

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY (“Policy”)

The City of Pembroke Pines (hereinafter “City”) understands that advances in technology and changes in culture are factors that influence the organization in both positive and negative manners. Social media, in general, is one of those external influences and the City of Pembroke Pines has a duty to protect the reputation and integrity of the organization and its members, as well as to guard against liability and potential legal risk.

To address the fast-changing landscape of the Internet and the way residents communicate and obtain information online, the city uses social media tools to reach a broader audience.

PURPOSE

It is important that the City maintain one voice across its social media platforms. When appropriate, posts should be shared from the City’s social media (not cut and pasted) platform(s) to any and all other city-related social media accounts (i.e. Police, Fire, Mayor, Commissioners, The Frank, etc.) to ensure the correct information is being distributed.

The Policy includes rules and guidelines for social networking, social media and blogging. The City takes no position on an Employee’s decision to engage in social networking, or in maintaining a blog; however, it is the right and duty of the City to protect itself from unauthorized disclosure of information. This policy establishes the City’s position on the utility and management of social media and provides guidance on its management, administration, and oversight. This policy is not meant to address one particular form of social media, rather social media in general, as advances in technology will occur and new tools will emerge.

The City prohibits unlawful communication through social media, social networking and blogging. All approved use shall be governed accordingly.

SCOPE OF APPLICABILITY

The Policy applies to management and non-management employees, contracted employees, supplemental employees, independent contractors, consultants, volunteers, temporary employees and other City workers including but not limited to all personnel affiliated with third parties (collectively “Employees”). This Policy will supersede and replace any and all previous policies, regulations, general orders, etc...pertaining to social media and Employee use thereof.

This Policy applies to all equipment that is owned or leased by the City or used to conduct official City business or to interact with internal networks or business systems, whether owned or leased by the City, Employees, or third parties.

If the provisions of this Social Media Policy conflict with a collective bargaining agreement, the collective bargaining agreement will prevail.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, the following terms are defined below:

1. Social Media or Social Network: Social Media or a Social Network is content created by individuals using accessible web-based and mobile technologies to communicate through interactive dialogue and/or to share information, ideas, messages, and other content (i.e. videos). Examples of social media include Facebook, Next Door, MySpace, RSS, YouTube, Second Life, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Google+, Flickr, etc.
2. Social Media Administrator: An authorized City Employee that is responsible for creating, reviewing, authorizing, and allowing content to be posted to a City social media site.
3. Commenter: A City official, Employee and/or member of the public who submits a comment on a City-sponsored social media site.

POLICY

Social media provides a new and potentially valuable means of assisting the City and its personnel in meeting community outreach, problem-solving and related objectives.

Personal use of social media can have a bearing on departmental personnel in their official capacity. The same principles and guidelines found in the City's policies apply to Employees' activities online. Ultimately, Employees are solely responsible for what they post online. Before creating online content, Employees need to consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. As such, this policy provides information of a precautionary nature as well as some prohibitions on the use of social media by City Employees.

Employees must adhere to the following policies when using social media. Failure to comply with the following or otherwise engaging in conduct that adversely affects the Employees' job performance, the performance of Employees' coworkers, or otherwise adversely affects customers, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- A. Employees are free to express themselves as private citizens on social media sites to the degree that their speech does not impair working relationships of the City, impede the performance of duties, impair discipline and harmony among co-workers, or negatively affect the public perception of the City.
- B. Employee users of social media are considered additional public spokespersons for the City and are therefore held to a higher standard of care when disseminating information on the City's behalf. These Employee users will develop and disseminate content that is consistent with City values, accurate and sensitive to legal issues of defamation and privacy. Authorized Employee users are expected to adhere to best practices and to use common sense when using social media as authorized by the city Manager or his/her designee.

- C. Endorsements of products or services of any kind by users who have identified themselves as an Employee of the City is prohibited, unless otherwise authorized by the City Manager and/or Department Head(s). Unauthorized distribution and/or re-distribution (i.e. sharing, re-tweeting, re-posting) of work-related products, including but not limited to, videos, photos or documents is prohibited. Distribution of confidential material(s) is prohibited.
- D. All City-sponsored social media sites shall be (1) approved by the City Manager and/or designee and the requesting Department Head; (2) published using approved City social networking platform and tools; and (3) administered by the requesting Department Head and/or designee who will service as the Social Media Administrator. Designees can be any department Employee designated by the requesting Department Head that has a complete understanding of this Policy and has appropriate technical experience and training.
- E. All City social networking sites shall adhere to applicable City, County, State and Federal laws, regulations and policies including all Information Technology and Records Management policies.
- F. Florida public records laws (Chapter 119, Florida Statutes), the Freedom of Information Act and e-discovery laws and policies apply to social media content and therefore content shall be managed, stored and retrieved to comply with these laws.
- G. Employees should have no expectation of privacy when using social media and/or networking sites on property owned by the City, while using City owned or issued equipment, while using City Wi-Fi systems, or City issued mobile devices.
- H. All social networking sites shall clearly indicate that any content posted or submitted for posting is subject to public disclosure pursuant to the Florida Public Records Law, Chapter 119, Florida Statutes.
- I. Employees should be aware that when they are communicating via social media and speaking as an Employee, first amendment free speech protections may not apply. Unless workplace speech is of public concern, the speech may not be protected and should be avoided. Additionally, in the event it is determined that the interests of the government in promoting efficient operations outweigh the interests of the Employee in commenting on matters of public concern, the Employee may be disciplined and/or terminated for such speech.
- J. As public personnel, Employees are cautioned that speech, on- or off-duty, made pursuant to their official duties – that is, that owes its existence to the Employee's professional duties and responsibilities – may form the basis for discipline.

- K. City Employees shall not post, transmit, or otherwise disseminate any information to which they have access as a result of their employment without written permission from the City Manager or his/her designee.
- L. Where possible, each City-sponsored social networking site shall include an introductory statement which clearly specifies the purpose and topical scope of the social network site. In addition, these social networking sites should attempt to link back to the official City website (www.ppines.com) for forms, documents and other information.
- M. Content, comments or links containing any of the following **will not** be allowed on City Social Networking sites:
- a. Speech that is prohibited and/or subject to governmental regulations and includes, but may not be limited to communications which may be construed as lewd and obscene, profane, libelous, insulting, humiliating, abusive, hostile, threatening, and/or considered fighting words;
 - b. Comments not typically related to the particular site being commented upon;
 - c. Content, profiles, pictures, avatars and/or usernames that promote, foster or perpetuate discrimination on the bases of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
 - d. Sexual content or links to sexual content;
 - e. Repeating, disseminating or sharing confidential information;
 - f. Stating, sharing or posting discriminatory comments which may be construed as creating a hostile or abusive working environment;
 - g. Partisan political views;
 - h. Non-city endorsed solicitations of commerce or advertisements not authorized by the City;
 - i. Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity; copyright, patent or trademark violations;
 - j. Information that may compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems;
 - k. Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party;

- l. Personally identifiable information, such as addresses, telephone numbers, social security numbers, driver's license numbers, HIPPA protected or other private and/or sensitive information;
 - m. Personal character attacks;
 - n. False or misleading representation; and/or
 - o. Unauthorized hyperlinks to third party websites unless posted by the City's approved authorized staff users for links to partnered / sponsored organizations and bona-fide governmental agencies, or other legitimate organizations as the City deems appropriate; and
 - p. Content related to a political campaign including, but not limited to: content pertaining to fundraising activities promoting or opposing any person campaigning for election to a political office.
- N. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Policy or any applicable law in accordance with Policy – Item 6. above.
- O. Content that is deemed not suitable for posting by a City Social Media Administrator because it is not topically related to the particular social networking site objective being commented upon, or is deemed prohibited content based on the criteria in Policy – Item 6. of this Policy, shall be retained pursuant to the public records retention schedule along with a description of the reason the specific content is deemed not suitable for posting.
- P. All City Social Media Administrators shall be trained regarding the terms of this City Policy, including their responsibilities to review content submitted for posting to ensure compliance with the Policy and public records retention requirements.
- Q. All social networking sites shall clearly indicate they are maintained by the City and shall have City contact information prominently displayed, where available. They shall also state that “this site is not monitored at all times, do not use this forum to report emergency situations and/or time-sensitive issues.
- R. Where appropriate, City security policies shall apply to all social networking sites.
- S. Comments that offer thoughtful criticism of the organization (not individuals) and City initiatives shall not be removed or altered except as provided for in this Policy.
- T. The City reserves the right to restrict or remove any content that is deemed in violation of this Policy or any applicable law. The City's social media articles, posts or comments

containing any of the content posted within this Policy shall be removed as soon as possible.

- U. Users shall be informed that by posting to the City's social media sites, the City relinquishes any and all responsibility and liability for any materials that the City deems inappropriate for posting, which cannot be removed in an expeditious and otherwise timely manner.
- V. Any content removed based on this Policy must be retained, including the time, date and identify of the poster when available, in accordance with the City's policy on the retention of such information.
- W. The City will not edit others' comments. However, if others' comments are not in compliance with the standards for content listed herein, the comments will be removed. Any content removed based on this Policy will be retained, including the time, date and identity of the poster when available, in accordance with public records laws.
- X. City Hall information shall be provided on all social media platforms.
- Y. In addition to the City's Government page, there are three other pages with designated Social Media Administrators: Pembroke Pines Police Department, Charles F. Dodge City Center (SMG) and The Frank Art Gallery. No other "pages" or city groups are to be created, however, "special event" pages may be created with approval and through the City's primary page.
- Z. Department heads shall be responsible for assigning "Social Media Leads" for each department within the City.
- AA. Elected officials are responsible for abiding by State and Federal laws and regulation pertaining to campaigning and open meetings as they relate to social media posting and responses.

EMPLOYEE GUIDANCE FOR PARTICIPATING IN SOCIAL NETWORKING

The City understands that Social Networking and Internet services have become a common form of communication in the workplace and among stakeholders, citizens, businesses, visitors and the general public. Social networks are online communities of people or organizations that share interests and/or activities and use a wide variety of internet technology to make the interaction a rich and robust experience.

All social media companies are driven to collect data and that data is sold on the open market to interested marketers and advertisers. By using social media, users are consenting to volunteer personal information which can be used in the open market and may be subject to public records and discovery requests.

Employees that choose to participate in social networks as a City Employee shall adhere to the following guidelines.

- A. The City's social media accounts are intended to be used for information purposes only. Social media posts made by the City and/ Employee must pertain to City news or City sponsored / partnered event only.
- B. All information should be consistent throughout the City's social media platforms.
- C. Employees are responsible for reading and following this Policy, as well as the other policies invoked by the City of Pembroke Pines to ensure their postings are consistent with these policies. Use of your City computer (or City portable electronic devices), City E-mail address and communicating in your official capacity will constitute conducting City business. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, obscene and pornographic material, harassment, threats of violence, offensive, demeaning, and/or inflammatory remarks or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
- D. As part of the interactive approach to using social media, the City Manager or his/her designee may follow, message, like, share and re-tweet posts that contain content that is relevant to the City's mission.
- E. The City's official social media accounts shall provide the official website of the City where residents and users can access information regarding the City.
- F. Authorized Employees shall not engage in back-and-forth conversation regarding topics that are complex, controversial, or otherwise sensitive.
- G. Authorized Employees, in consultation with the City Manager, will determine when an issue raised by others has reached a "critical mass" that requires a City response on the account.
- H. Departments have the option of authorizing Employees to participate in the City's social media sites as such participation may occur only on the City's official social media sites.
- I. Follow all public records laws, retention laws, fair use and financial disclosure laws and any other laws that might apply to the City.
- J. Do not cite vendors, suppliers, clients, citizens, co-workers and/or other stakeholders. In addition, Employees should not use copyrighted material, trademarks or content of the City (i.e. City Seal, pictures, City Logo etc.) without authorization from the City Manager and/or his/her designee.

- K. Employees who are not authorized by the City to serve as Social Media Administrators shall make it clear that they are speaking for themselves and not on behalf of the City. If an Employee is authorized to publish content on any site outside of the City's Social Media sites and such content is related to the work the Employee does or to a subject(s) associated with the City, the Employee is required to use a disclaimer such as this: "The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent the City's positions or opinions."
- L. Do not use ethnic slurs, profanity, personal insults and/or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the City's workplace. Do not share information about another Employee's opinions, beliefs, thoughts and emotions. Avoid posting pictures, audio and videos without the permission of those featured in them. Do not disclose private facts or information gained through unreasonable intrusion.
- M. If you identify yourself as a City Employee, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues, citizens and/or other stakeholders. Use common sense.
- N. Correct your mistakes (before publishing a comment). Do not alter previous posts unless an update is necessary.
- O. Frame any comments and/or opposing views in a positive manner.
- P. Use caution when interacting with outside entities. Do not conduct City business communications, internal or external, using private or City sponsored social media sites. Instead, use City email for standard City business communications.
- Q. Social Media Administrators of City-sponsored sites shall employ strong passwords, which shall be changed periodically. The passwords that are used for all City related social media accounts will be provided to the City Manager and/or designee.
- R. Social Media Administrators of all City-sponsored social media site pages shall be responsible for saving all site postings weekly for Public Records Laws retention purposes.
- S. Participation in a City-sponsored social media site will be at your own risk. The right of privacy should not be expected within any communication. By participating, you take personal responsibility for your comments, your username and any information that you provide. You may be personally and legally responsible for any posting you make on a City sponsored social media site.
- T. Employees shall never represent themselves as a spokesperson for the City. Employees shall not wear City clothing/uniforms in posted photographs or videos unless they have permission from their Department Directors (excludes external events when representing in an official capacity). Employees must have permission from the City's

Communications and Marketing Department to use a City logo or branding in their postings.

- U. Employees are responsible for following and respecting the Policy and report any concerns or incidents they may encounter to their supervisor, Department Director or Human Resources Director or designee.