

Local Government Use of Social Media

702.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines to ensure that any use of social media on behalf of the City is consistent with the City mission.

This policy does not address all aspects of social media use. Specifically, it does not address:

- Personal use of social media by city employees (see the Speech, Expression, and Social Networking Policy).
- Use of social media in personnel processes (see the Recruitment and Selection Policy).
- Use of social media as part of an investigation, other than disseminating information to the public on behalf of this city.

702.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Social media - Any of a wide array of internet-based tools and platforms that allow for the sharing of information, such as the city website or social networking services.

702.2 POLICY

The City will use social media as a method of effectively informing the public about city services, issues, investigations, recruitment, and other relevant events.

The use or access of social media should be done in a manner that protects the constitutional rights of all people.

702.3 AUTHORIZED USERS

Only employees authorized by the Mayor or the authorized designee may utilize social media on behalf of the City. Authorized employees shall use only city-approved equipment during the normal course of duties to post and monitor city-related social media, unless they are specifically authorized to do otherwise by their supervisors.

The Mayor may develop specific guidelines identifying the type of content that may be posted. Any content that does not strictly conform to the guidelines should be approved by a supervisor prior to posting.

Requests to post information over city social media by employees who are not authorized to post should be made through the appropriate supervisory channels.

702.4 AUTHORIZED CONTENT

Only content that is appropriate for public release, that supports the City mission, and that conforms to all city policies regarding the release of information may be posted. Examples of appropriate content include:

Local Government Use of Social Media

- (a) Announcements.
- (b) Tips and information related to crime prevention.
- (c) Requests for information.
- (d) Community engagement information.
- (e) Real-time safety information that is related to in-progress crimes, geographical warnings, or disaster information.
- (f) Traffic information.
- (g) Media releases.
- (h) Recruitment of personnel.

702.4.1 INCIDENT-SPECIFIC USE

In instances of active incidents where speed, accuracy, and frequent updates are paramount (e.g., crime alerts, public safety information, traffic issues), the Mayor or the authorized designee will be responsible for the compilation of information to be released.

702.5 PROHIBITED CONTENT

Content that is prohibited from posting includes but is not limited to:

- (a) Content that is abusive, discriminatory, inflammatory, or sexually explicit.
- (b) Any information that violates individual rights, including confidentiality and/or privacy rights and those provided under state, federal, or local laws.
- (c) Any information that could compromise an ongoing investigation.
- (d) Any information that could tend to compromise or damage the mission, function, reputation, or professionalism of the City or its employees.
- (e) Any information that could compromise the safety and security of city operations, employees of the City, or the public.
- (f) Any content posted for personal use.
- (g) Any content that has not been properly authorized by this policy or a supervisor.

Any employee who becomes aware of content on this city's social media sites that the employee believes is unauthorized or inappropriate should promptly report such content to a supervisor. The supervisor will ensure its removal from public view and investigate the cause of the entry.

702.5.1 PUBLIC POSTING PROHIBITED

City social media sites shall be designed and maintained to prevent posting of content by the public.

The City may provide a method for members of the public to contact city employees directly.

Local Government Use of Social Media

702.6 MONITORING CONTENT

The Mayor will appoint a supervisor to review, at least annually, the use of city social media and report back on, at a minimum, the resources being used, the effectiveness of the content, any unauthorized or inappropriate content, and the resolution of any issues.

702.7 RETENTION OF RECORDS

The Mayor should work with the City Clerk to establish a method of ensuring that public records generated in the process of social media use are retained in accordance with established records retention schedules.

702.8 TRAINING

Authorized employees should receive training that, at a minimum, addresses legal issues concerning the appropriate use of social media sites, as well as privacy, civil rights, and dissemination and retention of information posted on city sites.