



THE YORKTOWN FOUNDATION

Post Office Box 43
Yorktown, Virginia 23690

Yorktown Foundation Policy on Appropriate Messaging at Sponsored Events

The Yorktown Foundation is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation whose mission is to promote community activities in and around Yorktown, Virginia. To achieve that mission, we serve as an administrative umbrella organization for smaller groups and committees that focus on specific events. These include the Celebrate Yorktown Committee, the Virginia Symphony Sub-committee, the Tall Ships Committee, Art on the Riverwalk, the Yorktown Lighted Boat Parade and many other new and ongoing activities.

As a 501(c)3 organization, the Yorktown Foundation and its sub-ordinate groups are governed by IRS policies that limit our activities and speech. Further, because the actions of any sub-committee will reflect on the Yorktown Foundation as a whole, it is essential that our messaging remain as consistent as possible. To that end, this policy statement provides a set of guidelines for our subordinate groups that detail what language can and cannot be associated with the Foundation. This policy applies to any group or individual participating in activities that are sponsored by the Foundation and includes banners, decorations, audio or visual exhibits, and clothing worn by participants.

1. Political Speech

The IRS places strict limitations on charities regarding their participation in political campaigns, or their support or opposition for any political party. The Yorktown Foundation complies with these restrictions by abstaining completely from all political speech. Any statement supporting or opposing any candidate (past, present, or future) or political party is strictly prohibited.

*Political parties and their members are encouraged to participate in events sponsored by the Yorktown Foundation; however, **their participation must be in an apolitical manner.***

2. Divisive Rhetoric

Because the goal of the Yorktown Foundation is to unify our community by celebrating all of the great things about Yorktown, York County and its citizens, divisive rhetoric is counter-productive.

In many cases, divisive rhetoric is difficult to quantify. For example, the Yorktown Foundation agrees with the principles “Black Lives Matter”, “Blue Lives Matter”, and “All Lives Matter”. However, in recent years these slogans have become a mechanism for pushing people apart rather than bringing them together. Therefore, these slogans (and others like them) are considered divisive and are prohibited from being promoted at sponsored activities.

*Good natured rivalries, such as those between athletic teams, schools and fraternities tend to build community spirit and are **not** considered divisive rhetoric.*

3. Hate Speech

Hate speech is any form of expression through which speakers intend to vilify, humiliate, or incite hatred against an individual, group, or class of people on the basis of race, religion, skin color, sexual identity, gender identity, ethnicity, disability, or national origin. This is strictly prohibited at Yorktown Foundation sponsored activities.

4. Hate Groups

Hate groups, and known members of hate groups, are barred from participation in any Yorktown Foundation sponsored activity.

5. Hate Symbols

Recognized hate symbols cannot be integrated into the design of any exhibit or display used as part of a Yorktown Foundation sponsored activity. For a list of recognized hate symbols, please refer to the data provided by the Anti-Defamation League on their website at <https://www.adl.org/hate-symbols>.

6. All Other Profane or Inappropriate Displays

Inappropriate messaging is any display or exhibit that can be reasonably interpreted to be demeaning or offensive to our community standards. Because this standard is difficult to define, the Yorktown Foundation's Board of Directors reserves the right to adjudicate the appropriateness of any display or exhibit appearing at our sponsored activities.

The Yorktown Foundation Board of Directors is the final arbiter of what messaging is considered appropriate at any of its sponsored events. All decisions by the Yorktown Foundation are final.