

Social Media Policy DRAFT

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Introduction:

This policy is intended to assist city employees who will use social media as a communication tool and encourage social media use between the City and its stakeholders. Given the evolving nature of social media, this document will be reviewed and updated periodically as technologies or laws evolve.

Purpose:

Social media offers the City of Dayton the opportunity to interact with the public in ways that facilitate transparency, interactivity, and collaboration. These tools engage audiences differently than traditional media and enhance communication strategies. The City of Dayton encourages the use of social media to advance the goals of the city and the missions of its departments, where appropriate.

Applicability:

Acceptable Uses and Restrictions:

The best and most appropriate uses of social media for the City of Dayton generally fall into two categories:

- As a channel for disseminating time-sensitive information as quickly as possible.
- As a mechanism for communication between the City and members of the public, and more directly, its residents.
- Acceptance of paid advertising on city social networking sites is prohibited.

City staff representing the City of Dayton on official social media sites and applications in the course of their assigned duties and responsibilities are bound by existing city policies and standards, including but not limited to:

- Applicable state, federal and local laws, regulations, ordinances, Charter Provisions, and city policies, (e.g., Title VII, nondiscrimination, harassment, etc.)
- All information and technology security guidelines, procedures and policies
- Existing city standards of conduct, ethics, rules, and policies
- The Texas Public Information Act and e-discovery laws and policies (requiring content to be managed, stored, and retrieved and open to public inspection and disclosure.)
- Applicable state record-retention laws and city schedules for retention.

Personal Responsibility:

All city employees must be cognizant that how they represent themselves on social media publications reflects on the city whether with respect to city social media sites or personal ones. Public and private or personal and professional avenues of communication may easily become blurred and result in inappropriate use or content.

In all applications, the following shall apply:

Confidentiality

Employees will not post or use proprietary, confidential, sensitive or individually identifiable information or divulge city intellectual property (trademarks, copyrights, or patents) in any social media applications.

Personal vs. Professional Use

Employees' personal social media sites should remain personal in nature and should not be commingled or used for work-related purposes or to conduct official city business. Employees should not use their city e-mail account or password when accessing personal social media accounts. Personal and city social media accounts should not be synchronized for dual access or reference purposes.

Use of City Resources

Employees may use city-owned assets and equipment or resources (computers and cell phones) to access social media sites (personal or city sites) on a limited basis. Department directors will determine the level of access assigned to authorized users and the limits on non-business use in their respective departments.

Ethical Obligations

City ethics rules must be followed at all times, even when employees engage in social media use in their personal capacities.

Professional Responsibility

All city-related communication through social media applications should remain professional and should be conducted in accordance with the city's Communications Plan, practices and expectations. Employees are expected to use good judgment and take personal and professional responsibility for any content they publish via social media.

All employees who use social media applications for city business or on behalf of the city must:

Have Authorization

Not access or develop social media sites or other online forums on behalf of the city unless authorized by appropriate city management. Authorized employees must support the city's mission and goal in doing so.

Identify Yourself

When creating or using social media accounts that require individual identification, authorized users speaking on behalf of the city should identify themselves, if possible, by 1) full name; 2) title; 3) department; and 4) contact information when posting or exchanging information on social media forums. Unauthorized use of an authorized employee's identification or access credentials/information is a violation of this policy and will be disciplined accordingly.

No Privacy Expectation

Employees should have no expectation of privacy as to information stored on city computers, networks, databases or devices. Furthermore, there should be no expectation of privacy regarding any communications between any city employee and the public when the employee is in the course and scope of performing his/her assigned duties.

Communication Quality

Authorized employees should use good judgment and accuracy in all city social media communications. Errors and omissions reflect poorly on the City of Dayton and may result in liability for the City. In addition to the professional responsibilities, authorized city staff should refrain from any social media activity that is inconsistent with, or that reasonably could be expected to negatively impact the City of Dayton's reputation or standing in the community. Employees are cautioned to be respectful and professional to everyone, including fellow personnel, organizations, residents, and businesses.

When drafting a communication, make sure that it:

- Has a clear purpose
- Speaks well to the reader
- Is clear and concise without unnecessary verbiage
- Provides value to the reader
- Uses proper spelling, grammar, syntax, and punctuation
- Is positive and informative

- Offers appropriate links, pictures or references opportunities for more information where reasonable
- Has benefits to both the city and the public

In addition to the information above, best practices on how to be a good citizen of the social media environment include:

Be Responsible

All statements made about the city on any social media site, whether personal, private or official, reflect upon the city, its employees, services, and elected city officials. Each employee will be held accountable for all posts made officially in city media sites or personally on city media sites. Once published, a communication can never be eliminated from the web, even if withdrawn.

Be Honest and Transparent

Dishonesty, deceit, and untruthfulness are quickly noted in the social media environment and have a damaging effect on the City; therefore, all representations made on city media sites must be clear, accurate, complete, thorough and truthful.

Correct Errors Quickly

Any mistakes should be admitted as directly as feasible. Omissions, misleading entries or misrepresentations must be corrected as soon as they are recognized or brought to the City's attention. Correct information will be quickly provided with appropriate modifications and disclaimers, if necessary or helpful to clear up any misunderstanding or confusion.

Be Respectful of the Reader and the Audience

Social media posts should only be made when the City and/or the public would benefit from the publication. Value must be added. Communication from the City should assist the public and build a co-beneficial relationship and rapport with the City and its agents. This could include, among other things, thought-provoking articles that build a sense of community, improve knowledge or skills, enhance business development, enable problem-solving, increase awareness of city sources and resources and encourage mutually beneficial platforms for employees to provide better, more efficient city services.

Stay Within Your Area of Expertise or Authority

All information posted on city sites must be authorized and appropriate. Employees should only publish information within their area of expertise and not speculate, guess or assert personal opinion or commentary unless approval is authorized by appropriate city management.

Respect Proprietary Information, Content, Privacy and Confidentiality

For any non-original work, proper credit must be attributed. No copyrights, trademarks, trade secrets or other proprietary matter may be published without prior written approval, licenses obtained, permits and fees paid and/or proper attribution made within the publication itself. Links may be referenced to others' work rather than reproducing it on the city site. Employees' or city officials' names and/or likenesses may be used only with permission from such person to post on the site.

Respond Quickly

All communications requiring a reply or response shall be made promptly in accordance with this policy.

Be Sociable, Courteous and Respectful

In all communications, employees should use plain language and avoid using government jargon or acronyms. Use content that is open-ended and invites a response, or encourages comments. Responses should always be polite and respectful, even if the original response is not. When shortening words to maximize communication, utilize commonly used shorthand terms, letters and symbols.

Abide by Social Media Rules

Employees utilizing social media sites shall abide by the site's terms of service or terms of use. Before utilizing the site, each employee shall become acquainted with each site's terms and conditions of use or rules for services and follow them as directed. No employee is authorized to abuse a social media site and shall be accountable for any abuse, misuse or violations of such terms or rules of engagement.

Restrictions and Prohibitions

Users and visitors to the City of Dayton social media sites will be notified that the intended purpose of the site is to serve as a mechanism for communication between the City of Dayton and the public. Although free speech and cross-communication are

encouraged, there are certain topics and issues that are NOT allowed on the City of Dayton social media sites, comments, links, and uploads. By way of example, these include, but are not limited to:

- Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures
- Profane language or content. Abusive or disparaging comments directed at an individual(s)
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status or lack thereof, socio-economic status of an individual(s), national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation
- Sexual expression, discrimination, harassment or content of any kind or links to sexual content or pornography whether of an adult, minor or child
- Any expression of conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or the city's public safety systems
- Any expression of words that would disparage right, title or interest of legal ownership of any other individual or business
- Comments that do not pertain to the topic under discussion; including comments containing links to other websites or pages which are not relevant to the topic under discussion
- References to or inappropriate characterizations of individuals including personal attacks upon any member of the public, city employee or city official
- Advertising or promotional announcements of private or commercial enterprises, even if not for profit, unless the City is co-sponsoring such activity or event. Only City business-related advertising (services) or promotional announcements (special events) are allowed
- Individually identifiable information (e.g., address, phone number, and social security numbers) of specific individuals be they city employees, officials or members of the public.

The City of Dayton reserves the right to restrict or refuse to re-publish any content that is deemed in violation of these guidelines or any applicable federal, state or local law(s), including the terms of service or terms of use outlined by third-party social media application providers. The City of Dayton reserves the right to hide comments from users who violate these terms.

Monitoring

Social media is an engaging medium and welcomes two-way and cross-conversations, giving the City of Dayton the opportunity to receive and obtain comments and feedback from users regarding how the city is perceived, what it is doing right and what users think might be wrong or done more effectively or efficiently.

Monitors enforce this policy and guidelines to ensure content, and posted comments are suitable for all readers while respecting the gamut of opinions and points of view.

Prohibited, negative and/or inappropriate comments from users are to be expected given the deeply felt passion some individuals express about topics close to their hearts. Unacceptable forms of communication should not become a worrisome issue or treated as a sign of failure in social media strategies and usages. Instead, such comments can be reformed into positive effects, indicating to the online community that the city is professional, engaged in a dialogue with its users and that it values their input.

Security

City staff needs to take every caution to prevent fraud or unauthorized access to social media applications. In almost every case where an attacker accesses a system without authorization, he/she does so with the intent to cause harm, including:

- Making unofficial posts, tweets or messages that will be seen by the public as official messages
- Encouraging users to either click links or download unwanted applications that the attacker has added to the site
- Accessing, compromising or disabling a city system
- Redirecting users to sites that look like a city site but are used to gather data that could be used for unauthorized purposes (e.g., phishing)
- Using a compromised site to spread malware
- Acquiring confidential information about city employees or citizens (e.g., social engineering).

How to Mitigate Security Risks

Security related to social media is fundamentally a behavioral issue, not typically a technology issue. In general, employees unwittingly providing information to third parties

pose a risk to the city network. Employees need to be aware of current and emerging threats that they may face using social media sites and how to avoid falling prey.

The following are best practices when using social media:

- A separate user ID and password must be used to access social media sites, NEVER use your City Network username and password
- Never duplicate user IDs and passwords across multiple social media sites
- Learn more about security awareness and risks when using social media
- Ensure privacy settings are set appropriately
- Review (and apply as appropriate) patches for Firefox, Adobe, and Java as this software can be common paths for security vulnerabilities.

Records Retention

The following shall apply regarding the retention of city business, information or public records of posts to social media applications and tools:

- All content published and received by the city using social media in connection with the transaction of the city's public business are public records in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act (<https://www.texasattorneygeneral.gov/open-government/office-attorney-general-and-public-information-act>)
- The city remains responsible for capturing electronic copies of its public records made or received using social media, including those records made or received using third-party websites. All city employees and users are prohibited from deleting, altering, or in any way destroying, obliterating or tampering with the social media posts once they have been officially entered into the social medium.
- All city employees are responsible for keeping their individual access information confidential, and they will be held individually accountable for all entries made under their access data. It is no defense that the computer was accessible to others or that someone else might have tampered, deleted, or made an unauthorized post while the system was accessed by a third party if the employee left the access open and/or unattended.
- The city retains public records and disposes of social media public records in accordance with Texas State Records Retention Schedule (<https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/slr/recordspubs/rrs4.html>).

Questions, Comments, and Concerns

If at any time, there is uncertainty about how to apply this policy or questions arise regarding participation in social media, all employees are directed to seek the guidance of the Marketing and Communications Director as the employee designated by the City Manager responsible for all social media assets. Social media is in a state of constant change, and the City of Dayton recognizes that there will likely be events or issues that are not addressed in this policy. Therefore, the responsibility falls to each individual to use good judgment, and when in doubt, to ask for clarification or authorization before engaging in questionable online conduct. Any employee who observes questionable or inappropriate social media conduct or posts, whether on official city sites or private sites that could be a violation of this policy or negatively impact the City of Dayton, is directed to report this information to their Department Director or the Marketing and Communications Director.

Attachment A

As stated in the ***Acceptable Uses, and Restrictions*** section of this document, content, users, and visitors must be notified of the intended purposes of the City of Dayton social media applications. The following Social Media User Agreement is to be placed or linked on all social media sites.

Social Media User Agreement

To communicate with a larger audience, the City of Dayton maintains various types of social media applications. By accessing these applications, you agree to the terms and conditions stated below.

The City of Dayton intends to promote effective communication and maintain a respectful dialogue with users. In that spirit, the rules for posting external comments and content on Dayton media sites should maintain an open forum for community discussion and comment.

The City's social media system is monitored to ensure that posted comments and included content are constructive and suitable for all readers and users while respecting a wide and unfettered range of opinions and points of view. So that you are advised and comfortable to participate fully, the City of Dayton social media system's sites, comments, links and uploads containing any of the following prohibited material/matter shall NOT be allowed:

- Comments in support of or opposition to political campaigns or ballot measures.
- Profane language or content. Abusive or disparaging comments directed at an individual(s).
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status or lack thereof, socio-economic status of an individual(s), national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation
- Sexual expression, discrimination, harassment or content of any kind or links to sexual content or pornography whether of an adult, minor or child.
- Any expression of conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or the City's public safety systems
- Any expression of words that would disparage right, title or interest of legal ownership of any other individual or business.

- Comments that do not pertain to the topic under discussion; including comments containing links to other websites or pages which are not relevant to the topic under discussion
- References to or inappropriate characterizations of individuals including personal attacks upon any member of the public, city employee or city official
- Advertising or promotional announcements of private or commercial enterprises, even if not for profit unless the City is co-sponsoring such activity or event. Only city business-related advertising (services) or promotional announcements (special events) are allowed
- Individually identifiable information (e.g., address, phone number, and social security numbers) of specific individuals be they city employees, officials or members of the public.

The City of Dayton reserves the right to restrict or refuse to publish or re-post any content that is deemed in violation of these guidelines or any applicable federal, state or local law(s), including the terms of service or terms of use outlined by third-party social media application providers. The City of Dayton reserves the right to hide part or all of any given post/repost from users who violate these terms.

Social Media Site Request

Name and Title: _____

Department: _____ Date: _____

Statement of business need:

Anticipated benefits (improved productivity, timeliness of providing information):

What feedback methods are allowed for this social media tool, and how will they be managed?

What measures will be used to determine the success of this use of social media?

What goals do you have? _____

Names of approved departmental social media staff contributors:

Email address associated with account: _____

Approvals:

Department Head Approval:

Once approved, this document should be forwarded to the Public Affairs Coordinator to arrange for employee training on this policy, and set up required monitoring of the city for compliance with this plan.