

Section 10 -1a Social Media Standard Operating Procedure

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE			
No:	10-1a	Title:	Social Media Usage
Department:	Director of Communication and Legislative Affairs		
Approval Date:	April 27, 2011	Approval:	Director of Communication and Legislative Affairs
Update History:	Aug. 14, 2018		

PURPOSE

To define the procedures for the use of social media for City purposes consistent with Social Media Policy 205.06.

SCOPE

This procedure defines the detailed steps required for all City employees for planning, approving, implementing and supporting the use of any social media for City and Departmental communications. This procedure applies to all City employees. Failure to follow these procedures could lead to disciplinary action in accordance with the City's Employee Personnel Manual.

DEFINITIONS

Social Media and Social Networking	Both terms are used to refer to social internet sites or websites wherein information is created, exchanged or provided by/to third parties and individuals. Examples of social media include Facebook, MySpace, RSS, YouTube, Pinterest, Twitter, LinkedIn, Vine, Flickr, and blogs of all types, etc.
City of Arlington Author	An authorized City of Arlington official that creates and is responsible for posted articles and information on social media sites (see article below).
Article	An original posting of content to a City of Arlington social media site by a City of Arlington author.
Commenter	A City of Arlington official or member of the public who submits a comment for posting in response to the content of a particular City of Arlington article or social media content.
Comment	A response to a City of Arlington article or social media content submitted by a commenter.
City of Arlington Moderator	An authorized City of Arlington official, who reviews, authorizes and allows content submitted by City of Arlington authors and public commenters to be posted to a City of Arlington social media sites.

PROCEDURE

1.0 Planning the Use of Social Media

- 1.1 The use of social media will be planned by the department proposing to use it for communications purposes. Planning will consist of the following key steps:
 - 1.1.1 Proposing department will complete a Social Media Plan (incorporated herein in Appendix A) that will be submitted for approval as specified in Social Media Policy 205.06.
 - 1.1.2 Needs will be determined and costs estimated. Costs will include an estimate of required employee time to support the proposed social media on an annual basis.
- 1.2 Personal blogs are not permitted using City desktop computers or the City computer network. Personal blogs are “personality driven.” All blogs will be business blogs – that should be “content/issue driven.” Blogs may be internal or external. In the Social Media Plan, the type of blog needs to be clearly identified.

2.0 Social Media Use Approval

- 2.1 The Social Media Plan must be approved by the requesting Department Head.
- 2.2 The approved Social Media Plan will be submitted to the Chief Information Officer for an Information Technology (IT) review.
- 2.3 After the IT review is completed, the Plan will be submitted to the Director of Communication and Legislative Affairs for a communications review.
- 2.4 After the IT and communications reviews, the Plan will be submitted to the appropriate Deputy City Manager.
 - 2.4.1 If the Plan is approved, it will be returned to the proposing department for implementation (see 3.0).
 - 2.4.2 If the the Plan is not approved, it will be returned to the proposing department with a clear explanation of needed additional information. It may be resubmitted to the Deputy City Manager once clarifying information is incorporated.
- 2.5 If a plan is not approved by the Deputy City Manager, it may be revised and resubmitted as a new proposal or it will be considered terminated.

3.0 Implementing the Use of Social Media

- 3.1 Approved Social Media Plans will be implemented using the following branding specifications:

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- 3.1.1 The use of appropriate branding as specified by policy is required on all City of Arlington social media sites. All profiles and pages should be clearly identified as official City of Arlington assets, using the official City logo as the identifying image.
- 3.1.2 Profiles and pages should be designed to emulate the City's website, if possible. When possible, design colors should be consistent with the official colors in use by the City.
- 3.1.3 Questions about branding shall be clarified with the Marketing Communications Manager.
- 3.2 Content on all City of Arlington social media sites will be original. The reuse of created work from other social media sites is not permitted, unless it is able to be cited appropriately and the City has the appropriate usage rights prior to publishing.
- 3.3 Social media sites will be implemented and shall make every effort to use City desktop computers and the City computer network. The use of privately owned computers or personal Internet connections is permitted for any City of Arlington social media site, if explicitly approved by the Department Director or designee.
- 3.4 When creating a social media account, only those employees with City signature authority to execute contracts are authorized to legally bind the City when agreeing to terms and conditions with a social media provider. If no one within a department has signatory authority, the City Manager or a Deputy City Manager will be responsible for agreeing to the terms and conditions.
- 3.5 Sites will be set up in accordance with the requirements of the particular social media site. That includes sign-ons, user names, etc. that will reflect the site is the City of Arlington. Sites will not use personal sign-ons or personal-sounding user names. As closely as possible, sites will use "City of Arlington-Department" (fill in appropriate site name) as the user name.
- 3.6 Passwords for social media sites must conform to the City's Password Policy, including the use of strong passwords that are changed regularly. Passwords should contain at least eight characters, be significantly different from the previous password, and made up of a character from the four following groups: lowercase letters, uppercase letters, numbers and symbols. Passwords should not contain a word from the dictionary (in any language) and should not contain the user name, real name or organization name. These passwords must be changed on a quarterly basis.
- 3.7 All City social media site login and password information will be shared with the Marketing Communications Manager.
- 3.8 Each site or service should include a standard disclaimer referring to the City's rights and actions about comments. The Social Media Posting Policy should read:

Comments posted to this page will be monitored. The City of Arlington, Texas, reserves the right to remove inappropriate comments including those that have obscene language or sexual content, threaten or defame any person or organization, violate the legal ownership interest of another party, support or oppose political candidates or ballot propositions, promote illegal activity, promote commercial services or products, or are not topically related to the particular posting.
- 3.9 The Office of Communication will maintain a list of social media sites and services which have been approved for use by City departments and staff.

4.0 Supporting Social Media

- 4.1 The site must be maintained effectively. Estimated employee time and cost need to be included as part of the Social Media Plan. Employees designated to manage, post and use the department's social media site must provide adequate time on a cyclical basis that meets that site's requirements for responsiveness. Thus, a Facebook site would be updated daily while another site, such as YouTube, might be updated at regular intervals or as materials become available. Sites that are not updated on a regular basis should be deactivated.
- 4.2 Comments that conform to the Social Media Posting Policy will be posted on City social media sites. User comments shall not be deleted or removed based on the views expressed. Comments will not be edited.

Comments that do not conform to the Social Media Posting Policy should never be deleted from social media sites. Instead, those comments should be hidden, in order to retain the comment in compliance with City record-retention policies. Additionally, moderators should create and retain documentation detailing the reason the comment wasn't posted.

4.3 Etiquette:

- 4.3.1 Before the first contribution or posting on any social media site, it is a good idea to observe the activity on the site for a while before posting to get a feel for the style of contributions, the nature of the content and any "unwritten" rules that other contributors might follow.
- 4.3.2 Information will be published in the third person, or if approved by site management, in the first-person only with identification of the author's individual role in the City of Arlington. For all posted first person information, a standard disclaimer must be included to read as follows: *"The views expressed on this post are my own and don't reflect the views of my employer."*
- 4.3.3 Keep calm: don't pick fights by escalating heated discussions but be conciliatory, respectful and quote facts to lower the temperature and/or correct any misrepresentations. Never contribute to a discussion if you are angry. Leave it, calm down and return to it at a later date when you can contribute in a calm and rational manner. Remember, this is business, not personal.
- 4.3.4 Personal judgment: if you feel even slightly uneasy about something you are about to publish, then the chances are you shouldn't do it. Remember, the information you publish will be visible to other web users for a long time. If in doubt, discuss it with your supervisor first.
- 4.3.5 Respect: don't use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity or engage in any conduct that would be unacceptable in the City of Arlington workplace or prohibited by Social Media Policy 205.06 or the City's personnel policies. Always consider others' privacy and avoid discussing topics that may be inflammatory (e.g. politics and religion).
- 4.3.6 Personal privacy: avoid publishing personal contact details where they can be accessed and used widely by people you did not intend to see them. It is better to contact an individual outside the collaborative space if you want to take something off-line.

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4.4 Moderation: The objective of moderating content before it is published is two-fold:

- to ensure that only suitable content is published into a channel associated with the City of Arlington.
- to ensure comments made on blogs are clear and appropriate to the content/subject matter of the blog in question.

Moderation should be used by a department to ensure that content is appropriate for the specified site.

4.5 Engagement: To encourage engagement and increase transparency, it is the City of Arlington's intent to leverage social media as a method of two-way communication. To that end, when appropriate resources are available, comment and forum features will be activated to allow users to make comments, ask questions or request services.

4.5.1 When activated, comments and forums should be reviewed twice a day, before noon and before 5pm.

4.5.2 Staff will assess the content of each post or comment to determine it meets the standards described in the Social Media Posting Policy or if it requires a response from the City.

4.5.3 When a response to a comment is appropriate, site moderators should reply in a timely manner. If an answer is not immediately known, staff should work as quickly as possible to find the answer and post a response.

4.5.4 When disagreeing with others' opinions or providing comments, be sure the comments are meaningful, respectful, factual and relevant to the topic.

4.5.5 Posts or comments requiring a service request will be submitted to the appropriate department.

4.6 City of Arlington social media sites will link to other City of Arlington sites and/or sites approved by a Department Director or their designee. All City of Arlington social media sites will be displayed on the City's main webpage for easy access by users.

4.7 Group Ownership: Departments must identify specific users who control/maintain social media sites with group ownership. This will include identification of individuals (user name and password) with permission to use the site. When multiple individuals can post to the same site, they must identify themselves unless exempted by departmental procedures.

4.8 Individual departments that need additional guidance beyond what is in this Standard Operating Procedure may create a departmental social media usage procedures addendum that is consistent with this overall City procedure. Any department-specific usage or prohibitions should be included in the addendum.

5.0 Supporting Social Media

5.1 It is the responsibility of the Department Director to ensure that employees are aware of these guidelines for creating and maintaining social media sites. Carrying out the procedures outlined may be the responsibility of departmental public information staff or another staff member designated by department management.

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- 5.2 All City of Arlington social media sites must adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and policies, including all IT and City Records Management policies and other applicable City policies. The department's designated social media moderator is responsible for ensuring those policies are followed and records are properly retained and/or disposed of.
- 5.3 Texas Public Information Act and e-discovery laws and policies apply to social media content and, therefore, content must be able to be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with these laws.
- 5.4 The City of Arlington Director of Communication and Legislative Affairs may notify Department Directors when portions of the Social Media Standard Operating Procedures are not followed including violation of the policy, unprofessional use of the resource, lack of use or disinterest by the public, or a department's failure to maintain the site.
- 5.5 The Office of Communication will create monthly tracking reports looking at the key metrics for City of Arlington social media sites. Individual departments with social media sites will be provided with that information. Additionally, those departments are encouraged to perform their own analytics to measure the effectiveness of their social media communication and community engagement. Online tools like Twitter Counter and Facebook Insights can be helpful in developing these key metrics.

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1.0 Appendix A – Social Media Plan

Proposed Social Media:	Identify the specific social media (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.). If more than one media is proposed, then identify each in a separate planning document. Also, answer these questions: Is this social media already available on the City of Arlington network? What site name/user name will be used for this social media?
Purpose:	Why is the use of this social media needed? What purpose will it serve? What types of content will be placed on this site?
Media Use Management:	Describe how the use of the proposed media will be managed consistent with Social Media Policy 205.06. Identify specific management responsibilities within the department. This section will include identification of any moderators, authors, commenters and management of the media content.
Security Considerations:	Any technology or site security considerations should be identified in this section. Answer these questions: Are there any security considerations for use of this social media? If so, how are they being addressed?
Estimated Costs:	Include all employee time and any other cost considerations for implementation and ongoing support of the proposed social media.
Employee Training Plan:	How will designated employees be trained to adhere to Social Media Policy 205.06 and the requirements of the Social Media Usage Procedure?

Proposing Department: _____

Approved: _____

Date: _____

Information Technology

Approved _____

Date: _____

Office of Communication

Approved _____

Date: _____

City Manager's Office

Approved _____

Date: _____