



BEAUFORT POLICE DEPARTMENT

Social Media Comment Policy and Terms of Use

Effective Date: October 2, 2025	Revised Date:	Re-evaluation: As Necessary
Approval Signature: <i>Stephanie Price</i>		

Introduction

The Beaufort Police Department (BPD) recognizes social media as a powerful tool for community engagement, transparency, and public safety. This policy establishes guidelines for appropriate use of BPD's social media platforms by both the department and the public. It applies to all platforms currently used by BPD, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, X, and Nixle. As social media evolves, this policy may be updated accordingly.

Comment Policy

BPD encourages public interaction but requires that all comments and discussions adhere to the following standards:

- **Stay on Topic** – All viewpoints are welcome, but comments must relate to the original post's topic, community outreach efforts, or public safety information.
- **Be Honest** – False, misleading, or intentionally deceptive information is not permitted.
- **No Spam** – Excessive posting of duplicate content, promotional material, or irrelevant information is prohibited.
- **Public Record** – Comments and posts are subject to public disclosure and may be archived, even if hidden from public view.
- **Respectful Engagement** – Profanity, personal attacks, discriminatory remarks, or hate speech will not be tolerated.
- **Comment Availability** – Comments on BPD social media platforms may be disabled at the direction of the Office of the Chief of Police.

BPD social media accounts are monitored during normal business hours. While the department strives for prompt responses, urgent matters should be addressed through proper emergency channels.

Terms Of Use

By engaging with any BPD social media account, users acknowledge and accept the following terms:

BPD maintains a social media presence to provide timely updates on crime prevention, public safety initiatives, community programs, and critical incident notifications relevant to Beaufort residents, business owners, and visitors.

Limited Public Forum

All BPD social media platforms function as Limited Public Forums, meaning users are welcome to express opinions while adhering to respectful and relevant discussions. Posting on any BPD platform constitutes acceptance of these terms.

REPORTING EMERGENCIES OR CRIME

Social media is not an appropriate platform to request law enforcement assistance. Posting requests for police response on social media does not guarantee a reply.

- For emergencies, call **9-1-1**.
- For non-emergencies, call **843-524-2777**.
- To provide anonymous crime tips, contact Crime Stoppers of Beaufort County at **844-847-7238**.

Endorsements And Links

“Liking,” “Following,” or interacting with a BPD page does not imply endorsement of any individual or entity.

Public comments represent individual opinions, not official department views.

Links to external websites do not constitute BPD’s endorsement of content or opinions expressed on those sites.

Moderation And Content Removal

BPD reserves the right to remove any content that violates this policy, including but not limited to:

- Off-topic comments, including those unrelated to the post’s subject.
- Obscene, profane, or sexually explicit language or images.
- Threats, harassment, or incitement of violence.
- Discriminatory remarks based on race, gender, age, religion, or other protected classes.
- Misinformation, defamatory statements, or false accusations.
- Political endorsements, campaigning, or election-related content.
- Commercial advertisements or promotional material.
- Encouragement of illegal activities or unsafe behavior.
- Posts compromising public safety or law enforcement operations.
- Copyright violations or intellectual property infringement.
- Unsolicited links, spam, or bot-generated content.

Repeated violations of this policy may result in further restrictions on a user’s ability to comment on BPD social media pages.

Disclosure And Liability

Users participate in BPD social media interactions at their own risk. The department is not responsible for:

- Viruses, malware, or other digital threats from third-party links or platforms.
- The accuracy of user-generated content.
- Decisions made based on information from BPD social media pages.
- Any loss or damage resulting from reliance on social media posts.

BPD reserves the right to update this policy at any time. The Office of the Chief of Police may amend, modify, or adjust the social media policy and Terms of Use at their discretion. For questions, please email the Public Information Team at ***SocialPD@cityofbeaufort.org***.