least six members present.

Respect For Fellow Radio Operators, Clients / Organizations Served - Above all, think before you communicate on social media, be accurate in your communications relating to the clients / organizations served. In short, be respectful to everyone you come in contact with. Be cognizant of the fact that anything and everything you say or do may ultimately affect the Group, client / organizations we interact with. REMEMBER, all members of the Butler County Amateur Radio Public Service Group, Inc. are in essence representatives / ambassadors of the Group. Make no mistake, as a member of the Group you will reflect either positively or negatively on the entire organization.

Get The Facts - As a member of the Butler County Amateur Radio Public Service Group, Inc., you have a unique opportunity to contact any of the officers or fellow members of the Group in charge of the projects, services, information or other initiatives you’re interested in. To ensure you are not misrepresenting yourself or their work, consider reaching out to a member or the relevant point of contact for the information you desire. This simple courtesy will ensure you have factual, correct information, ensuring you can develop relevant accurate insights, especially when the subject is beyond your area of expertise. Ask the questions and get the answers from the contacts most likely to have the best information.

Social Media Best Practices - On positive note, these recommendations provide a roadmap for constructive, respectful and productive dialogue between social media participants, while at the same time protecting the privacy of individuals, the Group, and the client / organization the Group serves. The Group considers these to be “best practice” guidelines that are in the spirit of our culture, the best interest of amateur radio operators and radio communications in general.

Acknowledgement and Acceptance - As a member of the Group you are required to review and sign the Social Media Policy annually, as an acknowledgment of your communication limitations and informational responsibilities to the Group, as well as the client / organization we serve. Further, the Group must have a current (no older than 1 year) signed, original copy of the Social Media Policy on file with the Group in order to work any national, local emergency communication activity or general public service event. Acceptance of this Social Media Policy is strictly voluntary. However, if a member refuses to sign the document, it will result in the individual not being able to operate any type of radio equipment, at any event or activity the Group furnishes communications to.

Review and Certification - I _____ certify that I have read and fully understand the personal responsibilities and limitations of the Butler County Amateur Radio Public Service Group's Social Media Policy. I **WILL NOT** release any privileged, restricted or proprietary information pertaining to the Group or client / organization that I may come into contact with, to the local / statewide / national media or while utilizing any form of personal social media.

Signature

Date

[BELOW is to be completed by members less than 18 years of age at time of application. All others please disregard]

Group members under 18 years of age must have a parent / guardian sign and date below. Additionally, it should be noted that any amateur under the age of 18 cannot be issued a formal Emergency Management Agency, Region 13 RACES identification. However, individual may still be a member of RACES, fully participate in RACES exercises, but specific activity and participation in "real world" EMA operations will be at the sole discretion of the Region 13 RACES Officer.

Parent / Guardian Signature

Date

Region 13 RACES Officer

Date

Last Update: July 20, 2020