MLP Announce and Discussion List Acceptable Use Policy

Updated 4/29/2024

CONTENTS

1. Policy Origin

Policies in this document were selected by majority vote of list members from a survey publicized in early January 2024 to the Mendocino Community Network (MCN) Announce and Discussion Lists.

2. Founding Principle

With the rise in AI deep-fakes and wildly inconsistent governmental and corporate censorship, it has become increasingly challenging for people to determine what is true and what is untrue. We are founded on the principle that the users of the Announce and Discussion lists can, through their own research and direct experience, share information and debate the issues on the Lists without censorship. This is a primary function of the Discussion Listserv.

Every Founder and Moderator, current and future, has and will agree to this founding principle, namely "As part of protecting free human speech, our group will not pre-filter or post-filter for truthfulness or lack thereof (e.g., there will not be fact checking, judging, or removing/cancelling of "fake news.")

3. List Ownership, Hosting, and Administration

The Mendocino Unified School District (MUSD) has transferred public ownership of the Mendocino Community Network (MCN) Announce and Discussion lists (hereafter "the Lists") to the private local citizen's group known as the Mendocino Listserv Project (hereafter "MLP") as of May 7, 2024. The lists are still hosted by MCN (the host) that has an overarching "Terms of Service" (TOS). MLP is the administrator of the Lists. If ever the MCN TOS becomes in conflict with this MLP Announce and Discussion List Acceptable Use Policy, the TOS supersedes.

4. Membership Qualifications

Membership on the MLP lists is suggested for those who work or live in, or own a home or business in Mendocino County.

5. Who May Post

To post to an MLP list you must be a human member in good standing, that is, without any currently suspended email address on either list.

6. Suggested Content

Suggested content for the announce list includes:

* Emergency and situation updates
* Road closure information and hazard reports
* Available Items (for sale or free)
* ISO (In search of) items and services
* Lost and found announcements
* Events Listings, specifics of events (who, what, where and when)
* Wildlife Reports as mountain lion and bear sightings
* Services Offered

The Discussion list is intended for extended exchanges regarding Announce list postings and for everything else within the bounds of civil discourse which is not excluded by this policy.

7. Automated Posts

In general no automated posts are permitted. Exceptions: official emergency alerts. Any automated system used to post to the lists requires pre-approval of MLP.

8. **Specific Prohibitions**

These terms prohibit defamatory, abusive, profane, threatening, offensive, or illegal materials on the Lists. A community survey was conducted in January 2024. Based upon the responses, the following specific 13 activities are not permitted on the MLP Announce and Discussion lists:

> a. Direct threats, including of lawsuits and violence
> b. Doxing: researching and publicly revealing private or identifying information about an individual without their consent.
> c. Bots, including AI human impersonators
> d. Falsified posts such as pretending to sell things.
> e. Illegal activities, including phishing scams (fake forms to collect passwords)
> f. Personal insults or attacks, public ridicule
> g. Excessive Announce list posts.
> h. Public verbal brawling
> i. Accusing a specific person of a crime with no police report
> j. Indirect threats/intimidation
> k. Frivolously flagging other's posts as violations
> l. Undisclosed lobbyists or paid influencers
> m. Attempts to circumvent moderation/suspension

Warning: Re-posting text which violates any of the above terms, even if you did not write it, is considered itself a violation.

9. **Defamation and Libel**

In exchanges on the Lists and when referring to others, avoid personal attacks and characterizations that question a person's motives or qualifications. Sometimes a robust debate about ideas spills over into attacks on proponents or opponents of the ideas. List members are reminded that a false statement which harms someone's reputation can be actionable as libel. There is a substantial difference between disagreeing with someone about research and accusing the person of fraud or incompetence. Because negative statements that impugn someone's reputation can cause substantial economic and emotional harm, keep criticism objective and factually verifiable while skipping personal commentary about character, competence or motives to minimize legal risk.

10. **Content Responsibility**

Because no posts will be pre-filtered, all postings to or items linked from the Lists, are the sole responsibility of the person from whom such content originated. More specifically, posters are entirely responsible for each individual item of content ("Item") that they post to the Lists.

Moderation of users is done after postings have already been made. Neither MCN (the host) nor MLP (the administrator of the lists) control, or is responsible for content made available through the Lists, including violations of this AUP. By using the Lists, you accept that even with best effort user moderation by MLP, you may occasionally be exposed to content that is offensive, indecent, inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise objectionable.

11. **Moderation Process**

A violation flagged by any list member for moderation may result in user suspension if the moderation team determines a specific prohibition from this Acceptable Use Policy has been violated. The moderation team will make a determination and will publish the result of that determination to the list unless user safety concerns preclude doing so. Warnings will be issued to offenders where possible.

To flag a post as violating this Acceptable Use Policy, forward it from an email address which is signed up on this list to (mlp@mcn.org) or to our backup address, (modrequest@proton.me), in the event of an email issue with MCN. Any list member may flag a post in this way and who flagged will not be published.

Suspensions are per person, not per email address. They will include all known alias accounts on both lists. While suspended you may not post to either MLP list with any email address. Suspensions will be progressively longer, doubling based on repeat offenses.

Being reinstated on the Lists after a suspension may require disclosing alias email accounts to the moderators and/or demonstrating to the moderation team that one is a human being, for example, by phone or in person.

MLP is a group of volunteer citizens. Although volunteers will attempt to attend to reports of abuse promptly, there may be times when group moderation is delayed due to technical or other issues. By using the Lists, you agree to this condition, that MLP makes no guarantees of timely moderation.

12. **Support of Free Speech**

MLP will resist to the furthest extent possible all requests or demands to censor users who are posting within these AUP guidelines. This includes resisting attempts that seek to censor speech based on designations of "fake news" or "disinformation." See our Founding Principle, earlier in this AUP.

13. **Compromise Beacon**

This is our un-compromised compromise beacon:

    MLP Original Compromise Beacon: a b c d e f g   Date: 1/24/2024

If you see the same letters below, you can know that there has been no intervention on the Lists by outside forces to date. Because the US Patriot Act and other laws can make it a Federal crime punishable by imprisonment to publicize Federal attempts to censor content or to investigate users, MLP is here publishing, from day one, beacons which indicate no attempts as yet by local, state, federal or multi-national authorities to a.) Contact MLP volunteers or workers in any way, b.) Suggest courses of action, c.) Threaten or coerce any member of MLP, d.) Request or demand information to investigate one or more list users, e.) "shadow-ban," split, sequester or secretly moderate user posts, f.) prohibit individual users from posting, g.) prohibit certain information by key words or phrases from being posted to the Lists.

In the event of compromise, the appropriate letter(s) will be removed from the beacon here:

    MLP Latest Compromise Beacon: a b c d e f g   Date: 4/29/2024

A mirror of this beacon will be posted at (https://mlist.org) and you are encouraged to check it there as well.

14. **Message Size, Length / Links**

For announce posts, be brief and to the point. The MCN technical total size of an announce list post is capped at 60 kb. The MCN technical maximum message size for a discussion list post is 200kb. On both lists, use URL links to website material to give readers more information.

15. **Business Postings**

Businesses or organizations posting to the Lists must have an office in or an employee living in Mendocino County. The Lists are primarily for individuals and we suggest that businesses use them sparingly and only for special items. We suggest that business postings be posted by the actual business.

16. **Message Replies**

Replies to items posted to the Announce List will go by default to the person who sent the email to the list, and not to the entire list. Replies on the discussion list go by default to the entire list.

Messages to either list should be sent only to that list. Messages sent to multiple recipients including this list or using the blind carbon copy (bcc) may be rejected by the server. If you post to both the Announce and Discussion lists at the same time, your message may reach neither list for this reason.

17. **Copyright**

List members are responsible for content posted. You should not post any full-text version of published material to the list without permission of the author or publisher. Referring to an article or news item by offering a link to legitimate online published content is instead recommended. If you feel like you must post portions of text from a published article you should cite the article at least, and ideally link to it.

18. **Message Format**

Limited HTML formatting is allowed in messages. Keep in mind that formatting increases the size of your message.

19. **Emergency Intervention**

MCN staff (the host) may intervene to make changes in list membership without MLP approval in the event of technical abuse of the system, such as spam flooding by automated systems, to stop autoresponders from posting to the list, or other circumstances which threaten the viability of the service for all list members. When possible, MCN will notify MLP of any accounts removed from the MLP lists.

20. **Dispute Resolution**

The administrator of the Lists, MLP, is not responsible for adjudicating disagreements between users, with the narrow exception that MLP will make determinations where there are alleged violations of this Acceptable Use Policy.

The host, Mendocino Community Network (MCN), is not responsible for adjudicating disagreements or addressing concerns about posts on the lists, possible future postings to the list, or the behavior of list members-- either on or off the list. List members must resolve conflicts directly with other list members or where necessary engage law enforcement or legal counsel to resolve issues resulting from list posts.

21. **Retained Information**

The Mendocino Community Network (MCN), logs a minimal amount of information regarding the Announce list. Information in the logs includes standard information contained in e-mail headers. The logs also contain the list of members who receive a particular list message. The logs are kept for the sole purpose of resolving technical issues with the Lists. All logs are discarded approximately within two weeks after the posting was made.

The MLP logs the minimum amount of information required to moderate the Lists based on this Acceptable Use Policy. This information includes email addresses, moderation requests and dates, and notes on actions taken. User phone number and additional email addresses used on the Lists may at times be collected by the moderation team to resolve issues around moderation and re-instatement of accounts.

22. **Disclaimer**

The Mendocino Community Network (MCN) hosts the private MLP Announce and Discussion lists which the Mendocino Listserv Project (MLP) administers as a service to Mendocino County. Neither MCN nor MLP is responsible for the information posted on this site by others. MCN and MLP disclaim all warranties with regard to information posted on this site, whether posted by MCN, MLP or any third party; this disclaimer includes all implied warranties of merchantability and fitness. "For Sale" items or any other items, and inclusion of an item does not constitute the endorsement of any item presented on this list. The information presented is provided by MCN "as is" and without warranty of any kind, expressed or implied, including (but not limited to) any implied warranties of merchantability, fitness for any particular purpose, or non-infringement. In no event shall MCN (the host) or MLP (the list manager administrator) be liable for any special, indirect or consequential damages or any damages whatsoever resulting from loss of use, data or profits, arising out of or in connection with the use or performance of any information posted on the lists. Further, in no event shall MCN or MLP be liable for any special, indirect or consequential damages or any harm whatsoever resulting from any libel, defamation, or otherwise harmful content that may be posted to the Lists. See the sections "Defamation and Libel" and "Content Responsibility" for details, including an explanation that no posts are pre-censored.

23. **Policy Updates**

MLP reserves the right to alter and amend this Acceptable Use Policy as needed to maintain their primary mission and ensure the integrity, security, and proper functioning of their services. MLP will make reasonable efforts to notify users of any material changes to the Acceptable Use Policy. This may include posting updates on the Lists and/or sending email notifications to registered user accounts. Continued use of the Lists after a policy change constitutes acceptance of the revised terms.